Moral Values as Aspects of the Manifest Image

By

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Abstract.

This thesis will argue that a significant part of our moral experience can be explained by an analogy with the phenomenon of aspect perception discussed by Wittgenstein in his Philosophical Investigations. I will argue that projectivism cannot give a satisfactory account of moral perception. This difficulty constitutes an argument *against* projectivism; namely that projectivism is hopeless as an account of the phenomenology of morality, because it is at variance with the way we actually think and talk morally. It will be shown how quasi-realism is an attempt to remove the most important range of objections to projectivism – namely that it cannot account for the phenomena of serious moral thought and talk. I argue that the project of quasi-realism ultimately fails, leaving realism as the theory most able to account for our moral experience.

I shall reveal the untenable assumptions of the `Absolute' viewpoint entailed by the non-realist arguments of J.L.Mackie, and reveal the perpectival outlook that lies behind an aspect-seeing account of moral perception, and also illuminate why the key issue for moral realism is the question of whether we can establish moral objectivity. I shall then go on to say how much objectivity is possible. Finally, I shall show how a Wittgensteinian analogy between moral values and aspects helps to explain our common moral experience. The ability to perceive moral values will be shown to be tied in with the concept-dependency of moral perception, relying on discriminations that can only be made through the use of language, and hence through a shared form of life. The account will be shown to be fully capable of giving an account of our common moral experience.

98,256 Words.

Contents

Acknowledgments

Chapter 1. **Introduction.**

Chapter 2. <u>Moral Anti-realism</u>.

Chapter 3.   The Analogy with Secondary Properties.

Chapter 4 .   Quasi-realism.

Chapter 5.   Aspects, Perception and Moral Values.

Bibliography

Acknowledgments.

Chapter 1   Introduction.

The thesis will follow the convention that the head of each chapter is numbered, i.e. `Chapter 1`. This leads to any subsections, i.e. `1.1` (Chapter 1, section 1) which in turn leads to any sub-subsections, i.e. `1.1.i` (Chapter 1, section 1, subsection i). References appear in the form of endnotes at the end of each chapter.

1.1 Rationale.

The principal question that this thesis is going to address is whether we can justify the view that moral value constitutes part of the fabric of the world, or whether rather it should be thought of as forming part of our subjective response to that world; is value to be thought of as existing in the world, or does value owe its existence totally or at least in part to our subjective nature? This question matters, because the aims of moral philosophy are bound up with the questions "How should we live?" Or "What should I do?" The question of how far can reason, feeling, judgement and moral awareness take us in finding answers to moral problems is not a trivial one and deserves serious attention. Philosophers have been trying to answer these questions, or more specific derivative questions like them, ever since there has been philosophy. For almost as long, philosophers have also been trying to answer the related questions about the nature of the answers and the questions.

When pondering what the best course of action is generally, we might conceive of it as being a matter of having to decide what would make us the happiest, or what we can live with. Or we could conceive of it as being a matter of trying to discover something objective, such as which kind of mortgage will be the most cost-effective. In attempting to answer *moral* questions, the dichotomy is of this nature: some people think that what is right depends on ourselves in some way, such as a person's possession of certain feelings or desires, and so that the answer to the question will depend on an agent deciding what she really wants, or some such thing. Others think that the answer to the question "Is this action wrong?" does not depend on any subjective state of an agent but is something to be discovered, just as the answers to questions about whether physical objects, for example, exist, can be answered without depending in any way upon anybody's subjective states.

These contrary approaches to questions about the status of moral judgements are known as anti-realism and realism respectively. The debate between the two sides has a long history, and still arouses passion today. One reason for such persistence is that both sides seem to express things that we all often take to be features of moral judgements. We feel, for example, that a person's moral opinions are up to them, that no one else has a right to impose any particular idea of what they should do onto them. This is made particularly apparent in such clashes between 'clean-up' campaigners such as Mary Whitehouse and the Viewers and Listeners Association, and the opposing liberal attitude that it is a case of personal choice in matters of what we choose to read and watch. Likewise in debates about abortion, a prominent argument is that every person has a right to decide for himself or herself whether abortion is permissible, and it is not the place of government to make the decision for them. On the other hand there are some issues about which we do not feel that everyone has the right to make up their own mind. We do

not think it permissible for someone to actively pursue a life in which killing people is regarded as a good thing, for example. The fact that murder is wrong; it seems to the majority of us, is not something that we decide for ourselves, it is just wrong as a matter of fact.

This thesis is a meta-ethical inquiry, that is, an inquiry *about* ethics, rather than a substantive inquiry concerning what moral values we should adopt, etc. The latter is the subject matter of normative ethics, that part of philosophy in which systematic theories detailing the different views that can be taken on moral issues are constructed and their relative merits debated. I mention this to make it clear what this thesis is *not* about. Rather, this thesis is about meta-ethics, that part of philosophy in which we step back and ask questions about the claims we make when we engage in normative ethics. Though such meta-ethical questions are no doubt more abstract than normative ethical questions, they are also in a certain sense more urgent; for how could we decide whether to affirm or deny the above claim that the fact that murder is wrong is not something that we decide for ourselves, that it is just wrong as a matter of fact, without first being in a position to say what the claim really means? I now turn to the question of why such issues are important.

1.2. Why It Makes A Difference If Moral Realism Is True.

Still it might be unclear why the debate between realists and non-realists should be considered an important one. As has been implied, many of us share the same moral opinions in the great majority of cases. It is just that this fact is often overlooked because such opinions are so much taken for granted and the areas where there is dispute are so prominent. Does it really matter how these opinions are arrived at or how they are conceived of? This is the question of whether it really matters which, if either, meta-ethical theory is correct.

If moral values do not exist, then there are two possibilities as to what we are doing when we speak as though there were. Either such apparent statements serve another purpose than imparting information, such as expressing attitudes or recommending actions, or we are simply making a mistake in uttering such attempted judgements. Either way, there will be casualties. Normally, when any of us makes a moral judgement we are aiming to say something that is true, just as we are when we make any other kind of judgement (while recognising that finding answers to moral questions is not like empirical investigation). Now if such utterances serve no other function and are simply therefore mistakes, then clearly all our moral beliefs are false, and our very practice of having moral beliefs is revealed as a huge failure to perceive the truth about the world and ourselves. It seems to me reasonable to assume that this conclusion will not be welcomed by most people. At any rate, it is a matter of importance that we find out whether we are making such a monumental mistake. If on the other hand our moral judgements are in fact recommendations, expressions of feeling, or serve some other function than the one they appear to, then it will still be the case that none of our moral judgements are true. Of course they will not be false either, since expressions of attitude, recommendations and the like, do not have truth-values at all. In

this case as well, morality will be revealed to be something other than what it presents itself to us as being, and what most of us believe that it is. Therefore it cannot be just a verbal quarrel between objectivist and subjectivist to ask which aspects of our view of reality have their source in our subjective nature and which reflect reality as it is.

I shall try to indicate why it is important to find, if we can, where the truth lies between the two sides. It is my intention to describe what I *take* the threat posed by non-realism to be by staying for the moment with its simplest form, namely the position that because moral values do not exist, there is nothing for our moral opinions to be true of. I shall, later on, make a distinction between anti-realist and non-realist positions, as well as outlining Quasi-realism and those positions I have chosen to call neo-realist. For the moment, I shall use the term `non-realism` generally to refer to any meta-ethical position opposed to moral realism.

I see non-realism as threatening things which I believe to be important, and realism as safeguarding them. It seems to me that if non-realism were true, many significant things we believe would be shown to be false, and many things that we do, and regard as important, would be *pointless*. Several philosophers have suggested recently that substantial areas of moral belief and practice would be lost if non-realism were true. For instance, some have claimed that holding a non-realist view of what is of value to us may after all be incompatible with our seeing life as meaningful, or indeed, with our having desires at all. David Wiggins's 1976 British Academy Lecture "Truth, Invention and the Meaning of Life"[1] is perhaps the source of this suggestion, but Mark Platts and Sabina Lovibond have developed it more recently. For example, Platts, considering a somewhat narrow class of desires-those which, unlike hunger or lust, lack a distinct phenomenal character-argues that it will

make some difference to our happiness if we desire things because of the value we take them to have and not vice-versa.[2] It may well be the case that we can only see our lives as meaningful if we see our ends as having a value which transcends the mere fact that we have adopted them: desires frequently require an appropriate belief about the independent desirability of the object of desire.[3] This makes a practical difference: should nothing prove to be intrinsically valuable, we may lose any satisfaction from getting what is desired.[4] The argument here is that non-realism poses a threat to our enjoyment of the psychological benefits of commitment. This stems from the non-realist seeing the meaningfulness of our lives as dependent upon the participant perspective; the non-realist sees the subject, through commitment, choice, and desire, as constituting what is worthwhile in the world. But, as Wiggins notes it is precisely *objective* reasons that the will "craves" in determining what is worth pursuit: "often it could not go forward unless it thought it had them."[5] Lovibond stresses this point:

> If value is constituted by our desires, simply as such, there can be no objectively valid reason why we should want one thing rather than another; what difference does it make, then, what we choose? And what is to prevent us from lapsing into an inert condition in which no choice seems worth making?[6]

The non-realist, however, may insist that the truth of his theory has no such serious consequences, and, furthermore, does not pose any threat to our ordinary moral understanding and experience. Simon Blackburn, for instance, takes the major challenge facing non-realism (see chapter 4) to be that of showing that our normal (apparently realistic) way of speaking about morals is neither 'fraudulent' nor 'diseased', even though it is to be given a non-

realist construal, leading to the `no difference' thesis, namely that it will make no difference, apart from an ontological one, concerning which theory we subscribe to.[7]

I would wish to maintain, however, that substantial areas of moral belief and practice would be lost if non-realism were true. For instance, it is a normal feature of truth that it does not depend on my asserting to it for its status. Equally, we all can feel that despite whatever strongly held opinions we have on a particular matter, the truth may have escaped us. For the non-realist, moral `truth' *does* depend on my assent, and feelings of our own fallibility will be impossible in this area, or their content will require radical construal. Furthermore, what is `true' for me will not be `true' for different people with different feelings. The whole point of moral inquiry, that of finding out answers to questions of what we should do, will be lost. No single answer will be possible, since the answer for each individual will depend on that individual's feelings, or on what that individual will be prepared to recommend. It will be shown in later chapters how modern non-realists have responded with the claim that the truth of their theories poses no such threat; we will still have the reactions to events that prompt us to make the utterances expressing the attitudes that we have, and, moreover, we can even agree that someone's moral statement is true. For, (according to such theorists) to say that a belief is true is to agree with it, and we can agree and disagree with attitudes just as well as we can with beliefs. Thus modern non-realists claim to be fully able to account for the assertoric nature of moral discourse, leading to the claim that it will make no practical difference in regard to which theory we support. This `no difference' thesis will be dealt with in chapter 2 (2.4) in the context of non-cognitivism and the theory of `projectivism', and in chapter 4 (4.3) concerning the assumed `non-revisionist' argument of Quasi-realism.[8]

The `no difference' thesis is thought to constitute an argument *against* moral realism. This is somewhat surprising, since one would have thought that if meta-ethical views made no practical difference, then this would be at most reason to avoid, or be unconcerned with, meta-ethics, not to prefer one meta-ethical view to another. Even if the moral realist were to concede that there are no practical differences between moral realism and non-realism, is this enough to establish that only practical differences matter to the truth of a meta-ethical theory? David Brink has pointed out that if the latter were indeed the case, it would still not constitute an argument in favour of non-realism.[9] Only if we assumed that morality was essentially a system of practices, rather than, say, a set of beliefs, or a body of knowledge, would the practical implications of a meta-ethical theory be all that mattered to its truth. But as Brink points out, this seems to characterise morality in a non-cognitive way from the start. This is not to deny that practical implications of meta-ethical views, if any, can be evidential, it is only to deny that this is the only evidence for a meta-ethical view. If reflection on moral inquiry and the practical character of morality supports moral realism, then this is evidence for the truth of moral realism. The fact, if it is a fact, that the choice between non-cognitivism[10] and realism makes no practical difference cannot tip the balance in favour of non-realism. But the realist should not concede the claim that moral realism makes no difference. Moral realism matters. It matters to what we count as a case of moral argument, it matters to the moral judgements we can accept, it matters for our moral psychology, what we take to be valuable, and it matters to the appropriateness of certain sorts of attitudes to our own moral beliefs and those of others.

Non-realists have also offered the thesis that if we accept the truth of moral realism, some beliefs and practices that we have will suffer; for example, the belief I mentioned earlier that each individual is free to decide for themselves what is right for them to do. From saying that there is a moral truth to be known it seems but a short step to claiming that you have found it and that other people are just wrong because they do not see it as you do. Moral realism, this thesis says, underwrites intolerance.[11] But the realist can easily refute this. A moral realist may tolerate that which she believes to be mistaken. She may support a 'weak' view of tolerance, claiming that it is sometimes wrong to try to change the beliefs of others or interfere with their conduct; the rightness or wrongness of such interference will depend upon, among other things, the nature of the conduct or beliefs being interfered with and the nature of the interference. This is compatible with a realist belief that there are some moral beliefs or actions (say, certain racist beliefs or actions) that should not be tolerated. Now the realist can claim that it is precisely because a weak principle of tolerance is true that it is usually wrong to be intolerant-even if we take our opponent's views to be mistaken.[12] This recognises that the rightness or wrongness of some action x is one thing; the rightness or wrongness of some action y-which constitutes interference with x-is another thing. It is also untrue that a moral realist must be a dogmatist; rather she can and should keep an open mind about moral issues, and engage the opposition in dialogue, for, as a realist, she can also be a fallibilist. I would argue that it is also a mistake to think that tolerance comes out of non-cognitivism in such a straightforward way. There is no reason why it should. For that would be to claim that non-cognitivism can show that an attitude of toleration is preferable to an attitude of intolerance. However, it would be inconsistent, as most non-cognitivists have realised, to hold both that we are free to choose what moral attitudes to take and also that we can demonstrate that an attitude of tolerance is superior to one of intolerance; if no one moral

16

judgement is any more correct than another how can it be that I should be tolerant?[13] Also, to recognise that we are free to choose what moral attitudes to take, should not entail our not caring either way; to be unaffected is not to be tolerant, it is to be indifferent. I have already shown that the realist can justifiably be intolerant of racism. She also can and should keep an open mind about moral issues, engage the opposition in dialogue and reassess her position. However, the non-cognitivist may have no room for dialogue; subjective feelings can be very strong, and whereas the realist may see something (say, homosexual acts) as depraved, but still refrain from suppressing what she doesn't like, the non-cognitivist's feelings may be so strong as to require its total suppression.

1.3. The Phenomenology of Value.

The realism/non-realism debate in ethics has been around ever since people began thinking critically about their moral convictions. The issue has always been to make sense of those convictions in a way that does justice to morality's apparent importance without engaging in outrageous metaphysical flights of fancy, involving implausibly extravagant ontological claims. Moral realists like myself maintain that values form part of `the furniture of the world` by obtaining in some way; they are, at the least, not nothing, whether they be properties of objects, reasons for action, or whatever, while moral non-realists deny this. Let me at this early stage merely note that both realist and non-realist alike take our common experience of value to be prima facie realist; we ordinarily take value as appearing to us; we hear the melodiousness of our favourite piece of music and we see the beauty of a sunset in that the beauty of the sunset is interwoven in our experience of it; experience of the sunset appears to include our perceptual awareness of value. For these reasons, it seems best to start by agreeing with John McDowell's claim that

Any attempt to accept the appearances of the phenomenology of value makes it virtually irresistible to appeal to a perceptual model of moral awareness.[14]

In my defence of moral realism in later chapters, I shall indeed offer such a perceptual model. I shall consider an analogy between values and secondary properties (chapter 3) before offering my analogy with aspect-perception (chapter 5).

In Chapter 2 I shall explain and criticise the non-realist theory of 'projectivism' and claim that it cannot explain the phenomenology and metaphysics of moral experience. Part of this criticism will involve using some examples taken from aesthetics. However, it will later become clear that moral value perception is a case of aspect-seeing (see the discussion of 'seeing-as' in chapter 5), whilst the perception of aesthetic qualities is best understood as a case of 'seeing-in', which is essentially interpretive ('reading in'), and as such is significantly different from cases of aspect-seeing. It will also become clear in chapter 4 that moral judgements are assertoric and require a 'thick' conception of truth whilst aesthetic judgement is not under the same sort of normative constraints, so requires only a 'thin' notion of truth (see 4.4.i). These differences mean that I shall not offer any analogy between aesthetic values and moral values.

Imagine both realist and non-realist seeing some children kicking an injured dog. A realist about moral properties will maintain that she can see the wrongness of such an act of wilful cruelty, in that her experience of the act includes her perceptual awareness of moral value (we will assume that the act is cruel, and that the dog has not just attacked the children, so it is not a case of self-defence). She therefore contends that her psychological state at that moment is fully specifiable as a belief state about the way the world is. This belief state is referred to by philosophers as a cognitive state. (I shall discuss the precise nature of any 'perception' that might be involved here in chapters 3 and 5).

The non-realist viewing the same act also forms some beliefs about the way the world is; that there are children and a dog, the dog is limping and the children are throwing stones at the dog. However, the non-realist denies that she can see any moral value in the act, since moral value for her is not part of the fabric of the world. The non-realist claims that she appears to see the wrongness of such an act of wilful cruelty because the facts in the case (the perception of children kicking a dog) has elicited in her a subjective response; an attitude that what she is seeing is wrong, and to say that she saw the wrongness of the act is to express that attitude. Philosophers refer to this attitude as a non-cognitive state. For non-realism, moral perceptions are explained in terms of projected attitudes, feelings, emotions, and desires etc. (the 'projectivism' referred to earlier) referred to as non-cognitive states. It is usual for non-realists to argue that cognitive states provide no motivational force, in that they are inert, being merely passive states, i.e. beliefs about the way the world is. A non-cognitive state such as a desire, however, can be said to be an active state, and thereby motivational. Therefore, both a desire and a

belief are needed to explain action. (This topic is briefly discussed at 1.8. and in more detail at 4.2.iii and again at 5.8).

The non-realist has to be careful about speaking of seeing the act of kicking an injured dog as cruel. Cruelty is a 'thick' moral concept, and therefore descriptively rich; a cruel act is wrong De-dicto; it is part of the very meaning of the concept 'cruel' that it is a wrongful act: the meaning of cruel is fixed in this way. Therefore the non-realist must deny being able to see a cruel act as cruel, because to see something as cruel is to see it as wrong. (Our languages have two very different sorts of ethical concepts, abstract 'thin' ethical concepts such as 'good' and 'right' and the more descriptive 'thick' ones, such as 'inconsiderate' and 'cruel', according to Bernard Williams and others. These concepts are discussed at chapter 2.6 and at 5.4.ii and 5.8).[15] Although strikingly counter-intuitive, the cruelty constitutes, for the non-realist, part of her attitude to the act under contemplation and cannot be said to exist in the act itself. There is a strange *artificiality* in the non-realist insistence that we cannot see an act of wilful cruelty as cruel. This artificiality will become apparent in chapter 2 (2.6) in the discussion of the fact/value gap and at 5.7 when discussing aspect-blindness.

A problem for both realist and non-realist positions, as I see it, is to explain and justify both the phenomenology and the metaphysics of ordinary moral experience. Recent attempts to explain the phenomenology by both realist and non-realist will be discussed in detail in chapter 3 (3.2) on the analogy with colour, which will help to bring into focus the main issues, before I explain and criticise both the phenomenology and metaphysics of Quasi-realism (4.4-4.7) and offer my own model of moral realism, (chapter 5) based on an analogy with aspect perception. I have chosen these two contraries; moral realism and moral non-realism, to define the scope of the debate. It has been argued that they could both be wrong.[16] (As contraries, of

course, they cannot both be right). I believe this argument to be mistaken, because, as I shall show in this thesis, moral realism is the position most able to fully explain and justify the facts of ordinary moral experience as they are presented phenomenologically, and able to give a descriptively adequate account of the assertoric nature of moral discourse. The main purpose of this chapter is expository; I wish to outline, and give reasons for, my methodology, and `situate` myself in the ongoing debate.

One of the first concerns for the moral realist is an ontological question; what kind of entities are values? Another is epistemological; how are we to have knowledge of them? These two central issues are discussed in chapter 2 when dealing with moral non-realism, given full exposition in chapter 3 on the analogy with secondary properties and dealt with in chapter 5 on the analogy with aspect perception.

1.4. The Error Theory.

The most polemical attack on realism along these lines, comes from J.L.Mackie in his book Ethics, Inventing Right and Wrong and comes in four parts, the argument from the relativity of moral values, the argument from economy, the argument from `queerness`, and the `no difference` argument.

The `no difference` thesis is the argument that, despite the obvious differences in ontology, non-cognitivism takes away nothing we should object to having taken away in ethics. I shall argue that this is mistaken.

The argument from economy can be stated simply as the Occam's Razor argument, that one should not multiply entities unnecessarily. To put it another way, entities should not be postulated that explanations do not need. Since science can give a full description of reality without reference to moral properties, a universe that includes moral properties should not be admitted. In my defence of moral realism I shall show this to be a false economy.

The argument from 'queerness', put simply, is that moral values, should we give them a real existence, would have to be very metaphysically 'queer' entities indeed; unlike anything else in the universe. Mackie cites Plato's world of Forms as a stark example of this.[17] I shall go on to show that Mackie is mistaken in thinking that a naive consciousness must view moral values as primary qualities, and that his position corresponds to what has come to be called the Absolute conception of reality. This position, where values imprint themselves on a pure, passive witness, who has no say in the matter, I shall argue to be simply wrong. I shall discuss this Absolute conception of reality in greater detail in chapter 3.3 on the analogy with secondary properties, and this, along with arguments from McDowell and Lovibond in chapter 5.2, will show Mackie's conception of realism to be not merely false, but unintelligible.

The Absolute conception of reality (see 3.3) is that where we imagine our peculiar point of view as missing. This is criticised by John McDowell, Sabina Lovibond and Thomas Nagel as being 'The view from nowhere'. Nagel's view is that if we take away our peculiar point of view in an attempt to arrive at a purely objective view of reality, we will have excluded the only possible reference point we have, in that when looking at reality, something must necessarily be left behind the lens. In trying to see what can be included

in a true description of reality, it is unwise to leave out the only thing capable of performing such a task; the very thing doing the seeing.

> However often we may try to step outside of ourselves, something will have to stay behind the lens, something in us will determine the resulting picture, and this will give grounds for doubt that we are really getting closer to reality.[18]

To exclude minds from the Absolute viewpoint is to leave us with no viewpoint at all; a viewpoint that excludes ourselves is a view from nowhere. To deny that everything presented to consciousness deserves to be included in a description of reality is to deny what Nagel and others have called 'the manifest image'. This manifest image includes subjective properties such as colours, smells, sounds, tastes, etc., qualities counted in a full description of reality despite their link with human receptive mechanisms, a link which counts against them in any scientifically 'objective' ontology.[19] Someone who adopts the strategy of excluding properties that have a link with experiencing subjects, insisting that such a link puts the properties so experienced on the 'appearance' side of appearance and reality, is not being scientific, but rather has fallen victim to 'scientism', which is the view that whatever does not feature in a scientific description of reality must not really exist. Chapter 3 will argue that the Absolute conception is too *impoverished* a conception to cope with both colour and moral properties.[20] To deny reality to those real properties which are also subjective properties is thus to be scientistic rather than scientific, i.e. it is to regard science as the only possible standard of reality.

A more pertinent challenge by Mackie to the moral realist is to provide a satisfactory explanation of how we can have moral knowledge of these metaphysically `queer' values, if not by some mysterious faculty of `moral intuition'. This thesis will show, however, that a realist model of moral knowledge is possible, and fully able to justify the phenomenology and metaphysics of ordinary moral experience, and is able to give a descriptively adequate account of the assertoric nature of our moral judgements. Mackie challenges the realist to justify moral beliefs which are beliefs about an independently existing world of facts but which at the same time have an internal connection with reasons for action. Richard Norman has recently argued that

> A moral realism which deserves the name would, it seems to me, have to meet Mackie's challenge head on.[21]

I intend to do just that in chapter 5 on the topic of aspect perception. It is the above challenge that poses, I suggest, Mackie's biggest challenge for moral realism. I intend to offer a non--Platonist account of moral realism, which will be an anti-projectivist account of moral values as aspects of the manifest image. This will be broadly Aristotelian, in that it will argue for moral truths having to be viewed within a social context rather than as eternal truths. I wish to argue that morality and moral experience can be explained without either taking values to be a kind of Platonic entity or goodness to be a non-natural property. I propose to do this in part by arguing against the `downgrading' of appearance by philosophers influenced by Mackie's picture of realism.

1.5. Quasi-realism

I believe the greatest challenge to moral realism to come from Quasi-realism. Quasi realism is the project of explaining and justifying our ordinary moral experience without admitting the existence of moral values. Quasi-realism forms the greatest challenge to moral realism because, should it prove successful, it is claimed that someone who adopts Quasi-realism can say everything that the realist can minus the realist's specific ontological commitments. This is achieved by a construction of moral truth. The justification of moral beliefs is a matter of their mutual coherence. Since morality for the non-cognitivist is a matter of forming attitudes, Quasi-realism relies on a notion of a best possible set of attitudes. A full exposition and critique of Quasi-realism will be provided in chapter 4. Moral realism and Quasi-realism share assumptions concerning the need to regard moral judgement as capable of being right or wrong without diagnosing extensive error in moral practice, or in ordinary thinking about that practice.[22] The upshot of Quasi-realism is that there is no need to admit to the existence of moral values in explaining our ordinary moral experience, since it can claim a prima facie realism that is most fully able to explain and justify the facts of ordinary moral experience as they are presented phenomenologically. It is argued by Blackburn, who coined the term 'Quasi-realism', that it is able to best explain and justify our everyday common moral experience and practice without *revising* that practice, due to its being able to 'capture' the realistic seeming features of our moral thought. In claiming to be able to do this, Quasi-realism seeks to diffuse the argument I mentioned earlier; namely that a projective theory cannot fully account for the way we think and talk morally. In arguing against this claim, I shall present the case for a non-Platonist moral realism as the thesis that is most fully able to explain and justify both the

phenomenology and assertoric nature of our ordinary common moral experience.

I have also mentioned the claim by the modern non-realist that there is no need to admit to the existence of moral values in order to explain our ordinary moral experience. This leads to the suggestion that since non-realism can account for the assertoric nature of moral judgements, it will make *no difference* to our moral lives whether one is realist or non-realist (the 'no-difference' thesis). However, it does seem intuitively to be the case that all action, (especially heroic action), has ethical objectivity as a tacit presupposition, even for the projectivist, in something like the form of a claim that this action really is worth it, which is meant as an objective claim because, in some sense, there is meant to be more to its truth than the mere fact that I believe it. This is bound to be eroded by Quasi-realism's claim to be able to account for such realist presuppositions by imitating all the realist can say. And then what will guarantee, should Quasi-realism prove successful, that this will not lead, directly or indirectly, to practical *accidie*? As someone recently engaged to be married, I am acutely aware that the corresponding objectivity in the case of being in love, is the belief that the beloved is <u>worth</u> or <u>merits</u> my passion. Quasi-realism affirms this belief at the practical level, whilst rejecting it at the level of theory. This is because the Quasi-realist employs the apparently fact-stating, realist grammar of moral vocabulary without diagnosing error, whilst denying the (realist) status which that vocabulary seems to imply. Blackburn, anticipating a realist objection, says that the Quasi-realist is charged with having schizoid attitudes to his own moral commitments. Less polemically he explains the objection as that of the Quasi-realist using moral grammar in its (allegedly) realist way but although practicing as if there are moral values, real objections, mind-independent moral facts etc., saying that there are none really; they are a fiction, or useful,

regulative myth: hence forget them. One might protest that even if one carries on, after diagnosing error, using the same words, one is doing something very different from what one took oneself to be doing before, i.e. `shmoralising' rather than moralising. Quasi-realism responds by denying that coming to believe that projectivism is true rationally compels taking a different attitude toward one's moral commitments. The pragmatic defence of moral grammar is obviously relevant to this denial; the non-realist needs to show how, if moral values are just my attitudes, they are not *baseless* attitudes, i.e. they do not rest on nothing. Both realist and Quasi-realist recognise the need to prevent the corrosion of our moral confidence and competence by moral scepticism. Reflective human beings really *do* think that there is more than an unsophisticated projective theory allows to the difference between the consistent Nazi and the consistent Liberal: one of them seems *really* right and the other *really* wrong, in a sense which is validated by something more than our attitudes. If this should turn out not to be the case, then we could be forgiven for thinking that that really is a profoundly disturbing sceptical conclusion. Fortunately, this is not a problem faced by the realist. The non-Platonist moral realism I shall ultimately defend has the advantage of having no *disassociation* between theory and practice, thus making our theoretical self available to our practical self.

1.6. The Argument for Non-Platonist Realism.

The argument for my version of a non--Platonist moral realism comes in two parts, one negative and one positive.

Negatively, I shall show Quasi-realism to be incapable of adequately explaining the phenomenology with its prima facie claim to realism. I shall also argue that metaphysically, quasi-realism ultimately fails to `capture' certain features of our moral thought and talk. Although this part of my argument is directed specifically against the (allegedly) non--revisionist variety of moral non-realism taken together with the assumptions which the realist and Quasi-realist share, this strengthens rather than weakens the realist's objections to non-realism *per se*. By non-revisionist, I am referring to those shared assumptions concerning the need to regard moral judgement as a bivalent (able to be right or wrong) practice without diagnosing extensive error in that practice, or in ordinary thinking about that practice, and specifically the claim of Quasi-realism to be able to keep apart our theoretical and practical selves in explaining moral phenomenology and practice without having to revise that practice.

Whilst the negative aspect of the argument gives an added incentive for pursuing a realist theory to explain morality, (i.e. Quasi-realism will be shown to be unworkable so some other theory must prove itself as best able to explain morality) the defence of realism requires a positive argument as well. Of particular importance in this respect is the need to show how realism can explain those features of ordinary moral experience which traditionally have been the most problematic for realists and which have, as a result, helped to motivate non-realism. Amongst these features we should include such things as: the role of emotion and feeling in our moral lives; the explanation of

behaviour and the fact that the failure to act well, or the failure to make appropriate moral judgements, is not a purely rational failing, like self-contradiction, but a failure of character; the fact that moral truths have to be viewed within a social context rather than as eternal truths; and the need to explain morality and moral experience without either taking values to be a kind of Platonic entity or taking goodness to be a non-natural property.

1.7. Summary.

This introduction, as chapter 1, has so far shown why research into moral realism is important, i.e. the need to find out which theory is true, and whether it makes a difference if moral-realism is true, claiming that it safeguards those things that non-realism threatens. I have given reasons for my methodology, and briefly introduced the topics, issues, questions, etc. that will receive greater clarification in forthcoming chapters. I shall now outline the character of those chapters, which will give the reader a more specific 'map' of the thesis.

1.7.i. Outline Of Chapter 2.

This chapter will critically analyse the non-realist arguments against the need to accept moral values realistically construed as the best explanation of our common moral perception. Hume argued that we only appear to see the moral worth of an act because we 'project' our sentiment on to the object that we are contemplating. I shall go over these ideas in depth in the section on the influence of Hume, (2.2) both in the case of aesthetic properties and moral values. Put simply, the idea is that we receive a petition from the world, (say, some feature the object under our gaze has, which we are so disposed to react to) which elicits a subjective response which we somehow 'project' back on to the world and read off as if it were an objective reality. In doing this we project our responses to the world back on to it, thereby viewing a secondary property in a way more appropriate for viewing a primary one. This does not mean that we somehow mistakenly project our sentiments, because the internal response is an integral part of the experience. Hume does not suggest that all our moral judgements are in error, only that we should realise that when viewing a wrongful act, the wrongness owes its existence to ourselves; the moral value forms part of our subjective response to the world and in no way forms part of the world to which it is a response. David Carr has commented recently that Hume's meta-ethical scepticism would appear to be

> Simply a logical consequence of the sort of gross distortions which an Empiricist 'passive spectator' epistemology inherits from basically Cartesian roots.[23]

David Hume expresses this scepticism in a now classical statement:

> Take any action allow'd to be vicious; wilful murder, for instance. Examine it in all its lights and see if you can find that matter of fact or real existence, which you call <u>vice</u>.

The vice escapes you because

> You can never find it till you turn your reflection into your own breast, and find a sentiment of disapprobation, which arises in you, toward the action.[24]

Jonathan Dancy has recently offered an illuminating mimicry:

> Take any object allow'd to be a table: This one, for instance. Examine it in all its lights, and see if you can find that matter of fact, or real existence, which you call *its being a table*. In which-ever way you take it; you find only certain shapes, sizes, textures, and colours of its component parts. There is no other matter of fact in the case. Its being a table entirely escapes you, so long as you consider the object. You can never find it, till you turn your reflection into your own breast, and find there a certain sentiment of respect-for-tableness, which arises in you, towards this object.[25]

Dancy contends that Hume's argument is an abuse of resultance.[26] Resultance is the way in which one property of an object is said to exist 'in virtue of' another or some others, and may itself be a property from which (probably with the help of others) a further property results. For example, 'squareness' is a property of a thing in virtue of its possession of some other properties; such as the relative lengths and number of its sides, and the angles at which they subtend each other.[27] A dangerous cliff is dangerous because of its other properties, such as its steepness and unstable surface.

Because he asks us to look for the real existence of vice in a case of wilful murder, as if the vice is another property by the side of those properties from which it results, Hume is asking us to look in the wrong place. Then, because we find no such property there, Hume declares it not to exist. But the viciousness is not another property by the side of those properties from which it results; rather, they *are* that viciousness there, according to the theory of resultance. Hume is insisting that there be a *separate* metaphysical property of vice, and then announces, quite rightly, that we cannot discern such a property. But this is to ignore the fact that moral properties are themselves *resultant*.

It is important not to confuse resultance with the theory of supervenience, which I shall introduce and elucidate in chapter 4 at 4.2.ii. There is an important way in which supervenience differs from resultance. In general, supervenience holds between sets of properties. These properties we can call A and B. B-properties non-causally necessitate A-properties such that no object or event possessing an A-property can change in respect of that property without having changed in respect of its B-properties. No two objects or events can possess identical B-properties and differ in respect of any A-property. Calling B-properties 'base properties' and A-properties

'supervening properties'; base properties fix supervening properties but not vice versa. The important way in which supervenience differs from resultance is that supervenience, unlike resultance, is not concerned with the particular case. When we think in general terms, about a relationship between classes of properties, rather than whatever members of those classes happen to be present in the case before us, we are most likely thinking of supervenience, whereas when we think of particular cases we are almost certainly thinking about resultance.[28] What we get out of supervenience is the truth that any object exactly similar to this one in natural respects must share the moral properties that the first one has. As the point is usually put, it is a conceptual truth that the moral supervenes on the natural; there can be no moral difference without a difference in naturalistic features. This can seem trivially true, that it is impossible for any two objects to share all their natural properties and not share their moral properties. The similarity here is that moral properties cannot exist on their own, but must result from some other (probably natural) properties. So in a way, we get to supervenience *from* resultance. What we also get out of this argument is the truism that moral values can only result from a moral action. This may seem so obvious as to be not worthy of mentioning, but as shall become clear in chapter 2.4, it is important to R. M. Hare's version of the 'no difference' thesis, specifically that no-one would notice if moral values vanished from the world.

So chapter 2 will outline the theory of moral non-realism, beginning with the 'projective' theory of the most influential historical non-realist-David Hume. After discussing Hume's formulation of what has come to be called 'projectivism' first of all for aesthetic value and then in the case of moral value, (2.2.i) I will try to best establish what the theory entails before going on to criticise it (2.2.iii-.iV). I shall also examine and criticise a possible 'mechanism' for projection, arising out of Hume's explanation of causation, which can be seen as a first formulation of a projective theory (2.3). I shall claim that a projective theory is hopeless to explain our experience of morality. I shall explain in chapter 4 how Quasi-realism is best understood as an argument against this argument against projectivism, in that Quasi-realism is an attempt to bring projectivism back into line with our moral thought and talk.

I then intend to move the discussion in chapter 2 on to modern non-realism, by discussing J.L. Mackie's views on meta-ethics (2.5). A small watershed in modern philosophy was reached with the publication of his Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong. Mackie's 'error theory' is non-realist in that it denies the existence of moral values, but it is interestingly not a form of non-cognitivism since its exponent argues that moral utterances are all false. Rather than not being indicative at all, as the non-cognitivists think, the error theorists see moral utterances as trying to refer to things that do not exist, with the consequence that anyone who makes a moral judgement is thereby saying something false, whatever the judgement may be. Hence the name: the error theory. Also discussed will be Mackie's four objections to moral realism referred to earlier. These arguments centre on Mackie's argument that realism entails the perception of a primary property. This argument will be criticised in chapter 3. (3.2.iii).

Mackie's essentially 'no-difference' argument, that meta-ethical questions of moral objectivity are sharply distinct from first-order ethical issues, and that answers to the two sorts of question are quite independent, therefore someone could be a second-order moral sceptic without being a first-order one, or again the other way round, will also be criticised (2.5.iii). Quasi-realism, discussed in chapter 4, also shares this assumption.

1.7.ii. Outline Of Chapter 3

This chapter follows on from both sides' reaction to Mackie's ideas, with both realism and non-realism having to establish a theory that squares better with our common experience of the phenomenology of ordinary moral awareness. This has seen the development of the analogy with secondary properties, being, for the non-realist, the disposition to elicit a subjective state which is then 'projected' back onto the world, or, on the other hand, the explanation favoured by the realist; an awareness of a property that is said to be there anyway, awaiting our experience of it. The analogy argues against Mackie's idea that we must take moral value experience as experience of a primary property, making way for a richer conception of reality that allows moral values, as secondary properties, to be included in a description of that reality. Although the argument in chapter 2 is against the theory of projectivism which underpins the non-realist analogy with colour, the analogy itself has proven useful: in discussing the realist analogy, I shall show that, qua reality, 'secondary' does not mean 'second class' i.e. not worthy of inclusion in a full description of what counts as real. I shall examine an analogy with secondary qualities that might suggest values to be subjective properties. This analogy suggests that since a secondary property in the case of say, colour, can be explained as a disposition of an object to produce experiences in us,

then we might posit moral value as existing in the world as a disposition to produce an experience in us.

Value, for the non-realist, like colour, is interwoven into the fabric of our experience of the world, but that part of our experience does not accurately represent anything *in* the world. We create both colour and value, the non-realist insists, as we perceive the world. We project our sentiments onto the object, making the internal response an integral part of the experience. So the non-realist remains a non-realist about moral properties, but now she does not have to be specifically an *anti-real*ist, in that she can agree that our experience of the world is suffused with value, while insisting that value is not to be thought of as a genuine feature of the world. Rather we contribute the value. So the theory has it that if I say an object is red, I do not mean that it looks red only to me, I mean it looks red to all people whose sensory capacities are the right sort. Taking the moral case, `rightness` will be similarly shared by people who are making their judgements in suitable circumstances and who are in an appropriate state. This is a model of moral experience utilising Locke's distinction between primary and secondary properties. Both realist and non-realist may adopt it. The Lockean realist, however, identifies secondary qualities as "Powers to produce various sensations in us" as Locke also insisted.[29] By taking Locke's insistence that secondary qualities are powers to produce various sensations in us, one of the key people in the debate, the moral realist Jonathan Dancy, has argued that the moral property is a disposition and therefore moral quality experience presents itself as perceptual awareness of properties genuinely possessed by the object we are confronted with. I discuss Dancy's `dispositional` thesis in chapter 3. (3.3.ii). Dancy insists that his is a stronger conception of moral realism than the conception offered by John McDowell. Stronger, because by recognising what he calls the `inherent dispositionality` of moral properties, the realist can insist that such a property is in the object, and therefore exists

independently of perceiving minds, unlike the weaker conception favoured by McDowell which makes us aware of the effects of the disposition, and therefore depends more on a human viewpoint, making both colour and moral values emergent properties. Both the realist who accepts the weaker conception and the realist who prefers the stronger, can see no objection to taking the appearance of 'redness' at face value.

> An object's being such as to look red is independent of its actually looking red to anyone on any particular occasion; so notwithstanding the conceptual connection between being red and being experienced as red, an experience of something as red can count as a case of being presented with a property that is there anyway-there independently of the experience itself.[30]

Quite different from the Lockean realist is the naive realist. A naive realist would claim that colour can be seen directly; a red pillbox simply is red, therefore 'red' can be directly perceived. Such naive realism can be argued for in the case of moral value; values are directly perceived; the wrongness of an act of wilful murder is simply there and is directly perceived by the observer.

Chapter 3, then, will bring out what is interesting about the analogy with secondary properties, using a model of moral realism based on arguments presented by John McDowell and Colin McGinn, recently given greater depth by Jonathan Dancy in his book Moral Reasons. Although ultimately rejecting the secondary property analogy, the discussion will be seen to bring into focus the key issues of the debate. (3.2.i).

While it is my intention to present the case for a non--Platonist realism, I have mentioned, on occasion, certain historical and modern transcendentalists, such as Iris Murdoch. For while I should like to acknowledge Iris Murdoch's recommendation of a return to Platonic images of virtue,[31] because the recommendation is independent of accepting values as Platonic entities, it involves no inconsistency in my pursuing a non -Platonist version of moral realism.

1.7.iii. Outline Of Chapter 4.

Chapter 4 is on the topic of Quasi-realism. Its inventor, Simon Blackburn, also proposes versions of arguments from 'queerness' (see 4.2) and 'economy' (4.2.i) in support of a projective theory of value, as well as a 'no-difference' argument that Quasi- realism can account for the phenomenology and metaphysics of our everyday moral experience without diagnosing error. I argue that the project of Quasi-realism ultimately fails. I have identified Quasi-realism as the greatest challenge to my version of realism on two counts, because other objections will prove to be weak, and because of the shared assumptions of realism and Quasi-realism concerning ordinary moral thought and practice. I shall endeavour to prove Quasi-realism to be incapable of justifying that thought and practice. I shall challenge its claim to be able to 'capture' key features of our moral thought and talk, thereby revealing it to be unworkable. Quasi realism, like the new 'neo-realisms' (see 1.8), which try to supply morality with a rational basis giving it the means to justify particular moral opinions whilst denying the realist ontology, seem to me to be 'pseudo-scientific' in their willingness to take as a virtue of moral theories their success in being able to explain and justify morality in terms of objective, empirical properties. In so doing they end up

being not merely non-realist but also unrealistic. For example we find Blackburn stating:

> I myself think that there is precious little surprising left about morality: its Meta-theory seems to me to be pretty exhaustively understood. The difficulty is enabling people to appreciate it.[32]

Such accounts as this are, as Iris Murdoch so rightly says, at one and the same time both unambitious and optimistic.[33] As a counter to this, I wish in this thesis to argue for moral realism as the theory best placed to explain and justify the phenomenology and metaphysics of our common moral experience, while recognising that a realistic account of our moral experience is one that is necessarily *complex*.

1.7.iV. Outline Of Chapter 5.

Chapter 5 is my most original contribution to the debate, an analogy with aspects. Moral values, argued for in previous chapters as warranting inclusion in a full description of reality as neither metaphysically 'queer' or unnecessary, or requiring a special faculty of moral intuition, will be argued to be best understood in terms of 'aspects', and our awareness of them as analogous to the sort of perceptual experience of aspects discussed by Wittgenstein in his Philosophical Investigations. I believe the analogy with colour, although useful, to not be the full story. In discussing aspect perception, it will become clear that we may only call values 'subjective', because our understanding of morality is an understanding which we have as human beings, i.e. from a particular, subjective, standpoint rather than the 'objective' 'Absolute' standpoint. It is my contention that only by taking values as forming part of the fabric of the world by being modal properties

rather than substantial entities can we explain how morality is experienced as it is, and how that experience contributes to the explanation of moral behaviour (modal properties are discussed in chapter 4, at 4.2.ii). A non-realist like Mackie supposes that realism must involve moral value to be a primary quality. I shall argue that moral values are aspects, and as such they are not in need of such a substantive explanation. Rather, as moral aspects, they are correctly predicated of people, objects, situations and events. I shall argue that moral value perception has a necessary link with the will, and it is here, because of a link with concept mastery, that Mackie's challenge to the realist to provide a justification of moral beliefs which are beliefs about an independently existing world of facts but which at the same time have an internal connection with reasons for action, will be met.

The moral realism I wish ultimately to defend is a form of moral cognitivism. This moral cognitivism is an anti-projectivist , non-Platonist account of the discernment of moral facts as a case of aspect perception. This moral realism is not transcendent. The idea that we can get at Moral Facts in themselves, is, I shall argue, unintelligible, (see 5.2) simply because they form part of our institutions and our culture as well as our personal beliefs. Our perceptions, practices, and judgements as moral decision-makers are embedded in, and are an outcome of, these same institutions and social structures. This is immanentist realism. Like rule-following and language games, what we take to be valuable, and thus what we take to be a moral fact, changes because of cultural, historical, and environmental changes, and because our own personal views change too, as a consequence of a corresponding change in our own perceptions. Chapter 4 will explain how moral value judgements differ from judgements about comedy or niceness, in that the former requires 'thick' truth, whilst the truth of a 'seeing-in' judgement is valid if judged on 'thin' criteria. Chapter 5 will show aesthetic and moral values to have more differences, in that perception of the former is

40

a case of `seeing-in' or `reading in', whilst the latter is a case of `seeing-as' or aspect-perception.

1.8. Neo-Realisms.

At this point it will be worthwhile to note that the realist / non-realist debate has moved on at quite a pace. Realism is now the `buzzword' and ever more sophisticated arguments have emerged from philosophers defending realist or non-realist systems. The subject has expanded so much that it is a task to exactly identify the position of the major players. For example, I view positions as Quasi-realist if they seek to supply morality with a rational basis giving it the means to justify particular moral opinions whilst denying the realist ontology. Yet these may be systems that do not closely resemble Blackburn's exact position. A problem has arisen in that now several of these systems have emerged, claiming to have done just that, with the authors calling themselves, explicitly, realists. I shall now briefly outline some of the most prominent systems (I shall not examine or criticise them in any great detail) before saying why they fail to fully capture what I take realism to necessarily involve, i.e. a realist commitment to positing moral features of situations which are the objects of moral awareness or perception (chapters 3 and 5 will discuss exactly what I mean by perceptual awareness).

The most impressive of these recent arguments is contained in David O. Brink's book Moral Realism and The Foundation of Ethics. This is, like Blackburn's position, a coherentist system; that is the justification of moral beliefs is a matter of their mutual coherence. It differs from Quasi-realism in that it rejects the idea that the action guiding force of moral judgements is internal to morality; once an agent has established her moral beliefs, it remains, on Brink's account, a further question what she is motivated to do or what she has reason to do.

I cannot regard Brink's system as fully deserving the term 'moral realism'. It seems to me to be a brand of quasi-realism, because, as with Quasi-realism, his justification of moral beliefs is a matter of their mutual coherence, and, on this account, there is no need to posit any foundational moral features of situations which are the objects of any moral awareness or perception.

Consider now another version calling itself 'moral realism'. This is the system formulated by Michael Smith.[34] His system offers moral judgements as idealised desires, the desires we would have if we were, say, 'cool, calm and collected', since it is such idealised desires, he maintains, that constitute authentic reasons for action. This is an 'interrnalist' realism.

Internalism is a theory of action that accepts the difference between beliefs and desires in the way I mentioned briefly at 1.3, that reasons for action are a combination of factual beliefs and desires for certain states of affairs. Its roots are to be found in Hume.[35] I shall examine this idea in greater depth in chapter 4.2.iii and 5.8. For example, attributing to someone a desire to quench her thirst and a belief that this can most easily be done by going to the kitchen to get a drink of water, we can explain why she is walking toward the kitchen. Someone who accepts the split between beliefs and desires will insist that a belief is a cognitive state, while a desire is a non-cognitive state. Cognitive states of mind on this model are those which involve a person's possession of a piece of information (true or, as the case may be, false): such things as belief, awareness, expectation, certainty, knowledge, whilst non-cognitive or affective states of mind are neither true nor false but consist in an attitude of pursuit or avoidance: such things as purpose, intention, desire, volition. Some mental states, of course, are both affective and cognitive: hope and fear, for instance, involve both an expectation of a prospective state of affairs and a judgement of the state of affairs as good or evil. Cognitive states can be described as beliefs about the way the world is. On the belief/desire model they can be said to provide no motivational force, in that they are inert, being merely passive states. A non-cognitive state such as a desire, however, can be said to be motivational. In the above example of someone having the desire to quench her thirst, both a desire and a belief are needed to explain action. It has been usual for non-cognitivists to call upon a 'hydraulic metaphor' here, in that the mind is an arena where various forces or pressures (desires) get channeled (via beliefs) and ultimately combine together to produce a resultant force or pressure (an action). Someone influenced by such a model of human motivation may insist that beliefs move us to action only if they are relevant to the satisfaction of a passion. We may say that desires without beliefs are blind, whilst beliefs without desires are inert. It has been suggested that beliefs and desires have different directions of 'fit'[36] in that

beliefs fit the way the world is, while desires try to make the world fit them. Let me state for now that in my defence of moral realism I shall be able to reject some of the terms of the debate, so it is not necessary here to fully discuss the merits of 'internalist' or 'externalist' theories of moral action. . I shall call my version of moral realism 'internalist' since it will be shown that moral judgement is something distinct both from Humean beliefs and Humean desires, though incorporating aspects of both and having both a cognitive and a motivational dimension. (See 5.8). I shall show in chapter 5 how moral aspect-perception can account for Mackie's challenge to the realist to account for moral value as both a feature of the external world and having a necessary link with the will. This will be accounted for in two senses: one as aspect-seeing, the other as motivating action.

Smith's idealised desires claim to constitute moral realism depending on whether there turns out to be convergence in such desires. This is something that we can only find out by experience. If, over time, we discover that moral argument tends to bring out such convergence, then moral realism will be defensible. This theory seems to me to be no more than a kind of inter-subjectivism. Smith sees no reason to postulate any ontology of moral values. Surely if there are objective moral facts, as these systems are trying to establish and justify, then such facts exist whether or not we turn out to converge on them. These new systems claim to be realist, yet seem to me more 'Quasi realist'. Since their respective authors would presumably reject that title, perhaps their position can be termed 'neo-realist'. Richard Norman has recently criticised them as running scared of arguing for what they see as making implausibly extravagant ontological claims; they eschew such claims, and, in doing so, offer systems that hardly deserve the title moral realist at all.[37]

Just to emphasise how 'muddy' the waters have become to date, consider the resemblance to quasi-realism of Thomas D. Perry's position in Moral Reasoning and Truth. Perry tries to show how moral statements can be justified without qualifying them as true or false. This resembles Quasi-realism in that he is trying to explain and justify moral statements. He even argues that moral statements can be said to be true or false at one level whereas at another, higher, level they are to be thought of as justifiable or unjustifiable but not as true or false. This has obvious parallels with what will be shown in chapter 4 as Blackburn's distinction between the level of practice and the explanatory level of theory.

Besides other systems of a realist nature, (for example, Mark Platts, Moral Realities: An Essay In Philosophical Psychology) there are increasing numbers of non-cognitivist systems now on offer. These are non-realist in that they do not admit that moral values form part of the fabric of the world. Neo-realisms could claim to be cognitivist by allegedly being able to justify the phenomenology of our ordinary moral experience and practice without diagnosing error in that practice. In this way such systems claim objectivity for value judgements. (Quasi-realism for example could be characterised as the view that the truth conditions of moral commitments are given by the existence or non--existence of the attitude expressed by any particular commitment in a best possible set of attitudes.) However, there is no attempt at prima facie realism in explaining moral experience in Allan Gibbard's book Wise Choices, Apt Feelings: A Theory Of Normative Judgement. He concentrates on what he says are three meta-normative projects of enduring interest: to understand what makes judgements about how to live normative, to explain why we make such judgements in the first place, and to account for the central role that emotions play in them, particularly as they bear on moral questions. Someone who believes in normative facts may claim for example

that moral judgements about how to live and associated emotions may represent normative facts. For example, guilt may be thought to represent the fact of having done something wrong.[38]

Non-cognitivists may reject approaches to these projects which construe our emotions and judgements about how to live as representations of normative facts, preferring to view judgements about how to live and associated emotions (such as guilt and resentment) as being without truth value and arising from psychological mechanisms which have the specific biological function of promoting social co-ordination; they function not to represent the world, but to co-ordinate our activities in the world. Gibbard endeavours to accomplish all three normative projects within a naturalistic, normatively non-realist world view: there are only natural facts, such as those revealed in the natural and social sciences, and there are no normative facts. (natural or otherwise).

This is all impressively argued. But I shall not review these positions in any great detail. None of them are particularly relevant to my method of pursuing a full-blooded realism, since none see the need to explain our perceptual awareness of values by offering any model for the reality of such values. For example, take Brink's position. If his position is a realist one, then Richard Norman has pointed out that by the same token we could be realist about the rules of football.

The rules of football make up a self-contained consistent system. Within the system there are ways of justifying particular beliefs, in terms of their coherence with the system. And the judgements made within the system have practical implications, but only for those who are already committed to playing football in accordance with the rules. Unproblematically, someone's 'being offside' or 'scoring a goal' are real features of the world, but I do not see this as having any special ontological implications. We do not need any special ontology of footballing properties or footballing facts. The only ontological commitment required is a commitment to the existence of human beings and their social institutions and practices. Perhaps this does raise questions about the ontology of the social world, but these are ontological questions of a more general kind.[39]

So Brink does not go far enough for Norman. Brink's system, Norman says, would not imply any special ontology; if we do not need any special 'footballing realism' to account for the possibility of justified beliefs which are action-guiding for those who play football, then by the same token Brink's coherentist and externalist position does not amount to a full-blooded moral realism. Richard Norman's worry is that Brink's system involves no more than inter-subjectivity. I do not think it is necessarily a worry that Brink's system seems to involve no specific ontological claims, however. We can be realist about the rules of football. Why shouldn't we be? After all, we don't just happen to converge on the rules of football; they are established and then recognised and acted upon. I can infer from the rulebook that the player was offside. If a player gets offside, then the reaction from the crowd will be different from that of the referee; the referee will blow his whistle. All parties will be reacting with different shades of behaviour to a real aspect of the event. The social construction of reality is one way of accounting for this

subjective perspective. We cannot, as I shall later argue, get at Moral Facts in themselves, simply because they form part of our institutions and our culture as well as our personal beliefs. Our perceptions, practices, and judgements as moral decision-makers are embedded in, and are an outcome of, these same institutions and social structures. This will become apparent in my defence of moral objectivity using arguments presented by Sabina Lovibond and John McDowell in chapter 5.2. What I take issue with about Brink's neo-realism is not so much the lack of a specific realist ontology, but rather its explanation of moral objectivity as coherence of objective preference. Realism, it seems to me, needs to affirm that moral statements can be true or false, for objectivity consists for the realist in the fact of the matter- not just in expressions of preference or dislike. I previously noted Richard Norman's criticism of the neo-realists as running scared of arguing for what they see as making implausibly extravagant ontological claims, and in doing so their systems hardly deserve the title moral realist at all.[40] This suggests something like physical properties as the right sort of model for the moral features of a situation. However, in commenting on the analogy with secondary properties, Norman remarks that moral perception is not really like the perception of a simple property such as colour. Moral perception is rather to be understood as being "more like pattern recognition."[41] This suggests rather that moral features of situations are to be found in pattern, shape and structure other than in gross properties on the analogy with colour. This realisation should make us concentrate not on the existence of features within the sensory field, but on response to features of morally relevant situations; it is not so much a question of what is to be seen, as if there were an extra feature in one's sensory field that comes to be noticed, but the kind of response that one makes to situations, that indicates that one has noticed an aspect or that one sees something in a situation that

one had failed to notice before. This is the kind of realism that I shall ultimately defend. It relies on adopting a subtler model of moral perception, which avoids the Lockean struggle with `ghostly' properties (see chapter 3). The overall structure of values is one of shape and narrative. Our discerning these patterns, resulting in a new attitude to what we perceive, is what uncovers value. This will become apparent in my discussion of aspect perception in chapter 5. (5.4).

I have outlined the reasons for my methodology, one being to distance myself from the systems briefly outlined above, which I think of as being `neo-realist' in that they claim to be realist but run shy of arguing for the existence of moral value (I use the term `neo-realist' instead of `Quasi-realist' because Quasi-realism is the project of justifying the phenomenology by a construction of moral truth, i.e. it justifies only prima facie realism by being cognitive (in the sense of being an attitudenist objectivist) without being realist about moral value). Part of what I intend to do involves justifying the facts of ordinary moral experience as they are presented phenomenologically. I agree with McDowell that it is virtually irresistible to appeal to a perceptual model of moral awareness. A central reason for my methodology is that we ought to start with the understanding of morality given to ordinary moral consciousness because it is only as a last resort, i.e. if all attempts to explain ordinary moral thought and practice fail, that we should turn to an error theory. As McDowell has said, to offer such a theory when error-free explanations are available "seems a gratuitous slur on `common sense'".[42] This is one more reason to start with ordinary moral experience, and to insist that it is the perceptual model which suggests itself as that suited to explain the phenomenology of moral experience. Perceptual that is, is a broad sense, i.e. from the Latin percipiere meaning `to grasp' or `become aware of' since it is obvious that a blind person can be made morally aware of a situation. This

will go some way toward establishing moral realism as "the only progressive research programme in moral philosophy."[43]

[1] Wiggins, David. "Truth, Invention, And The Meaning Of Life" Proceedings Of The British Academy. 1976 Reprinted in his Needs, Values, Truth. (Oxford: Blackwell and The Aristotelian Society) 1987.

[2] Wiggins, David. "Truth, Invention, And The Meaning Of Life" Proceedings Of The British Academy. 1976. PP. 331-78.

[3] See Platts, Mark. "Moral Reality And The End Of Desire" in Reference, Truth And Reality. Mark Platts Ed. (Routledge, London) 1981.

4 Mark Platts asserts that "Desires frequently require an appropriate belief about the independent desirability of the object of desire". He goes on to argue, "Where the belief is absent so too is the desire and thus the satisfaction that might have come from getting what is desired". Should this indeed be the case, he argues that accepting moral realism may be essential if we are to enjoy the psychological benefits of commitment. Platts further suggests that for reflective beings like ourselves, giving up moral realism will result in our lives becoming "empty, brutish and short"(Ibid. Platts, Page 80). Certainly, Hume's identification of moral value or goodness with mere subjective approval blurs an important distinction between that towards which we are naturally inclined and that towards which we feel impelled by duty or conscience in the belief that it is right.

See Carr, David. "The Primacy of Virtues in Ethical Theory". Cogito winter 1995. Page 241.

[5] Op.Cit. Wiggins Page 341.

[6] Lovibond, Sabina. Realism and Imagination in Ethics (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota press) 1983. Page 9.

[7] This is not to suggest that ontological differences somehow do not matter.

[8] However, in a world containing only subjective value, the important issue is what importance to place on things. This goes against the feeling that we do not value something because we approve it, rather we approve it because it is valuable; we try to give a sense to our moral experience by recognising what is valuable and trying to come to understand its significance. The debate between realist and non-realist is deep and important. It affects our ontology of course, but also our epistemology and semantics. And in ethics, it makes a significant difference to our understanding of what (if anything) is valuable, to our account of moral disagreement, and to the importance we place on moral reflection. See Sturgeon, Nicholas. "What Difference Does It Make Whether Moral Realism Is True?" Southern Journal of Philosophy 24. (1986) Supplement, PP 115-41.

[9] Brink, David O. Moral Realism and the Foundation of Ethics. (Cambridge University Press) 1982. Pp.92-95.

[10] The non-realist position I may sometimes refer to as moral non-cognitivism, since realists maintain that any observer viewing a wrongful act-wilful murder for example -is in a cognitive state (a belief state about the way the world is), while non-realists deny this, maintaining that the wrongness of an act of wilful

murder is not observable; moral value is not in the world to be seen. This distinction between moral realism on the one hand and non-cognitivism on the other, and the question of whether non-realism *entails* non-cognitivism, will be dealt with in greater detail in chapter 4, on the topic of quasi-realism.

[11] See for example McNaughton, David. Moral Vision. (Blackwell) Page 11.

[12] See Bernard Williams 1972. pp. 19-26.

[13] Op. Cit. Brink. Page 92.

[14] McDowell, John. "Values And Secondary Qualities" in Morality and Objectivity Honderich, Ted. (Routledge and Keegan Paul) 1985 p.113

[15] Williams, Bernard. Ethics and The Limits of Philosophy Page 143. Also relevant is Iris Murdoch, The Sovereignty of Good Ruth Anna Putnam "Weaving Seamless Webs" in Philosophy April 1987.

[16] See Carr, David. "The Primacy of Virtues in Ethical Theory" part 1 in Cogito Winter 1995.

[17] Mackie.J.L. Ethics, Inventing Right and Wrong. (Penguin.) 1977. P38.

[18] Nagel, Thomas. The View from Nowhere. (Oxford) 1986. page 68

[19] Nagel has suggested it is wrong to exclude from a description of reality a bat's experience of finding its way about by radar. See "What is it like to be a bat?" in the same author's Mortal Questions.

[20] Op.Cit."Values and Secondary Qualities" p.121.

[21] Norman, Richard "Making Sense of Moral Realism" Philosophical Investigations, 1997. Vol. 20, no. 2. pp. 117-135.

[22] As he gives no explicit comment suggesting that he regards himself as offering an error theory which would change the meaning of moral terms, Hume's own position may be closer to Quasi-realism than Blackburn realises. See Hume. David. A Treatise on Human Nature ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford university Press) 1960. 11 iii

[23] Carr, David. "The Primacy of Virtues in Ethical Theory" part 1 Cogito Winter 1995. Page 240.

[24] Hume. David. A Treatise on Human Nature ed. L. a. Selby-Bigge (Oxford university Press) 1960.

[25] i Dancy, Jonathan. Moral Reasons (Blackwell.) Oxford 1993.Page 75.

[26] Dancy, Jonathan. Moral Reasons (Blackwell.) Oxford 1993 pp 73-77.

[27] Ibid. Page 73.

[28] The second difference between resultance and supervenience is that no token identity theory or constitutive account of the relation between supervening and subvenient properties is at all tempting. There is no prospect of identifying goodness with the class of properties on which it supervenes; say for instance the class of natural properties, nor somehow with the sets of members of that class that collectively belong to the various objects that are instances of the supervenient property.

[29] Locke, John. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding Book IV.

[30]McDowell, John. "Values and Secondary qualities" in <u>Morality and Objectivity</u> Honderich, Ted. (Routledge and Keegan Paul) 1985 page 112.

[31] Murdoch, Iris. <u>The Sovereignty of Good.</u> (Routledge) 1985. pp. 1-2.

[32] Blackburn, Simon. "Errors and the Phenomenology of Value" page 118.

[33] op.cit. Murdoch page 47.

[34] Smith, Michael. <u>The Moral Problem</u> (Blackwell) 1994.

[35] See Hume. David. <u>A Treatise on Human Nature</u> ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (Oxford university Press) 1960. 11 iii 3.

[36] See Smith, Michael. <u>The Moral Problem</u> (Blackwell) 1995.pp. 111-119.

[37]. op.cit. Norman, Richard. "Making Sense of Moral Realism"

[38] See Gaita, Raymond. <u>Good and Evil an Absolute Conception</u>. (Macmillan) 1991.

[39] Op. Cit Norman, Richard. "Making Sense of Moral Realism"

[40]Ibid. Norman, Richard. "Making Sense of Moral Realism"

[41] Ibid.

[42] "Values and Secondary Qualities" p.113. McDowell's statement is actually made in reference to the explanation of colours as "authentic objects of perceptual experience". But as it is McDowell's brief to argue for the reality of values in analogy with secondary qualities his comments are clearly intended to apply equally to his realist explanation of values.

[43] Blackburn, Simon. <u>Spreading the Word</u> (Oxford) p.189."The only progressive research programme in moral philosophy" is how Blackburn describes the project of Quasi-realism.

Chapter 2.   Moral Anti-realism

> I cannot see how to refute the arguments for the
> subjectivity of ethical values, but I find myself incapable of
> believing that all that is wrong with wanton cruelty is that I
> don't like it.
>
> Bertrand Russell.[1]

2.1. Rationale.

This chapter will outline the theory of moral non-realism, and deal with the philosophical theory of projectivism. I shall discuss the Humean sundering of values from facts, later expanded upon by J. L. Mackie, showing how this modern dichotomy has led into the analogy with secondary properties, which is the subject of chapter 3.

Since Hume's non-realist 'projectivism' concerns all perception of value, I intend to start with his projective explanation of aesthetic experience, with no attempt to criticise this except where it aids exposition. Criticism will follow once the aesthetic projective position has been established. This will be followed by exposition of Hume's projective explanation of moral awareness, which I shall criticise at the end of the exposition.

An early formulation of a projective theory can be found in Hume's account of causation. The 'mechanism' Hume uses to account for causation, namely his 'association of ideas', seems the only apparatus available for explaining Humean projection. Therefore, I have offered an explanation and critique of how Hume might have tried to account for the 'mechanics' of his projective account of value. I have also examined a modern theory of projectivism offered by Thomas Baldwin. Finally, I shall examine and

criticise the non-realist projectivist position which results in the `error theory' of J. L. Mackie in his book Ethics: Inventing Right And Wrong.

2.2. The Influence Of David Hume.

Plato's notion of beauty (to kalon) seems to be something like goodness in general; something to be sought after; that which has `magnetism', and is able to attract the soul to finer things. It has a "to -be- pursued-ness" [2] it is an idea more in tune with intellectual and moral striving than with the arts, and is distinguished from the visual attractiveness of appearances. In Plato's works there is no sharp dividing line between religious, moral, political and artistic values. The same could be said about the lack of such hard and fast distinction between the good/ the fine/ the noble /the useful/ the beautiful etc. in the middle ages; Umberto Eco has described the culture of the middle ages as an integrated culture. He comments:

> This integration of values makes it difficult for us to understand nowadays the absence in medieval times of a distinction between beauty (pulchrum, decorum) and ability or goodness (aptum, honestum)[3]

In the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, there is a fact-value continuum,[4] contrasted against the now traditional fact-value distinction.[5] It is a characteristic of contemporary philosophy to pull apart this continuum. Beauty is seen today mostly as the sensuous appearances of things and has lost its connection with utility. The relation between ethics and aesthetics, between art and morality, has aroused great interest throughout the long history of aesthetic theory and the philosophy of art.[6]

B.R. Tilghman has pointed out that in the history of British aesthetic thought, 18th century developments produced the tendency to throw out the conception of beauty either as a thing in its own right, or forming part of the fabric of the world by being a property of things, and to replace it with a conception of it as a function of consciousness, thought of as a reaction to those things. Beauty, says Tilghman, became to be seen as a "seventh sense".[7] The major figure in this sundering of beauty from utility is David Hume. Hume tells us that Euclid has successfully described all the properties of a circle and yet said nothing of its beauty. This is because:

> Beauty is no quality of things themselves, it exists merely in the mind which contemplates them.[8]

Hume is a non-realist in that he denies that we can observe value. Beauty is in the eye, or more correctly, in the *mind* of the beholder:

> Euclid has fully explained every quality of the circle, but has not, in any proposition, said a word of its beauty. The reason is evident. Beauty is not a quality of the circle. It lies not in any part of the line...It is only the effect which that figure produces upon a mind, whose particular fabric or structure renders it susceptible of such sentiments. In vain would you look for it in the circle.[9]

Even though beauty for Hume cannot be ascribed to objects outside the mind, he recognises that we do ascribe beauty to such objects in ordinary language, but according to Hume this is due to the close association between the perception of the object and the feelings it arouses in us. "The mind", he writes,

> is not content with merely surveying its objects, as they stand in themselves: it also feels a sentiment of delight or uneasiness... consequent to the survey; and this sentiment determines it to affix the epithet *beautiful* or *deformed* (to the object that it surveys).[10]

A similar view of value was expressed by the American Philosopher George Santayana (1863-1952) in The Sense of Beauty first published in 1896. According to Santayana, there is "a curious but well-known psychological phenomenon" whereby we "take an element of sensation" to be "the quality of a thing". Hence,

> if we say that other men should see the beauties we see, it is because we think those beauties *are in the object* like its colour, proportion, or size.

But this notion, he said,

> is radically absurd and contradictory. Beauty...cannot be conceived as an independent existence...It exists in perception, and cannot exist otherwise. A beauty not perceived is a pleasure not felt, and a contradiction. (Santayana,pp. 28-9)

Just as it would be 'absurd and contradictory' to suppose that pleasure can exist independently of anyone feeling pleased, so it is with beauty, given that beauty is a sensation-a 'felt pleasure'-and not 'the quality of a thing'.

It could be objected that we do, of course, on occasion, talk about the beauty of wild places we have never visited. Similar talk is also intelligible about places (say, in the Amazon rain forest) that no-one has yet visited. Surely beauty can exist in the absence of suitable spectators; if an artist paints a beautiful picture that remains undiscovered in his attic until long after his death, surely we may talk about the beauty being there in the picture all along, despite the absence of observers. Someone might object that such talk would be nonsensical if the view taken by Santayana and Hume were correct. But there is a way in which this objection does not count against either philosopher, because there is another way of defining beauty by reference to feeling. Beauty, it may be said, is a quality of objects and not itself a feeling; but this quality is identified by the feelings it causes in us. There are some passages in Hume that support this. Beauty, he writes,

> is such an order and construction of parts, as... is fitted to give a pleasure and satisfaction to the soul...beauty is nothing but a form, which produces pleasure, as deformity is a structure of parts, which conveys pain; and...the power of producing pain and pleasure make in this manner the essence of beauty and deformity. [11]

This view does not entail that beauty cannot exist in the absence of suitable spectators, for an object might be "fitted to give pleasure", even though it is not actually doing so, because no spectators are present.

Nevertheless, the blatant anti-intuitiveness brought about by such ontological parsimony was commented on by Hume himself referring to our perception of colour:

> Philosophy scarce ever advances a greater paradox in the eyes of the people, than when it affirms that snow is neither cold nor white: fire hot nor red. [12]

The denial of common sense attribution of properties to objects has a lineage that can be traced back to Galileo[13] and the philosophy discussed above has given us the dualistic picture of the physical world consisting of primary qualities such as shape and extension, on the one hand, and the mind and its sense data, the secondary properties such as colour and value, on the other.

A theory of how we come by these data is captured by the useful term 'projectivism' and has been coined by Simon Blackburn[14] referring to what he calls a Humean "projective picture" the idea that

> ...the world proper, the sum total of facts impinges upon us...(I)n addition to judging the states of affairs the world contains, we may react to them...Such a reaction is 'spread on' the world...[15]

Values, according to the projectivist, are "Things we spread on the world"[16] rather than objectively part of states of affairs.

Hilary Putnam comments on the sophisticated substitute for our pre-scientific notion of colour given to us by Descartes and Locke:

...This substitute involves the idea of a sense datum (except that, in the seventeenth and eighteenth century vocabulary, sense data were referred to as "ideas" or "impressions"). The red sweater I see is not red in the way I thought it was (there is no "physical magnitude" which is its "redness", but it does have a disposition (a power, in the seventeenth and eighteenth century idiom) to affect me in a certain way-to cause me to have sense data. And these, the sense data, do truly have a simple, uniform, non-dispositional sort of "redness".[17]

This picture is one of 'objects of mathematical physics', on the one hand, and 'raw feels', on the other[18]. Philosophers sympathetic to a non-realist position may see a belief in values as foolish in the face of science's capability to describe the world without reference to them. This has resulted in a <u>downgrading</u> of values, categorising them as mere appearances:

The fact and value gap segregates value to keep it pure and untainted. It is not derived from or mixed with empirical facts...with the increasing prestige of science, there has been a marginalisation of the ethical-Big world of facts, little peripheral area of value[19].

Simon Blackburn says that to establish projectivism properly, we would need a close exploration of the nature of the attitude which is thus spread onto the world, 'Gilding it and staining it'. This would involve isolating what makes an attitude a moral one, whether we would be better off without such attitudes, what their best replacement might be, and so on.[20]

2.2.i. Criticisms of Projectivism.

My criticism of a projective theory of value comes in four parts. Firstly I shall criticise the explanatory terminology. The second part of my criticism will concern the process of projection itself. Thirdly, when later dealing with the projection of moral value, I shall criticise the two-stage nature of projection, and argue that this fails to square well with the immediacy of our everyday perceptual experience. Fourthly, I shall criticise the idea that projectivism makes no difference to our moral experience.

2.2.ii. Cashing Out The Terminology.

My first objection to a projective theory of value concerns the explanatory terminology. This is comprised of metaphors that are difficult to 'cash' or evaluate in easily intelligible terminology. In fact, no attempt is made to 'cash out' explanations couched in such metaphors as 'gilding' and 'staining' the world. Ryle and Austin, who for the most part led the attack on sense data, pointed out that every single part of the story is supposition-we are never given an account of exactly how the projection happens, only an assurance that it must be so. We are told that 'redness' is not 'intrinsic' to the external thing that we ascribe it to, but rather is a disposition of the object to affect us in certain ways-to produce certain sense data in us, or produce certain sorts of 'states' in our minds, or however one wants to frame it. The idea that properties like colour or values are 'in' the things themselves, is a spontaneous 'projection'. This is theory, and theory of a most peculiar kind:

> An "explanation" that involves connections of a kind we do not understand at all ("nomological danglers", Feigl called them)[21] and concerning which we have not even the sketch of a theory is an explanation through something more obscure than the phenomenon to be explained.[22]

Philosophers who talk this way rarely if ever stop to explain what *projection* itself is supposed to be, or explain the nature of the 'screen' projected upon.

2.2.iii. The Projective Process.

Now to the second part of my criticism, namely the process of projection itself. What exactly is the story behind the mind's supposed ability to 'project' something onto something else? Is it the case that after one has viewed the value-free facts, a nano-second later, the projection of a feeling or desire follows? Two attempts to 'flesh out' the bare bones of projection theory were made by the German, Theodor Lipps, and the English essayist and novelist Vernon Lee.[23] Lee (who takes over most of the main points of Lipps's theory) asks why it is that human beings frequently apply to inanimate objects terms which can be applied literally only to beings which are alive, usually persons. The answer is that it is an instance of a tendency, deeply embedded in human thought processes, for the mind to merge its activities as a perceiving subject with those of the perceived object. It is this tendency which causes us, for example, readily to make an inanimate object the subject of a verb of action, as when we say "The mountain rises". We are not aware of this attribution of properties of the self to objects (in this case that of 'rising' to the mountain), because it occurs only when the mind is in a contemplative state. The thought behind this assertion is this: if we were aware of the activity of rising (due in part to the muscular activity of raising our eyes upward) as <u>ours</u>, we would not be inclined to attribute it to an object outside ourselves; but, in a contemplative state, we cease to be aware of ourselves. Our attention is fixed entirely and completely on the object, and so we tend to attribute our activities to it. What we project onto the mountain is the general idea of rising. Projection happens so fast, because it is a sub-conscious process that we are not aware of. This is a case of a projective explanation of the attribution of affective properties to natural/inanimate objects (scenes, events). Some Aestheticians, however, use this sort of projective theory to explain our attribution of expressive properties to *created* objects, in particular, to works of art, where it is proper

to see the object as informed by, and inculcating, `a state of mind' of the creator. I shall now discuss this idea.

The projectivist insists that the perceived value of a work of art is a projection of emotion[24]. But it is possible when experiencing a work of art, to recognise what is expressed and yet not share the feeling. An astute suggestion is put forward by Ray Elliott in his paper "Aesthetic Theory and the Experience of Art". Elliott draws attention to a distinction made by Plato between ignorance which is both present in and predicable of a person and that which is present but not predicable of him or her. A similar distinction can be drawn in respect of emotion, which can be present in me but not predicable of me in aesthetic experience:

> The emotion that I feel in experiencing a work from within...may be present in me without being predicable of me. It is present in me because I do not merely recognise that the poet is expressing, for example, sadness, but actually feel the sadness; yet the emotion I feel is not predicable of me, i.e. it would be false to say that I *am* sad or even, unqualifiedly, that I feel sad. (Elliott, 1966, p.147)[25]

So we can imagine a happy audience listening to a poet reading this contempory poem:

<u>Many Before Us</u>.

There is an imp of the perverse:
like chewing a stone all day
for the sheer joy of taking it out.

Hiring a car to keep in the garage,
or buying a return ticket
and not going back.

Or, best of all,
take your ugliness over to her
and beg.

You say you did that already?
You are not new pal.[26]

The intention of the poet here is both to express sadness and pathos,[27] which may well be picked up on by the reader and elicit a wry smile, since, as the last line infers, we have, usually in spotty adolescence, all 'been there'. The poem is indeed intended to convey sadness, but the point is that it is the expression of sadness itself which, once felt, elicits a smile, or even laughter. The sadness will be recognised and felt by the audience, but in no way could the audience be said to <u>be</u> <u>sad</u>. It is the case that they indeed recognise what is expressed and yet do not share the feeling. It is sadness `as if'. The projectivist insists that we receive a petition from the world which elicits a subjective response which we somehow `project' back on to the world and read it off as if it were an objective reality. However, it is, I would maintain, unintelligible to claim a projection of sadness in this instance when it would be false to say that the members of the audience <u>are sad</u>. It squares better with the phenomenology to say simply that the audience has recognised the expression of sadness in the poem. We may say that the audience was affected by a

petition from a genuine feature of the world, in this case the expression in the poem. Thus there is no need to postulate a process of projection of human sentiment to explain the audience reaction.

Since projectivism locates the source of expressive properties in the spectator, there is also a problem when what is expressed in a work of art is new to the spectator. I do not *recognise* in the work of art something I have felt. To give an example from art:

> The last self-portrait of Rembrandt is a species of inner quietude attainable only after a lifetime of experience has been absorbed and mastered. This wise serenity is a state to which few artists attain, and there is no evidence to suggest that it is particularly widespread elsewhere; yet it is expressed...and...becomes available for contemplation to the rest of us.[28]

To account for this is impossible by a projective theory. A projective theory must postulate a mechanism of psychological projection of feeling: objects engender feelings in us, which we then project: but how can I project a feeling that I have never experienced? In this case, I am informed about a possibility of feeling hitherto beyond my experience: when we make ascriptions of moral properties or aesthetic properties, or of secondary properties like colours, we are not projecting, but *being informed*, i.e. recognising. The above criticisms, it may be said, concern aesthetic *distance*. This is not, it may be argued, really appropriate when discussing the phenomenology of moral value awareness: there is a much more involved nature to our shared experience of moral value. In chapter 5 I shall show how the objects of sight relate in different ways to the context and goals of human purposeful activity. Although in this chapter I have used aesthetic examples to criticise a projective account of perception, there are enough significant differences between a perceptual account of aesthetic values and a perceptual account of moral values for me to reject an analogy between them. The perception of aesthetic

qualities is better understood as essentially interpretive, being a case of 'reading in'(see 5.6), whilst moral value perception is better understood in terms of 'seeing-as'. I shall not discuss these differences here, they will become clear in chapters 4 (4.4.i) and 5.(5.6) I wish to now discuss my third argument, concerning whether it is possible to square the theory of projection with everyday moral experience.

2.2.iv. Squaring The Projection With Everyday Perception.

I will examine Hume's projectivism in the case of moral value, and in doing so, try to sympathetically reconstruct his projective position before going on to criticise it.

Hume is also a non-realist about moral properties:

> Vice and virtue therefore may be compared to sounds, colours, heat and cold, which, according to the modern philosophy are not qualities in objects, but perceptions in the mind.[29]

Projectivism springs from the simple thought that moral properties must have an intelligible connection to natural properties on which they depend. Hume illustrates this point in a now classic statement:

> Take any action allow'd to be vicious; wilful murder, for instance. Examine it in all its lights and see if you can find that matter of fact or real existence which you call vice.

The vice escapes you because you can never find it until you turn your reflection into your own breast, where

> In which-ever way you take it, you find there only a certain sentiment of disapprobation, which arises in you, toward the action[30]

Hume, in all consistency, is giving the same subjectivist account for moral value that he elsewhere argues for aesthetic value; that we only appear to see the value of a thing because we `project' our sentiment on to the object we are contemplating[31]. We receive a petition from the world which elicits a subjective response which we somehow `project' back on to the world and read it off as if it were an objective reality. In doing this we thereby view a secondary property in a way more appropriate for viewing a primary one. This does not mean that we somehow *mistakenly* project our sentiments, because the internal response is an integral part of the experience; unlike Mackie, Hume does not suggest that all our moral judgements are in error, only that we should realise that when viewing a wrongful act, the wrongness owes its existence to ourselves; the moral value forms part of our subjective response to the world and in no way forms part of the world to which it is a response. A non-realist may picture moral thinking as a projection of values onto objects and events, while someone more influenced by the realist view can see moral experience as a matter of trying to *find* a value that is already there. It could be argued that the difference between projection and recognition is a matter of seeing our response to moral experience as either being a response from ourselves; a push as it were, in the case of projection, or perceiving a petition from the world, a pull in the case of recognition.

The process that the projectivist imagines to be going on when we see, say, a beautiful sunset, is that the fact of the matter-a bright, circular light illuminating a gaseous cloud-is the first stage of our perceptual experience. Then, this experience requires a further stage, when we `project' our subjective response back on to the object, `gilding' and `staining' it, with a property `borrowed from internal sentiment', and read it off as if it were an objective property. However, seeing, where there is no ambiguity, can be described in a more simple way as a one-stage process: i.e. immediate: we see `a beautiful sunset' not `a gaseous cloud lit from behind by a bright light' from which I see from my further response that it is beautiful. Similarly, in the moral case, we see something as `a wrongful act', not as ` two people kicking a wounded person' from which

I go on to see that it is wrong. I maintain that Projection is an unnecessarily complex two-stage process. As such it does not appear to square well with the far more simple immediacy of our everyday value perception:

> Our experience of what is of value does not come conveniently divided up into two parts: an awareness of what is genuinely there to be observed and a subsequent affective response to what we have seen.[32]

In the above argument I am not claiming any analogy between moral values and aesthetic values. Rather, I am pointing out how Occam's Razor can be wielded against the projectivist; such a proliferation of processes offered in the non-realist explanation of seeing values are not required to fully explain our ordinary value perception.

Another realist objection is that the projective account puts something between ourselves and our direct, immediate perception of the world. Colour and value to the projectivist are to be thought of as something we create in perceiving the world. They are modes of our awareness of the world and not properties of the world. Value is one of the many aspects of our experience that is contributed by ourselves and not by the world. The non-cognitive element in moral experience is variously taken to be a feeling, emotion or desire. Whichever of these is most plausible, non-cognitivists have had a hard time explaining how we could suppose a feeling or a desire to be a property of an object.[33]

Because perceptual states are thought of as representing the way the world is, some content can be given to the idea that one might attribute to a perceived object a property which turned out to be merely a property of the representational state. But desires and feelings, on the non-cognitivist account, are not representational states and it is impossible to imagine how they could be falsely assumed to be so. The projective account makes the objects of perception a *product* of our peculiar mode of perception. We might agree with John McDowell, that on a projectivist account, colours and moral

values may be thought of as created by us, they are, as he puts it, our *children*.[34] The realist, however, can offer an alternative view, that our mode of perception does not create colours, but rather allows us to see them. McDowell suggests colours should be thought of not as our children, but rather as *siblings*. Moral values, like colours, can be conceived as *real* properties, but properties which can only be perceived by beings who have a certain kind of perceptual experience. So colours are real properties that can be seen only by those who possess colour vision, and, analogously, moral properties are not to be thought of as created by our feelings, but rather conceived of as real properties which similarly can only be experienced by beings who share a whole network of emotional response with us.(See Chapter 3).

2.3. How Hume Says The Mind 'Spreads Itself On The World' By The Association Of Ideas.

To establish projectivism properly, we need to understand much better the 'mechanics' of projection and how things as apparently disparate as feelings and supposed 'properties' of objects and processes can apparently be so deeply interconnected. It seems to me that the only 'mechanism' readily available to Hume to explain why we project our sentiments in the moral case, is the association of ideas.

David Hume offers a first formulation of a projective theory in his account of causation, where two kinds of events' being constantly conjoined in our experience inevitably leads us to regard them as necessarily connected, so we cannot acknowledge the constant conjunction without regarding them as necessarily connected as well.[35] Causation, we might say, is, on Hume's account, a projection of custom (while remembering that custom is a property of the mind for Hume, in the first instance, it is the propensity of the mind to move from one idea to another). There is here a temporal and

spatial closeness, a constant conjunction; a sequence in time in which one idea gives rise to another. An observed constant conjunction between As and Bs establishes a 'union in the imagination' such that the thought of an A naturally leads the mind to the thought of a B. That is a fundamental principle of the human mind. Hume does not believe in any theory of necessary connection, whether relating to our common perception of colour, values or causation. We get the idea of necessary connection only because of the passage of the mind from the thought of something to the thought of its usual attendant. The association of ideas offered as an explanation of causation, appears to be the only apparatus Hume has to 'cash out' projection. Thus Hume might offer the association of ideas to explain why we project our sentiments in the moral case. For example, when observing for the first time an instance of cruelty to an injured animal, say three children kicking a dog, he would explain our pronouncing it as wrong by saying that first we observe A. the kicking. Then follows B. the recognition of pain. Then comes C. the disapprobation caused in us stemming from our own experience of pain. When we next encounter such an act, B. is dropped, and the kicking is associated with our disapprobation and is thereafter seen as a cruel, wrongful act. The reason why B. is dropped is that it is a weak association. Weak, because our seeing the dog's pain involves a further association, that of recalling what pain feels like in our own case. We may have needed B. in the first instance, but as patterns of recognition are built up over time, the natural propensity of the mind to move from A. to C. is stronger; the customary link between A. and C. becomes reinforced without the need for an intermediate association, therefore B. is dropped in future cases.

Whether or not the constant association of ideas will do the job in explaining our experience of causality (see Goodman's criticism later), it is easy to see what Hume has in mind in the case of morality. When making the point that an action's being vicious is not something that can be observed 'in' the action in question, and therefore morality does not consist in "any matter of fact, which can be discover'd by the understanding" (p.468) Hume is not denying the obvious fact that, usually, we simply observe an action and immediately pronounce it to be vicious. It is simply that when it happens we are not

then reporting something we observe to be true of the action in question or stating the conclusion of an inference reason has determined us to make from the action we have observed to the conclusion that it is vicious. The same is true on a Humean account of necessity. In believing that two events are necessarily connected we go <u>beyond</u> any observed relations between the events in question, and beyond anything our experience gives us any reason to believe. But when we see one billiard ball strike another we immediately believe that the motion of the second arises of necessity out of its contact with the first. Now it becomes clear how this can apply in the moral case. Many things can be observed or inferred to be true of a particular action we regard as vicious, but each of them is just another 'matter of fact' about what happened. In a case of wilful murder, for example, we can discover by causal reasoning that two boys have stabbed a third, and have deliberately destroyed a human life, causing great suffering, pain and hardship both to the victim and to others. But according to Hume that is not to discover that the act is vicious. That the act has these observable characteristics and consequences is one matter of fact; that it is vicious is said to be quite another. And no process of reasoning can lead us from the first to the second. In judging an act, the judgement is the attribution of a certain characteristic-virtue or goodness-to an action. Although there is in fact no such characteristic in such actions, the feelings we get on contemplating them inevitably lead us to ascribe it to them. Our moral judgements, like our causal judgements, are <u>projections</u>. In his account of causal statements, Hume says that we have an *idea* of necessity that we employ in formulating our *belief* that two events are necessarily connected. In his account of causation, we are told that the idea of necessity arises directly from the impression or feeling of determination. Thus we *believe* that the two events are necessarily connected, but the presence of the feeling is absolutely essential for our getting at that causal belief. In exact parallel, we might say that in saying or believing that X is vicious I employ an idea of viciousness; I get that idea and make that judgement only because I get a certain feeling or sentiment from contemplating X. For all of Hume's efforts, he does not explain *what* we are attributing to an action when we say it is virtuous; he does not say what 'virtuous' means, any more than he tells us what 'necessary' means.

2.3.i. Criticisms.

Hume's projective theory of causation has been criticised. The brief points below make up a general criticism of Hume's account of causation, and do not strictly address the issue of 'gilding' and 'staining' (see 2.3.ii). Rather, they question what expectations we *can* derive from the association of ideas. For example, Nelson Goodman has complained that it would mean us having no expectations at all-or what comes to the same thing, we would expect everything. This is because one and the same correlation between two sorts of thing can lead to conflicting, even contradictory, expectations.[36] For example, after we have observed a number of emeralds and found each of them to be green, Hume says we would be led to believe that the next emerald we observe will be green, or perhaps even that all emeralds are green. And the only thing that leads us to that expectation is the observed constant conjunction. Now let us define a new predicate 'grue' as follows: X is grue iff either X is first observed before The Millenium and X is green, or X is not first observed before The Millenium and X is blue. Obviously, to date, every emerald observed has been grue. Hume's theory predicts that, given the observed constant conjuction between being an emerald and being grue, we will come to believe that the next, or perhaps every, emerald is grue. But there is no doubt that we do not get that expectation in those circumstances, especially if we are examining emeralds on the eve of the Millenium. Hume says nothing about why we do not get it. His theory, in the absence of further qualifications, implies that we would. If our observation of emeralds can lead us to expect both that the next one will be green and that it will be blue, then it is easy to see that the same observations could be shown to lead us to expect anything at all; and therefore everything.[37]

Barry Stroud comments that, for Hume, moral talk is autobiography.[38] This view exactly parallels his account of causal statements-that they are reports of happenings within the mind of the person asserting them. A problem for the theory of the association of ideas is that our associative link of say, redness with letterboxes, or fire-engines, etc. does not guarantee our always seeing them as red. If the fire service decided to buy a yellow fire-engine, I would see it as yellow, even though every fire-engine I have seen to date has been red. If the fire-engine was taking part in a parade of bright red fire-engines, its different colour would make it even more likely to stand out. Similarly, in the moral case, it is not by association that we find cruel acts vicious and wrong. I may have previously enjoyed bull-fighting, but now see it as cruel and therefore wrong. The moral realist will naturally claim that we are disposed to pronounce a cruel act as wrong by recognising the property itself. This is because of our belief that cruelty is wrong, and we pronounce the act as wrong by observation of the wrongness of such an act of deliberate cruelty; the moral property is thus a feature of the act in question. Cruel acts are wrong.

The non-realist must deny that we can observe value. However, our experience of the world does seem to involve the experience of value, both moral and aesthetic; we hear the melodiousness of our favourite music, we see the cruelty of the children as they kick the injured dog. The insolence of John McEnroe on the centre court is no more unobservable than his ground-strokes. The non-realist has had to develop a theory that fits better with our everyday experience. This has influenced the development of meta-ethical theories of moral value as having a secondary existence, either having their source in our subjective nature for the non-realist, or reflecting reality as it is for the realist by being a disposition to elicit a response in us.[39] The analogy with secondary properties will be discussed in chapter 3. I now turn to a modern formulation of projectivism offered by Thomas Baldwin.

2.3.ii. Making Sense Of The projective Theory.

I shall now try and sympathetically reconstruct a modern projective theory, using the example of our ordinary perceptual experience of subjective properties such as colours, sounds, smells, etc.

First of all, it is obvious that the projective process, what Hume called `gilding' and `staining', does <u>not</u> involve a subjective experience being `projected' onto anything else but regions within the subject's egocentric sensory space. I do not, for example, `hurl' qualities "borrowed from internal sentiment"[40] onto anyone else's space. Sense experience, according to one modern interpretation of the theory of projectivism,[41] incorporates a reference to a region of physical space organised from the subject's `point of view' (or point of hearing, smelling etc.) and the sensory quality which identifies the type of an experience is given as `projected' into the region of space referred to in the experience. So the idea is that the intrinsic spatial reference of sense experience converts the subjective sensory quality of sense experience into the apparently objective quality of a physical object located before the subject: thus projecting the sensory qualities of sensation out into physical space. This would appear to entail that the senses present to us that which is merely subjective as if it were objective, out there before us. Colour, for example, it might be said, exists subjectively <u>in us</u> according to this theory, and should not be thought of as a <u>real</u> property of an object, only an <u>apparent</u> quality:[42] we project the content of our perceptual states on to the world and suppose that what is out there resembles what we perceive. The central claim of the projective theory is that it is the inherent projection of the quality <u>in me</u> onto a <u>real external framework</u> that provides the perceptual experience. C. D. Broad comments:

Now this muddled mixture of theories is not consistent with itself or with the facts. It is inconsistent with itself for the following reason. When I look at a penny, the brown colour that I see is seen spread out over the round contour. Similarly with the cold temperature that I feel. We are asked to believe that there is brownness without shape "in me", and round shape without colour out there where the penny is, and yet that in some mysterious way, the shapeless browness "in me" is projected into the round contour of the penny "out there". If this be not nonsense I do not know what nonsense is.[43]

I have mentioned the central claim of the projective theory as the inherent projection of the quality *in me* onto a real external framework. Thomas Baldwin has pointed out that this is a strongly externalist conception of the spatial features of sensory content: the projectivist is a real realist about the region of space she projects into[44]. Even typical hallucinations do not involve illusory space. When Macbeth asks

Is this a dagger, which I see before me,

the handle toward my hand? Come, let me clutch thee-

I have thee not, and yet I see thee still

it is clear that the reference is to a real region of space.[45] What makes this possible- i.e. that it is hard to imagine how a region of space can fail to exist- is aptly illustrated by Gareth Evans:

> Places, however, being-how shall we say?-so much thicker
> on the ground than objects, a subject cannot fail to have a single
> place as the target of his "here"-dispositions at an instant.[46]

So in coming to think of values as if they had a space-time location, we come to think of them as in the world, as real. (See also chapter 4.5).

I think it is clear from this that should the spatial features of sensory content be lost, i.e. if a subject should have `space-blindness', i.e. where there is visual experience but without the usual spatial information, projection could not take place.[47] This is because, on the projective theory, visual experience is organised precisely through spatial projection. It is the spatial projection of sensible qualities. A person who was `space blind' would enjoy (or, rather, suffer from) a `view from nowhere', where the usual axes and dimensions of visual space would be lost. It would not make much sense to talk of visual projection without the spatial information that is constitutive of the normal visual field, for the lack would not simply involve the absence, so to speak, of labels for the relevant axes; relative locations, as well as egocentric locations would be lacking.[48] And, just to labour the point, it is this egocentric uniqueness of spatial reference that is always to the one and only environment of the subject-i.e. that is essential for projection to take place-that would be lost. Yet `space-blindness' is a real phenomenon, documented in studies of injuries sustained by combatants in the First World War. The pathological case is almost the reverse of Weiskrantz's `blindsight' phenomenon[49] where the affected person's visual system somehow collects information but without normal visual experience: in `space-blindness' there is visual experience, but without the usual spatial information. The patient's visual experience is described as having lost its usual spatial content. The problem for projectivism is clear enough: how can a projective theorist account for the space-blind subject being able to see colours and recognise values? The projective theory has visual experience organised precisely through spatial projection. Yet the studies done by Riddoch 1917,[50] Holmes, 1918, and Horrax, 1919, show the patients to have not only lost their left and right axes, but also the third dimension of visual space:

When I was carrying out some of the tests one day he suddenly said: "Everything seems to be really the same distance away. For example, you appear to be as near to me as my hand" (he was holding his hand one and a half inches from his face and I was sitting about five feet away from him).[51]

The studies of these unfortunates revealed that in their peripheral vision things were seen, but not seen as having any definite egocentric location or any definite location to other things. Yet shape <u>and</u> colours could be recognised. One may wonder how it can make much sense to talk of visual projection without the spatial information, i.e. the unity of visual space, that is constitutive of the normal visual field. Rather than adjusting the theory of projectivism to explain the phenomenon of 'space-blindness' by introducing a multiplicity of subjective visual spaces in order to accomodate such a 'view from nowhere',[52] or introducing a foundational role for a subject's bodily experience, [53] or introducing other complicated formulations, it would seem to me far better to wield Occam's Razor in the direction of the projectivist and simply claim that the colours were there to be seen, as properties of physical objects[54] (the application of Occam's Razor being against a proliferation of explanation, rather than ontology). The space-blind soldiers were able to see not just shapes, but were also able to identify colours, which suggests that they were affected by the properties themselves. It is more simple to think of 'subjective' properties such as colour and value as features of situations.

2.4. Projection And The 'No Difference' Thesis.

Some philosophers have suggested that it would make little difference to the world and to ourselves if moral realism were true, whereas some have taken the position of R.M.Hare, and doubted whether the realism/non-realism debate is anything more than a mere verbal quarrel.

It is always unwise to accept a challenge whose terms you do not understand...I do not understand what is <u>meant</u> by the "objectivity of values"[55]

While Hare is unconvinced about the merit of trying to show the objectivity of values, He also notes that

You cannot annihilate values...a man is a valuing creature and likely to remain so.[56]

Since Hare goes on to contrast two worlds, one where there exists intrinsic value, and one where values have indeed been annihilated, his previous statement must mean simply that it is impossible for people to stop being concerned about things.

Hare insists that `objectivists' and `subjectivists' are saying the same thing in different words. If we can say of the answer to a mathematical problem that it is right, and we can say the same thing of a moral judgement, then that shows, the objectivist would insist, that a moral judgement is in <u>some</u> way <u>like</u> the answer to a mathematical problem (while recognising that mathematics is not like empirical investigation) and therefore cannot be subjective. Hare objects to this that the word `right' is used very generally indeed in our language. One man may say "Shut the door" another may say "That's right, shut the door". This in no way establishes that the utterance `Shut the door' is objective. Hare's point is that the fact that we can say "That's right" or "That's wrong" when someone has uttered an <u>imperative</u> suffices to show that the use of those expressions in speaking about moral judgements goes no way at all towards proving that these are factual or `objective'.

In a world where values are built into its fabric and another where values have been annihilated, Hare says that the inhabitants will go on thinking and being concerned about the same things. So Hare asks what is the difference between the two worlds? If the answer is "Nothing" then the subjectivist and objectivist quarrel is merely a theoretical or metaphysical one. This is now a common view; Charles Stevenson, as well as Hare, and, more recently, Simon Blackburn, have all argued that, despite the obvious differences in ontological and epistemic commitments, non-cognitivism takes away nothing we should object to having taken away in ethics.[57]

> When the debate started, it looked as if whether one was a realist or a non-cognitivist made an enormous difference to how one thought about morality.

Yet now:

> The theories have got so close to each other that a serious question would arise as to whether there is any longer a real difference of any sort between them...it will make no difference to one's approach to morality which theory one supports...Would there be any content left to the question of whether there is a moral reality if nothing about the nature of our moral experience hangs on the answer?[58]

There is a difference, however, between two interpretations of Hare's non-realist world. Hare says the non-realist world is one where values have been annihilated. It makes a difference whether he means the non-realist world to contain only projected value or no value whatsoever, projected or otherwise. If the latter is the case, then Hare's question "what is the difference between the two worlds?" would be much the same as

asking "If values disappeared from the world, would anyone notice?" Is it intelligible for a world full of valuing creatures to contain no moral values? If an alien, landing on earth, told an astonished audience that no moral value existed on its home planet, would the visitor be taken seriously? On a visit by us to the alien world, would we not look for patterns in their society, and try and see the moral value that has been denied? It is not like saying material objects do not exist. Is our disbelief a reaction caused by the truth that morality cannot be intelligibly said not to exist? This is an ontological argument, based on a realisation of what it is to be a moral being. For should we act in good or bad ways, whether values are projected or already exist in the action itself, it remains the case that they still form part of 'the- world- and- our- responses'. Hare asks whether in a world where values are built into its fabric and another where values have been annihilated is there any noticeable difference between the two worlds, since the inhabitants will go on thinking and being concerned about the same things? But can values be annihilated, if, as Hare insists, both worlds contain moral actions? It is like asking "If speed disappeared, would anyone notice?" As if speed had an existence independently of something going fast. Speed cannot disappear from fast things, and value (say, wrongness) cannot disappear from (cruel) actions. Quite simply, if speed disappeared, nothing would move, everything would be still, and if moral value disappeared, it would be because no-one would be doing anything right or wrong. Values must exist in a world where valuing creatures do right or wrong.

When considering both worlds, one where values form part of the fabric of the world, and the other, where value has been annihilated (i.e. value is not even projected), cases of say, wanton cruelty have a similarity with things going fast; both cases are tautological: when something goes fast, it is speeding; when a wrongful act is committed, it has the value of wrongness. We see the speed, because it is going fast, and in an act of wanton cruelty, we see the wrongness in virtue of the act being one of wanton cruelty. We literally see the property in view. Our world appears suffused with value; the non-realist admits as much. Objects going fast possess speed, and values have a similar essential

nature. I argue further for the essentiality of moral values in the context of their ineliminability from explanatory concepts in chapter 3.2.ii.

So I would insist that the only intelligible debate is whether there is any difference between the two worlds of intrinsic or projected value. The question then becomes "Are our moral values an intrinsic part of the fabric of the world, or do they owe their existence in that world to our responses to that world, by being a projection of that response? And if so, would there be any difference between the worlds, except an ontological difference?" This is what I take C. L. Stevenson and Simon Blackburn to be arguing when stating that, despite the obvious differences in ontological and epistemic commitments, non-cognitivism takes away nothing we should object to having taken away in ethics.[59] Of course, for the projectivist, there is no difference; because value is assumed to be projected anyway. But if all value was non-existent, even the projected kind, the projectivist in such a world would be in the same position as the realist in the same world; he would not be able to see any value in states of affairs, since his projection could not take place because no-one would be doing anything right or wrong. So the projectivist, assuming the truth of projectivism, has not accounted for an absence of projected value. Both observers couldn't see the cruelty, therefore it simply wouldn't be there. This would make a difference to the two worlds. So, for the realist, then, annihilated values would make a difference. For the projectivist, if real values were annihilated, there would only be projected values, so there would be no difference. But, for the projectivist, if projected values were annihilated, there would be a difference.

The only way for moral values to 'disappear' is in a limited sense, i.e. if everyone degenerated and came to see nothing wrong in wanton cruelty, either in Hare's non-realist world by projecting wrongly, or, in the realist world, having misperceived (or becoming totally blind to) the value in the first instance (The notion of 'in the first instance' is, as I have already noted, an interesting one: our perception of unambiguous events does turn out to be an immediate process, i.e. not requiring explanation as a two-stage process in the way that projection needs to be).

The two worlds have further differences. If we did come to see cases of wanton cruelty as right, this would go no way toward making it actually right; it would simply mean that we had all degenerated. Straight away we may realise that if agents believe something to be F, and it turns out, in fact, to be not-F (perhaps someone pointed out the relevant features), then that will change their attitude toward it, altering both the responses of people in the two worlds, (a change in projected attitude in one, correct perception of the actual value in the other) and a resulting change in the phenomenology. Both will be cases of coming to see something as meriting a response. The debate is whether a projected attitude would be altered by coming to see the salient features of the act in a certain way, or, rather, whether it was the case that seeing the intrinsic moral value merited a response when coming to see it in that way. Certainly, as a moral realist, it is open for me to claim that the facts of the case caused the petition from the world, and that those facts were moral ones, i.e. the petition from the non-moral facts to elicit the subjective response did not cause that response to be projected back onto the world and then get read off as if it were an objective property: rather, the petition came from the moral value itself, and, once I had had the relevant features pointed out to me, I came to see it correctly.

I have argued here for the essentiality of moral value; if values turn out to be truly essential to any explanation of the facts, then the facts of the case are moral facts, and are the very thing the non-realist depends on for the projection: we cannot `gild' and `stain' the world unless we recognise the very properties we are supposed to project. Projection, then, is redundant in explaining the phenomenology of ordinary moral experience. Should the non-realist protest that she never meant to deny the essentiality of wrongness in a case of wanton cruelty, only insist that the non-moral facts of the case, say, three people kicking an injured beggar, elicits a subjective response that we project and then read off as an objective property when describing the act as cruel, then not only can we remind her that the petition was from the cruelty of the act, and therefore, with the ineliminability of values from explanatory concepts, she must have recognised the value in the first

instance, we can also protest that projection as she thinks of it, i.e. as elicited from facts without value, something like 'three people kicking injured beggar', must not be a genuine case of seeing, but something like interpreting. Seeing wanton cruelty in terms of only non -moral facts, as if the cruelty was somehow absent before the supposed projection, what John McDowell has called "the disentangling manoeuvre"[60] is not seeing in the way we usually think of seeing; it is 'seeing' as if we were interpreting from a blueprint (again, a two-stage process). It is as if I were to see three people kicking an injured beggar, and from the non-moral facts *go on* to interpret that what they were doing is cruel. But seeing is not like inferring. Here there is no inferring phenomenology; we cannot just list the appropriate features, tick them off, and go on to project that the act is wrong. The relation between the recognition of the morally salient aspects and the more primitive non-moral data is one of assembling the data into a total picture[61]. The notion of meaningfulness is useful here. The projectivist interprets what the picture might be intended to represent from a direct perception of its arrangement of non-moral facts, its colours and shapes, i.e. from its properties as a material object. Then the projectivist goes on to project the meaning onto the picture. Such projection is a mode of treating pictures which reveals an orientation towards them as material objects rather than meaningful objects. The projective account treats pictured events like blueprints-we cannot immediately see the pictured scene or object in the picture as meaningful; there is need of a further process of projection. It seems to me that the projectivist makes seeing a reaction to the mere passive reception of data, instead of the active perception of our visual experience. Seeing is not data-reception, but an activity which involves discernment-picking out the relevant features, and recognising the formal relationships between them. Chapter 5 will show this activity to be what uncovers value, and how it is manifested in fine shades of behaviour in people, the postures and gestures indicative of politeness, consideration, respect, etc.

2.5. J. L. Mackie and The Error Theory.

I shall now examine and criticise the non-realist theory of J. L Mackie. In his book Ethics: Inventing Right And Wrong, Mackie states his aim as to demonstrate that moral values do not exist.[62] He also makes clear that his position; `moral scepticism' or `moral subjectivism', is a theory about what values are not (i.e. objectively existing things) not about what they are. He also has a (perhaps secondary) purpose to his theory; that of showing that most of his fellow non-realists-whom he divides into non-cognitivists and, oddly, naturalists-are wrong in their ideas about the linguistic analysis of moral language. He recognises the need for a two-part theory of ethics. A full account of ethics must have a view of the *existence* of moral values, and also on the *meaning* of moral language. Surprisingly, Mackie agrees with the realist assertion that moral language *does* carry a presupposition of the reality of moral values. But he agrees with the non-cognitivist that moral values do not exist. So Mackie is in agreement with the non-cognitivist about the non-existence of moral values, but he is in direct disagreement with the non-cognitivist assertion that moral `statements' are not making any attempt to refer to objective moral values. Therefore he proposes an `error theory' of ethics. Firstly, I shall outline his argument against non-cognitivists and naturalists.

Mackie wishes to disprove two kinds of non-realism. He calls these non-cognitivism and naturalism. This strikes one as surprising, since naturalists are usually characterised as, and think of themselves as, realists; an objectivist may claim that moral properties are naturally occurring properties. The objectivist holds that a moral judgement such as `Killing innocent people is always wrong' is a proposition which is true or false. It ascribes a property to all actions of a certain type. Rightness, wrongness, goodness, badness, are, the objectivist holds, moral properties. If the objectivist claims that moral properties are logically distinct from the `natural' properties of things, Swinburne[63] calls this position anti-naturalism. If the objectivist claims for her moral properties that possession of them is entailed by possession of the natural properties, then Swinburne calls this latter view naturalism. Natural properties are, for instance, being square, red,

having a magnetic charge, causing pain or making someone happy; these are all properties which subjectivists are content to suppose to belong to things, properties which we ascribe to things when not overtly engaged in moral discourse. Most predicates denote natural properties. One of Mackie's reasons for classing naturalists with the non-realists is simply that naturalism can be attacked by the same arguments that he wishes to use against non-cognitivism. Mackie characterises naturalism as the theory that moral terms refer to natural features of the world rather than to values. Here he is anticipating his later argument that the idea of a 'value' is of a thing with intrinsic action-guiding force. Some naturalists such as Philippa Foot deny that an action's being wrong necessarily gives anyone a reason to refrain from doing it.[64] Foot contends that the fact that certain norms apply to one's situation and that, if adopted, they would supply one's explanatory reasons for action, do not themselves establish that one has good or justifying reason to act on them. Mackie regards such naturalists as not believing in the existence of objective moral values. He thinks of naturalism as being essentially descriptive. He says that there are perfectly natural, value-free differences between kind and cruel actions, and it is these differences that the descriptivists are claiming that moral language describes. Mackie interprets both non-cognitivism and naturalism as theories that try to analyse the meanings of moral terms. He, on the other hand, points out that no such 'linguistic analysis' will give a solution to the question of whether or not values exist. Thinking that they can do so is a mistake often made by non-cognitivists, he thinks. Mackie sets out to show that, contrary to most non-realist analyses of moral language, our use of moral terms presupposes the existence of moral values; 'a claim to objectivity' is, he thinks, part of the meaning of moral terms. Moral values for Mackie are especially 'queer' because they possess 'objective prescriptivity'; they have 'to-be-done-ness' or 'not-to-be-done-ness' somehow built into them. They possess this especially 'queer' feature not just because realists say so but because it is part of the very meaning of the concept. He treats naturalists like Foot, who count themselves as realists as being non-realists if they deny that being aware that something is good or right gives you any reason as such to do it or seek it. In Mackie's view, if you are talking about moral values that lack objective prescriptivity, you are not talking about moral values at all. Neither non-cognitivist nor

naturalist accounts of the meaning of moral language cope satisfactorily with undeniable features of the moral experience we are using moral language to deal with and describe; the utterance "murder is wrong" is used by someone to express more than just personal feelings about murder. He feels, says Mackie,

> that there is more to ethics than this, something more external to the maker of moral judgements, more authoritative over both him and those of or to whom he speaks...[65]

We feel that the sentences we utter are true, not just expressions of reactions we have found ourselves to have or choices we have taken. Naturalism is the natural refuge of anyone who feels this way; she can happily recognise the truth of many moral judgements: it is not a matter of free decision that certain kinds of behaviour are cruel or unjust; such things are there to be discovered. Mackie, however, maintains that this leaves out part of what we mean as well; if naturalism is true, the action-guiding nature of moral judgements is contingent upon the person's happening to be affected by noticing the cruelty or the injustice or whatever. In themselves, these facts are `inert' and yet the speaker means to express an objectively prescriptive proposition when she describes them in moral terms. A person is trying to say, in a moral judgement, something about the thing judged. This is what non-cognitivism denies. But, the speaker also wants to say something "That involves a call for the refraining from action" which naturalism denies.[66] This sounds like question begging, since Mackie's assertion about what we mean in making moral statements is precisely what both non-cognitivist and naturalist were denying all along. Mackie backs up his assertion with two examples. One example is taken from Bertrand Russell, who was, as Mackie puts it, "officially on the other side". Even though as a matter of philosophical theory Russell thought that `Ethical propositions should be expressed in the optative mood, not in the indicative', he nevertheless admitted that when he expressed a strong moral opinion he felt

> not only that (he) was expressing (his) desires, but that (his)
> desires...were *right*.[67]

The other example Mackie finds in existentialist writings in which characters become aware that objective moral values are non-existent, and as a result cease to make or care about moral distinctions. If they were not convinced that moral statements carried as part of their meaning a presupposition of values' existence, awareness of the lack of such values would not cause such people to take a different attitude to their moral commitments, and feel that making such judgements is worthless.[68]

Mackie's conclusion that a presupposition of the objective existence of moral values is indeed part of the meaning of ordinary moral language tells us nothing about whether such moral values do in fact exist, as he is careful to point out, and I now turn to his arguments purporting to show that they do not.

2.5.i. Mackie's First Argument: The Relativity Of Moral Values.

I intend to outline Mackie's arguments to disprove the existence of moral values. They are the argument from relativity, the argument from `queerness' and the Occam's Razor argument from `economy'. I wish to initially make clear what the arguments entail, before any attempt is made at criticism. Criticism of these arguments are also to be found throughout the thesis, as the following chapters deal with the attempts by realists to avoid conceding that Mackie was right. I shall also deal with Mackie's fourth argument, that accepting his `error theory' makes no difference to our moral lives.

Mackie distinguishes two non-objectivist arguments in the first chapter of Ethics: the `argument from relativity' (which is conceded by Mackie to not be as compelling as the other two arguments) and the `argument from queerness'. These can be seen, I feel, as part of a wider appeal to his argument from economy. Mackie's major argument is that our moral experience and practice are better explained by the error theory than by

objectivism. The first element of moral life which is better explained in this way is what he calls `relativity'. It is, he says, a `fact of anthropology' that there exists a well known variation in moral codes from one society to another and from one period to another. He is quick to make clear that his point carries no forceful claim that diversity of belief and disagreement is a proof that morality is not objective. After all, there are similarly differing beliefs about thoroughly empirical matters such as matters of science, between cultures, which gives us no reason to think that there is a lack of some objective fact of the matter in these areas.

Mackie concedes that cultural diversity by itself does not refute the objectivity of moral values. Rather,

> the argument from relativity has some force simply because the actual variations in the moral codes are more readily explained by the hypothesis that they reflect ways of life than by the hypothesis that they express (differing) perceptions...of objective values.[69]

This line of argument is a familiar one which has an equally well known response: that the same moral values may produce a large degree of variation in behaviour in widely differing circumstances. For instance, it is pointed out that the Inuit people used to leave their old people on the ice-floe to die. Other cultures, however, regard as good moral practice the care of the elderly. This seems a clear example of the sort of divergence that Mackie is pointing to. But it is retorted that there may be no divergence of moral opinion at all. The differing cultures may believe that the welfare of the group takes precedence over that of the individual. In one society (say, that of our own) the general welfare is not harmed by caring for the old, but in other cultures such as the ancient Inuit, eg. ones that depend on everyone's ability to hunt or to travel long distances, the welfare of all would be put at risk by attempts to make allowances for those too old to keep up.

Mackie does not consider this response a particularly telling one, since he thinks it assumes that people hold the moral beliefs they do because they have derived them rationally from basic principles. In fact, he thinks it much more plausible that our moral beliefs are caused by our immediate responses (of either approval or disapproval) to situations. It is not 'reason' that gives us our moral beliefs, but 'moral sense'(presumably based more on feeling than reason) And it is less likely that many people and societies of the world are failing to 'sense' what is really there than it is that there is nothing really there to be 'sensed'.[70]

It is a familiar argument to claim that where there is disagreement, there lies subjectivity. But the moral realist can claim a much richer moral sense than that allowed by Mackie that utilises both feeling and reason: in chapter 5 I shall argue that, rather than there being nothing really there to be 'sensed', as Mackie proposes, rather it is the case that a person's possession of moral concepts informs their moral vision, resulting in a capacity to see different moral aspects of the same case. This is similar to the idea I shall go on to discuss in chapter 3, namely what McDowell terms 'coming to see things in a certain light'. In general, we simply judge, and we act on that judgement by either pursuit or avoidance (see 5.8).

There is an important point that tells against the argument that where there is moral (or aesthetic) disagreement, there lies subjectivity, and that is to compare like with like. On comparing like with like, Renford Bambrough stresses that factual claims, such as those concerning the boiling point of water, can seem straightforward enough in ways that value claims (say about the morality of abortion) are not. But, as he goes on to point out, accounts of this 'diversity' regularly fail to compare like with like. To see the point, consider it in the reverse direction: the massive moral consensus around, say, the wrongness of inflicting pain upon the innocent with no foreseeable gain, (torturing children say) might equally be contrasted with seemingly irreducible disputes in the realm of quantum physics, say, controversy about the number of elementary particles. If the

moral sceptic reminds us that there are those who reject the moral claim: "...we can offer him in exchange the Flat Earth Society"[71]

There is a related argument espoused by some non-realists that moral realists must embrace some form of moral absolutism. However, no moral realist should deny that what is right can and will vary with circumstances. The realist can insist that moral facts must vary as morally relevant circumstances vary. The realist only principally insists that moral facts not vary as people's moral beliefs and attitudes vary. This means that it is only a very special class of circumstances with respect to which the realist holds the moral facts fixed. So, too, the relativist is saying that the moral facts vary not with just any circumstances but in relation to peoples' moral beliefs and attitudes. This means that the moral realist's facts and moral rules can be as complicated as you like. There is no implicit commitment to a moral absolutism where moral requirements do not vary with circumstances; it is simply not true that the moral realist must believe in a set of coarse-grained moral rules, such as 'do not lie' and 'don't cause suffering' that apply to all people in all circumstances.[72]

Mackie regards the argument from relativity as less compelling than his next, more forceful, attack on objectivism:

2.5.ii. Mackie's Second Argument: The Argument From Queerness.

> If there were objective values, then they would be entities or qualities or relations of a very strange sort, utterly different from anything else in the universe. Correspondingly, if we were aware of them, it would have to be by some special faculty of moral perception or intuition, utterly different from our ordinary ways of knowing everything else.[73]

In this argument, the wider appeal to economy is clear. We are being told that since objective moral values do not fit into any picture of the world that empiricism can provide, we should reject any belief in them. Mackie himself acknowledges that there are a number of things that empiricism has similar trouble accounting for, referring to the 'companions in guilt' arguments by Richard Price, whose account would mean that the argument from queerness would have us reject along with objective values:

> our ideas of essence, number, identity, diversity, solidity, inertia, substance, the necessary existence and infinite extension of time and space, necessity and possibility in general, power and causation.[74]

Mackie is prepared to admit that this is a strong argument. He concludes that if Empiricism is indeed unable to satisfactorily account for these things then we must give them up if we accept the argument from queerness. He professes himself willing to do so rather than give up the argument! (The following chapters 3 and 5 will show values to not be susceptible to the argument from queerness). Mackie does, however, believe that the majority of the things Price mentions can after all be satisfactorily accounted for within an empiricist theory of some kind.

Even if they could not, there is a feature of objective moral values that makes them especially queer, queerer in fact than any of the other entities so far offered as running foul of the argument from queerness. This is the feature of 'objective prescriptivity'. Something which has a positive objective moral value has 'to-be-done-ness' built into it. Mackie offers Plato's Form of the Good as the clearest example of this:

> something's being good (i.e. instantiating the Form of the Good) both tells the person who knows this to pursue it and makes him pursue it.[75]

This objective prescriptivity, built into the values that attach to goals and actions, is the particularly queer feature which rules objective moral values out of existence, according to Mackie. I mentioned in my introduction that naturalists like Foot deny that values have such a feature. Mackie would have to say that they are not talking about the same concept as he, and, he thinks, 'ordinary language users' are, since he has argued that such a feature is part of the meaning of the concept of an objective value. This is why he has to deal with naturalism in his arguments about the linguistic analysis of moral terms, rather than here in his attack on other forms of objectivism. Since naturalists do not claim that values as he thinks of them exist, he classes them as a kind of non-realist. Though Mackie is attacking moral realism as necessarily involving the sort of relations offered by the world of Forms, and few realists are willing to accept the theory of the Forms nowadays, he insists that the argument is just as cogent against ordinary moral concepts like 'cruel' 'just' 'obligated'. The reason why it might seem less forceful is that these terms have their claim to objective prescriptivity cloaked by their other functions as descriptions of natural facts or expressions of feelings and needs. But insofar as these words include a claim to moral authority, the concepts that they denote are, he would argue, also utterly queer. The following chapters, especially arguments in chapter 3 challenging Mackie's formulation of what he takes realism to be, will show that the realist is not the kind of realist that Mackie was attacking; i.e. realism does not involve mistakenly viewing secondary properties in a way more appropriate to perception of primary properties.

It is worthwhile to pause a moment in order to ask what sorts of things are not 'queer'? The criterion of 'queerness' for Mackie is for something to be 'utterly different' from anything else in the universe. Yet it has been argued that this criterion would have us reject concepts which we cannot intelligibly reject.[76] Thus there are lots of things like this in the universe. To illustrate this, consider this sentence from Ethics:

> We get the notion of something's being objectively good, or having intrinsic value, by reversing the direction of dependence here, by making the desire depend upon the goodness, instead of the goodness on the desire.[77]

John Finnis has pointed out that, in writing this sentence, Mackie is putting forward the claim that 'objective' values are just projections of our sentiment, our feelings and our wants. This claim, it seems safe to assume, is one that Mackie believes to be true. He asserts the proposition expressed by the sentence which was intended to mean that proposition. Finnis argues that several things here are 'utterly different' from all other things: Mackie's intention; a sentence's meaning; a proposition; the idea of truth. For that matter, it might well be argued what sorts of things are not 'queer'? Could it be said that every kind of thing is 'utterly different' from all other things in the universe? Finnis's argument applies to the epistemological portion of the argument from queerness as well. When Mackie talks of our 'ordinary ways of knowing' he is presumably thinking of things like sense-perception; introspection; observing; inspecting; measuring; comparing; etc. It is certainly true that awareness of objective values is unlike any of these, but so too are understanding someone's intention or meaning; judging the truth of a proposition; etc. If these things cannot be accounted for by the sort of Empiricism espoused by Mackie then according to his remarks about Price's 'companions in guilt' (namely that if empiricism is indeed unable to satisfactorily account for these things then we must give them up if we accept the argument from queerness) he would have to explain our having such concepts as a mistake as he does for moral values. But any attempt to explain away the concept of intention, and the understanding of it; or of a proposition and the entertaining of it, would be manifestly self-defeating, since any such attempt would necessarily involve the use of the things to be explained away

.

Of course it is the feature of <u>objective prescriptivity</u> that moral values have as their distinctive feature that Mackie finds totally unpalatable. But there are other entities with a feature equally as queer as objective prescriptivity; mental entities, for example. Some mental entities undeniably have a feature of `of-ness' or `about-ness' or `directed-toward-ness'. For example, such mental entities as thought, fear, and hope. It was proposed by Edmund Husserl that all thought is necessarily thought *about* something.[78] In thinking, something is thought about. In fearing, something is feared. In hoping, something is hoped for. This `of-ness' feature of mental entities is called the `intentionality of the mental', and it is, it may be argued, an utterly queer feature equal to that of objective prescriptivity, but whose existence cannot be denied.

2.5.iii. Mackie's Third Argument: The `No-Difference' Thesis.

In chapter one of <u>Ethics, Inventing Right and Wrong</u> Mackie argues a definitive `no difference' thesis, that one could, in effect, hold that realism is false, while still in all consistency, hold deeply felt moral positions about serious issues that confront one in everyday life. This is because of the independence of meta-ethical questions of moral objectivity from first-order ethical issues, in that answers to the two sorts of question are quite <u>independent</u>: One could be a second-order moral sceptic without being a first-order one, or again the other way round.

But then he defends two second-order theses: That all first-order moral judgements embody in their meaning a claim to objectivity, and that this claim to objectivity is false. The problem is of course that Mackie insists that the above statements together entail that all first-order moral judgements are false: hardly the view that the two sorts of question are independent, since it is a second order claim. (pp 30-42, and p 49.) Mackie seems to be on both sides of the `no difference' thesis: He is claiming first of all that a person could, for example, combine the strongest second-order scepticism with a dogmatism about one's first-order moral outlook:

A man could hold strong moral views, and indeed ones whose content was thoroughly conventional, while believing that they were simply attitudes and policies with regard to conduct that he and other people held. Conversely, a man could reject all established morality while believing it to be an objective truth that it was evil or corrupt.[79]

But then, his considering moral statements as embodying a claim to objectivity, clashes with his second-order position that, in fact, no moral sentences are capable of truth: there are no moral values in the world, so there is nothing for our moral statements to be true of. When dealing with the 'no-difference' thesis and the theory of projectivism, I argued there that, for a projectivist, the disappearance of moral values would make a difference, in that the morality of the case could never be assessed because its moral worth would not be on view. Mackie argues that propositions of morality, in contrast to, for example, propositions about physical states of affairs, do not describe anything in 'reality'. Moral statements are, indeed, trying to refer, but in fact refer to nothing; therefore all moral statements are false. Mackie says

One way of stating the thesis that there are no objective values is to say that value statements cannot be either true or false.

I think Mackie has made a mistake here. Some philosophers do indeed say this, but this is to say more than that values do not exist. It also presupposes that utterances in which we appear to predicate values of objects in fact serve a different function. If moral statements are genuine attempts to describe reality, as he indeed insists, then, given the fact that values do not exist, moral statements are failing to refer. They must all therefore be false, rather than being incapable of having a truth value at all. I believe his actual view to be that moral statements cannot be true. On Mackie's account, a statement such as "This is a

cruel action" is a genuine attempt to describe reality, but a failure of predication. One cannot ascribe properties if statements fail to refer; "This box is red" would be false if it was a statement that failed to refer, i.e. there would be no redness that the statement was trying to refer to. Certainly, for us, referring matters. If I were to say that "Bullets are being fired outside". It will certainly matter and make a difference if the statement can actually refer. Not least if I believe it cannot and fail to act on it. Mackie himself draws attention to this very fact, when referring to existentialism, but then goes on to propose his no difference theory. So, having said that all moral statements are in error, the realisation of which may result in a catastrophic change of moral behaviour and practice, Mackie then goes on to maintain that our theoretical self can be kept apart from our practical self. So Mackie is contradicting himself by first of all insisting that our moral practice need not be affected by adopting an error theory, then insisting that all moral statements are trying in vain to refer, the realisation of which may cause us to revise our moral practice. I shall further argue in chapter 5 that moral realism, which makes our theoretical self available to our practical self, offers the best explanation of our common moral experience.

2.5.iV. Mackie's Fourth Argument: The Argument From Economy.

As I said when dealing with the argument from queerness, it is alleged that since we are being told that objective moral values do not fit into any picture of the world that empiricism can provide, we should reject any belief in them. This is essentially an 'Occam's Razor' argument, that we should avoid doing with more, what can be done with less. Therefore, if moral values are redundant in any explanation of our common moral experience, we should not postulate their existence. I shall now argue, contra this thesis, for the essentiality of moral values in explanatory concepts.

2.5.v. Opposing the Sundering of Fact and Value-The 'Seamless Web'.

For the realist, evaluative judgements are beliefs just as much as non-evaluative judgements are. In practical reasoning we have to 'weigh' both kinds of judgement in coming to an all-things-considered judgement. This is possible for realists because of an acceptance of what has been described as

> "interweaving of moral and non-moral facts into a seamless web".[80]

This is in opposition to the non-cognitivist idea that projection occurs due to human beings gathering information elicited from facts <u>without</u> value, what McDowell has described as "the disentangling manoeuvre".[81] I should like to cast doubt upon the idea that such a manoeuvre can always be carried out. I mentioned in the introduction Bernard Williams' ideas about 'thick' and 'thin' moral concepts. Languages, according to Williams and others[82] have two very different sorts of ethical concepts: abstract ethical concepts (the 'thin' ones) such as 'good' and 'right' and more descriptive ones that are less abstract, (the 'thick' ones) such as 'cruel' and 'inconsiderate'. McDowell has argued[83] that there is no way of saying what the 'descriptive component' of the meaning of a word like *cruel* is without using a word of the same kind; as McDowell puts the argument, a word has to be connected to a certain set of 'evaluative interests' in order to function in the way such a thick ethical word functions; and the speaker has to be aware of those interests and be able to identify imaginatively with them if she is to apply the word to novel cases or circumstances in the way a sophisticated speaker of the language would. The attempt of non-cognitivists to split such words into a 'descriptive meaning component' and a 'prescriptive meaning component' founders on the impossibility of saying what the 'descriptive meaning' of, say, '*trustworthy*' or '*decency*' is without using the same words or a synonym. If we try to unpick the meaning of say, 'trustworthy' we might, despite our efforts, end up using words such as 'loyal' or 'staunch' or 'faithful'

etc. Similarly, in the case of 'decency' we may come up with 'honesty' 'integrity' 'rectitude' or 'probity'. This is another example of their *essentiality; the *ineliminability* of moral values from explanatory concepts. Given this essentiality, (further argued for in chapters 3 and 5 as essential for moral perception) we can cast doubt upon the perception of values as explained by the non-cognitivist as gathering information elicited from facts without value. When we are actually confronted with situations requiring ethical evaluation, whether or not they also require some action on our part, the sort of descriptions that we need-descriptions of the motives and character of human beings, above all-are moral descriptions, not factual or scientific ones. When a situation or a person or a motive is appropriately described, the decision as to whether something is 'good' or 'bad' or 'right' or 'wrong' frequently follows automatically. For example, our evaluation of a person's moral stature may critically depend on whether we describe her as 'impertinent' or 'unstuffy'. Our life-world, as Iris Murdoch tells us, does not sunder easily nor neatly into 'facts' and 'values'; we live in a complex world, an integrated, messy, human world, in which seeing reality, with all its nuances, and making appropriate value judgements, are simply not separable abilities. It will be shown in chapter 5 how both facts and value are unproblematically integrated in the majority of peoples' unhesitating capacity to weave 'seamless webs' (see above and chapter 5.5) of pictures, words, concepts, people, situations, into the fluid stream of people's purposes and projects.

It is all well and good for the non-cognitivist to describe hypothetical cases in which two people 'agree on the facts and disagree about values', but in real life, such cases are very rare. There is a weird discrepancy between the way non-realists who subscribe to the sharp fact/value distinction *make* ethical arguments sound and the way ethical arguments *actually* sound. One of the most prominent proponents of the 'no-difference' thesis, the non-realist C.L. Stevenson, has been described by Stanley Cavell as writing like someone who has *forgotten* what ethical discussion is like.[84] This is because arguments exemplify the entanglement of the ethical and factual: listen to people arguing about legalising drugs, or what to do about the unemployed, or a fundamentalist and a

liberal discussing abortion. We may ask when and where did a Social Democrat and a Communist, or a Tory and a Labour supporter ever agree on the facts? Take for example, the Enclosure Acts in England during the early 1800's. Two historians may agree about the historical fact that the enclosures took place, and about the resulting loss of the common land. But one historian may claim that the loss of rights to graze animals, to procure firewood, etc. caused great hardship for those affected, and as such was an act of barbarism, as well as a clear enough case of class robbery.[85] The other historian however, may insist that the true dynamic at work was neither barbarism nor class robbery, but the need to implement industrial working practices resulting in high crop returns, and that poor relief more than made up for any hardship of the dispossessed. I am not claiming that there are historical moral facts that can decisively prove either claim, rather that it is possible for one party to be systematically failing to notice salient features; they are blind to the aspects that the other party are trying to make them become aware of. For example, to one person, the Luddites wrecked the new machinery installed in the mills because they were afraid of technological progress, and such action was an act of sheer vandalism. To another person on the other hand, the Luddites were skilled negotiators whose method was one of collective bargaining by riot.[86] We can imagine lots of other examples, such as discussion of Darwin's theory of Evolution, and so on.

An acceptance of the entanglement of fact and value means the realist recognises that in practical reasoning we have to 'weigh' both evaluative and non-evaluative judgements in coming to an all-things-considered judgement, which emphasises the importance of recognising how things are. For the realist, evaluative judgements are beliefs just as much as non-evaluative judgements are. Explanations of moral actions always proceed via an agent's beliefs, and these may be true or false, in that it does seem intuitively to be the case that moral beliefs ought to 'track the truth'[87], by being a report of how things are, or how the agent sees states of affairs[88]. Reports on 'how things are' or 'How things strike us as being' can involve the use of 'thick' moral concepts in explanations such as "I could see that what they were doing was cruel." or "The act was

unjust." Or again: " I objected to their disloyalty". Such substantive or 'thick' ethical concepts, I intend to show to be guided by the world (see 5.5); by how things actually are, or strike us as being. A concept of this sort may be rightly or wrongly applied, and people who have acquired it can agree that it applies or fails to apply to some new situation. In many cases the agreement will be spontaneous, while in other cases there is room for judgement and comparison. Some disagreement at the margin may be irresolvable, but this does not mean that the use of the concept is not controlled by the facts or by the users' perception of the world:

> Thus I may know, by looking at it, that the die has come up 6, and this roughly involves the claim that if it had come up 4, I would have come to believe, by looking at it, that it had come up 4.[89]

Similarly, in the moral case, if agents believe something to be F, and it turns out, in fact, to be not-F, (Perhaps someone pointed out the relevant features) then that will change their belief.

Moral concepts have a kind of semantic depth. Starting from our initial grasp upon these concepts, together with some practical grasp upon the conditions of their application, we can proceed to investigate, to experience, the features of the real world answering to these concepts. What the sceptic denies is moral knowledge. Yet when agents apply their thick moral concepts, in doing so they make judgements, and if any of those judgements can ever properly be said to be true, then their beliefs can track the truth, i.e. be world-guided by being about the fact of the matter, since they can choose to withdraw judgements if the circumstances turn out to be not what was supposed, can make an alternative judgement if it would be more appropriate, and so on. Agents who have mastered these concepts can perceive the personal and social happenings to which the concepts apply. If there is truth here, their beliefs can track it. Precisely because of the realistic account given of these concepts and upon our grasp of them-precisely because

they are designed to pick out features of the world of indefinite complexity-this process of investigation through experience can, and should, proceed without end.

> Our grasp upon what, say, *courage* is can, and should, improve without limit; we must rest content with the thought that at death *approximate* understanding is all that we can hope for. But all along we have a grasp of what the concept is, as manifested by our grasp upon austere T-sentences involving it; and perhaps, all along we have a grasp upon some gloss, some dictionary definition, of the term picking out that concept. But for the realist this austere grasp, that knowledge of the dictionary, is the beginning of understanding, not the end; there is, for us, no end, yet that starting point is far indeed from it.

A moral realist can think of the knowledge given by applying ethical concepts as something like perception. Commenting on the similarity between moral perception and perception of secondary qualities, Bernard Williams writes:

> The psychological capacities that underlay our perceiving the world in terms of certain secondary qualities have evolved so that the physical world will present itself to us in reliable and useful ways. Coming to know that these qualities constitute our form of perceptual engagement with the world, and that this mode of presentation works in a certain way, will not unsettle the system. In the ethical case, we have an analogy to the perceptual just to this extent, that there is local convergence under these concepts: the judgements of those who use them are indeed,...world-guided. This is certainly enough to refute the simplest oppositions of fact and value.[90]

2.6. The Error Theory.

Of course, any appeal to the principle of economy must not only say why a given explanation of some phenomenon infringes that principle, but must also provide an alternative explanation which does not. We now arrive at Mackie's error theory. He must provide an explanation of _why_ we are in error, as well as telling us that we have fallen into error. He must explain why we believe in objective moral values when no such entities actually exist. Here, he is prepared to offer an essentially Humean explanation: we project our reactions to the world back onto it, (both desires and needs as well as feelings), and read them off as if they formed part of objective reality. For Mackie, we mistakenly think of these reactions as being reactions to real values, rather than that values are just our projected reactions. Mackie calls attention to the same process occurring in matters of taste; instead of saying that a slimy toad arouses loathing in me, I say that it is a loathsome creature. And in moral cases the motivation to commit this 'pathetic fallacy' is stronger. (Chapter 3 casts doubt on this with McDowell's analogy on the 'frightening' or 'fearsome' as meriting our reaction because of the perceived thing actually being fearsome or frightning.) Like Blackburn after him, Mackie sees the purpose and source of moral attitudes as social. In order that morals may be more useful in regulating people's behaviour, it is helpful that everyone think of them as external and authoritative, not just as the reactions some people just happen to have.

Mackie is being inconsistent here. The above contradicts the 'no-difference' idea, since it will make a difference if people take heed of Mackie's arguments for the error theory and believe that they have come to see morality as it really is. For example, in L'Etranger by Albert Camus, during the trial of Patrice Meursault for murder, we learn that Meursault has rejected permanent values in favour of decisions based on present, avowedly ephemeral, realities.[91] He has come to the realisation that there can be no relationship whatsoever between the natural world and questions of value. (P.186) This is at first manifest not so much by what he does or thinks than by what he fails to do or to

register. Some of the most notable examples are the lack of expression of grief for his mother, his indifference both to Raymond's proposal of friendship and to Marie's suggestion of marriage and his remark that he finds the word *aimer* meaningless. (P.69) As regards his mother's death he is refusing certain conventions which we normally call moral: that one experience grief at a parent's death, and that such grief should be expressed through certain channels. In fact, the reader learns of Meursault's mother's death when he remarks on it while remembering yesterday's events. Stated as a matter of fact event among others, his mother's death reads like an item on a shopping list. This realisation of the 'detachment' of fact from value by Meursault becomes more apparent during the trial in the attempt by those concerned to find a meaning in Meursault's actions. This attempt is one of trying to understand in *their* terms, not *his*. What they cannot understand is that he committed a murder apparently without motive: no meaning can be found in the act itself, so meaning is imposed upon it (by others) from *without*. As Rosemarie Jones points out, Meursault's attitude to his murderous act at the trial represents a radical questioning not only of the legal system but also of the society which empowers it and of the values which inform that society.[92] When asked to explain why he has shot dead an Arab while walking on the beach, Meursault replies "The sun made me do it." His persistence in being himself, a person who has ceased to make or care about moral judgements, in opposition to the hypocrisy of a society that still believes in the existence of moral values through lack of questioning, makes him, says Camus, "A martyr to the truth."[93] The difference between Meursault and those others involved in his trial, is brought out in the realisation that each accuses the other of denying the truth of existence.

Mackie is not of the opinion, however, that `objective moral values' are just the projection of our feelings. More often than that they will be the projection of our desires and needs. The tell-tale trace of this is found in the non-moral use of the words `good' and `goods'. These words are used to describe objects that satisfy or help to satisfy our needs and desires. In this area we just get confused, he thinks. Instead of realising that they have value because they are useful in satisfying our desires, we think that we desire them because they are intrinsically valuable. This confusion is aided by the fact that there will indeed be features that make the objects intrinsically desirable, but they will be natural features and their making the object desirable is contingent on our having the wants and needs that we do.

This fact, the contingency of what is `good' upon what we want, is connected to another source of the idea that moral values are objective. Moral imperatives, Mackie suggests, in a curious echo of Foot, are hypothetical imperatives in which the hypothetical clause has been dropped. The action or goal that is being prescribed is in fact a good because of some need or want that the person being spoken to is assumed to have, but the reference to that want has been dropped (perhaps it is assumed on both sides) and the sentence appears to be a categorical imperative expressing a non-contingent objective good. One of the reasons that the hypothetical clause has been dropped may again be connected to the social function of moral discourse. The wants may well be those of the community but the agent will be expected to share them, as would any other individual member. Rather than express clearly these complex relations it is easier just to leave reference to them out, which will also once again make the imperative seem more independently authoritative.

Lastly, Mackie suggests that moral rules are ones which seem to be objective just because no rule-maker is apparent. As he puts it

Ethics is a system of law from which the legislator has been removed.[94]

The legislator he appears to be referring to is God, primarily. This source of objectification may be weaker than the others (depending on whether one accepts that God commands something because it is good, rather than something is good because God commands it. There is no need to discuss this issue here) however, the blurring of this very distinction in the minds of some people, may have been one among many contributing factors in our fall into error. At this point it might be said that although Mackie has given us some fairly plausible accounts of how this error could have been made, he is not exerting himself to prove that this is what really happened. Indeed, taking these `patterns of objectification' points alone we might think that this explanation of our moral beliefs, and the rival explanation that we are aware of objective moral values, are equally plausible. Mackie's point is that the objectivist explanation requires us to accept `queer' entities whereas the non-objectivist explanation is entirely in natural terms, and that is what makes it decisively superior. This leads us now into chapter 3, and the analogy with secondary properties, which will show that Mackie's conception of realism is not just false but unintelligible.

[1] Bertrand Russell quoted in Wiggins, David. "A Sensible Subjectivism" in Darwall, Stephen, Gibbard, Allan, Railton, Peter. Moral Discourse and Practice: Some Philosophical Approaches. (Oxford) 1997. Page. 227

[2] Aquinas also attributes a strong magnetism to goodness, saying: "All things, not only those which have knowledge but also those which are without it, tend to good". (See Aquinas.1256-9 pp 33-40).

[3] Hanfling, Oswald. Philosophical Aesthetics An Introduction "Aesthetic Properties" Page45. See also "Art and Ethics"

[4] ibid page 45

[5] Although Sabina Lovibund has argued for such a continuum in the philosophy of the later Wittgenstein. See Realism and Imagination in Ethics. (Blackwell) 1983.

[6] See "Art and Ethics" Tilghman, B. R. in Wittgenstein, Art and Aesthetics (D. Z. Philips Ed.) (Macmillan 1991)

[7] ibid page 23

[8] Hume, David. "The Standard of Taste" in Of the Standard of Taste and Other Essays. Lenz, John W. Ed. (New York: Bobbs Merril)

[9] Hume, David. "The Sceptic" in Lenz, J.W. (Ed.) Essays Page 125. Quoted in Hanfling, Oswald. "Aesthetic Properties" op.cit. Philosophical Aesthetics (Blackwell 1992) Page 45

[10] Hume, David. "The Sceptic" in Lenz, J.W. (Ed.) Essays Page 124. Quoted in Hanfling, Oswald. "Aesthetic Properties" ibid Page45.

[11] Hume, David. A Treatise on Human Nature ed. L. a. Selby-Bigge (Oxford university Press) 1960. Page. 299.

[12] Hume, David. Letter to Hugh Blair, July 4th, 1762. Printed in Mind. October 1986.

[13] See Putnam, Hilary. The Many Faces of Realism. (USA open court publishing) 1987. pp. 4-5.

[14] Blackburn, Simon. "Reply: (to John McDowell, Non-cognitivism and Rule Following) "Rule Following and Moral Realism" In Holtzman, Steven & Leich, Christopher, Eds. Wittgenstein: To Follow A Rule. (Routledge) 1981. Page 173.

[15] Ibid "reply" page 177.

[16] Ibid. Page 165

[17] Op. Cit. Putnam, Hilary. Page 6.

[18] Ibid. Page 7.

[19] Iris Murdoch. Metaphysics as a Guide to Morals p.25.

[20]These remarks about establishing projectivism are made by Simon Blackburn <u>Spreading the Word</u> Page 189. These issues will be passed over for the sake of brevity.

[21] Feigl, Herbert. Ed: <u>Concepts, Theories and The Mind-Body Problem.</u> (U. S. A. University of Minnesota Press) 1958, 370-497.

[22] Op. Cit. Putnam, Hilary. Page 8.

[23] Both theories are used in Wilkinson, Robert, "Art, Emotion and Expression." in Op.Cit. <u>Philosophical Aesthetics</u> Page 231.

[24] See Wilkinson, Robert. "Art, Emotion and Expression." in Hanfling, Oswald. (Ed.) <u>Philosophical Aesthetics. An Introduction.</u> (Blackwell) 1992.

[25] Ibid. Page 233. The same could be argued for "grief in the recent death of Diana, princess of Wales. The grief could be said to be felt by the crowds of people lining the streets, yet I would maintain that it was grieving *as if*, in that *grief could not be correctly predicated of them.*

[26] "Many Before us" by Joe Fearn. Printed in <u>the Echo Room</u> Issue 12. (Jackson's Arm Press) 1988.

[27] I am informed by Michelle Denby of University College Northampton of the recent debates concerning authorial intention; who controls the meaning of a text? Author or reader? Once the author has transmitted his/her meaning into text, the result is beyond the intention of the author, because language exists through social consensus. There is a problem concerning how we know the author's intention. This is why I chose to use one of my own poems; leaving aside Freudians and reader response theorists, I feel it safe to say that in this poem, my intention <u>was</u> to elicit a wry smile at the end of the poem. As for the <u>actual</u> response, I have read this poem at various venues, including the four diverse venues of the East Midlands Arts Council's "New Voices Tour" 1996. On all these occasions, the audience reaction was the same; wry smile and/or laughter.

[28] op.cit. Wilkinson. Page232.

[29] Hume. David. <u>A Treatise on Human Nature</u> ed. L. a. Selby-Bigge (Oxford university Press) 1960.

[30]Hume. David. <u>A Treatise on Human Nature</u> ed. L. a. Selby-Bigge (Oxford university Press) 1960.

[31]ibid.

[32] McNaughton, David. <u>Moral Vision an Introduction to Ethics.</u> (Blackwell) 1988. Page 77.

[33] Simon Blackburn has specifically addressed this issue. See for example "Rule Following and moral Realism." p.167. His argument, that we express an attitude toward attitudes in a projective account of perception, is dealt with in chapter 3 on the analogy with the perception of secondary properties, and more explicitly in chapter 4 on the topic of quasi-realism.

[34] McDowell, " Values as Secondary Properties".

[35] Ramsey has also been credited with a theory of 'projection'. He is usually associated with the propounding of a 'subjective' theory of probability. This theory, very roughly, states that when we attribute a good chance to an event or a high probability to a judgement, we are simply 'projecting' a degree of

confidence. Of course we believe in unknown laws, and some opinions about chances are much better than others. What is needed is some set of standards by which we can assess projections of degrees of confidence, so as to allow us to say that some are better than others, and others may be so superior that some persons may be incapable of knowing them. Ramsey's theory has been influential in Simon Blackburn's formulation of 'quasi-realism'. Blackburn comments: "an opinion might be formed in the light of observed frequencies of fit into an otherwise successful scheme of projections, and most fundamentally it might its possessor the habit of belief in what happens, and disbelief in what does not. (Opinions and Chances. P.80) This, says Blackburn, is the keystone of Ramsey's theory. It imparts a pragmatic standard for evaluating projections. The standard, moreover, is taken to be mandatory, for on both Ramsey and Blackburn's view, it is necessary that truth count as success in judgement.

[36] Goodman, Nelson. Fact, Fiction, and Forecast. (Harvard University Press) 1955. pp. 74-83.

[37] See Stroud, Barry. "Hume" in Honderich, Ted. The Arguments of the Philosophers. (Routledge) 1977. pp. 68-95.

[38] See Stroud, Barry. "Reason, Passion and Morality" in Honderich, Ted. The Arguments of the Philosophers. (Routledge) 1977. Page 180.

[39] See Dancy "Two conceptions Of Moral Realism" Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society 1981.

[40] Hume, David. Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals. (First published in 1751) in Hume's Enquiries ed. Nidditch, P. (Oxford University Press) 1975. The distinct office of taste, Hume says is "...gilding or staining all natural objects with the colours borrowed from internal sentiment" Page 294.

[41] The discussion here follows the projective theory of sensory content put forward by Thomas Baldwin in Crane, Tim. The Contents of Experience: Essays on Perception. (Cambridge University Press) 1992. pp. 177-195.

[42] Thomas Baldwin comments on this point that "...it is through the inherent projection of the subjective onto a real external framework that sense experience achieves its own intentionality." Therefore, Baldwin claims that even the non-conceptual content of perception is quasi-propositional-consisting of the appearance to the subject that certain qualities are present in certain regions of space, which appearance the projective theorist will seek to ground in the intrinsic sensory qualities of sense experience and their projective relation to regions of the subject's environment. The sensory qualities lead a double life-both as intrinsic qualities of experience and as apparent (and not, therefore, real) qualities of the objects of experience: So, for a projective theorist such as Baldwin, there is no need to invoke sense data in giving an account of the content of perception, since the theory needs no special sensory objects to bear sensible qualities.

[43] Broad, C. D. Scientific Thought London (Keegan Paul) 1923. This passage is cited in Baldwin, Thomas "The Projective Theory of Sensory Content" in Crane, Tim. (edited) The Contents of Experience Essays on Perception. Page 185.

[44] Ibid. Baldwin, Thomas.

[45] One might object that dreaming involves projection into illusory space. But the projectivist may retort that dreams involve a kind of fictive, or "as if" perception, of the same type as conscious visualisation. There can also be episodes of madness in which the boundary for the subject between imagination and perception becomes blurred (Macbeth and Banquo's ghost for example) but the madness arises from the fact that the spatial content of the imaginative act somehow loses its "as if" status and becomes incorporated in the projective intentionality of perception. (It is part of the central claim of projective theory that it is through the inherent projection of the subjective onto the objective real framework that sense experience achieves its own intentionality).

[46] Evans, Gareth. The Varieties of Reference. Oxford. (Clarendon Press) 1982. Page 169.

[47] It is noticeable from this theory that having a physical head is necessary for seeing: a consciousness without a head would be lacking the egocentric uniqueness of spatial reference. This would presumably result in such a "thing" being able to "see" in all directions at once, and we may wonder whether such a viewpoint could be legitimately called *seeing* at all.

[48] A discarnate consciousness would presumably have the same problem of lacking the egocentric uniqueness of spatial reference. Even a free-floating astronaut has axes provided by embodiment. For example see Flew, Anthony, "Reply to Smook, Would Survival have to be Of an Astral Body?" Canadian Journal of Philosophy .1982.

[49] Weiskrantz, L. Blindsight, A Case Study and Implications. (Oxford University Press) 1986.

[50] See Op. Cit. Baldwin, Thomas. Pp 191-195.

[51] Ibid. Page 194.

[52] This is offered as an explanation by Baldwin Ibid PP 194 -195. He does note however, that " ...the puzzling phenomenology of these cases must make any such characterisation of them tentative." Page 195.

[53] Stephen Burwood offers this explanation in his thesis on the topic of embodiment. Hull University Ph.D. Thesis 1996. Though not as a defence of projectivism. Rather, as a defence of the necessity of a foundational role for a subject's bodily experience (in this instance the egocentric location of the axes imposed by possession of a physical head). I am grateful for his bringing these cases, discussed in The Contents of Experience to my attention.

[54] I am aware that some cases of spatial reference do not relate to physical substances, for example rainbows, sounds and smells, where we are happy to locate such phenomena in physical space without any immediate compunction to treat them as properties of objects.

[55] [55]Hare. R.M. "Nothing Matters" in Applications of Moral Philosophy (University of California Press) 1973 page 40.

[56]Hare. R.M. "Nothing Matters" in Applications of Moral Philosophy (University of California Press) 1973 page 39.

[57] Charles Stevenson, "Ethical Fallibility" in DeGeorge, Richard. ED. Ethics and Society (New York: Doubleday) 1966 pp 197-212. Hare, R.M. "Nothing Matters" 1957, pp. 39-41. Blackburn, Simon. "Reply: rule following and moral reasoning" in Holtzman, Stephen H. and Leich, Christopher M. Wittgenstein: To Follow A Rule (London: Routledge and Keegan

Paul.) 1981 pp 163-87. And in Spreading the Word 1984. Pp 143-260. And again in "Errors And The Phenomenology Of Value" 1985, Page 11.

[58] McNaughton, David. Moral Vision an introduction to ethics (Blackwell) 1986.

[59] Charles Stevenson, "Ethical Fallibility" in DeGeorge, Richard. ED. Ethics and Society (New York: Doubleday) 1966 pp 197-212. Hare, R.M. "Nothing Matters" Blackburn, Simon. "Reply: rule following and moral reasoning" in Holtzman, Stephen H. and Leich, Christopher M. Wittgenstein: To Follow A Rule (London: Routledge and Keegan

Paul.) 1981 pp 163-87. and in Spreading The Word pp 143-260

[60] Op.Cit. McDowell. Rule Following and Moral Realism PP 144-145

[61] See op. cit. Richard Norman.

[62] Mackie, J. L. Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong Page 15.

[63] Swinburne, R.G. "The Objectivity of Morality" Philosophy 1976. pp. 6 -7

[64] "Are Moral Requirements Hypothetical Imperatives?" Proceedings Of The Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume LII, 1978.

[65] Op.Cit Page32.

[66] Ibid. Page 33.

[67] Russell, Bertrand, quoted Ibid. Page34.

[68] It is interesting to note that Blackburn draws a parallel between the realist's belief in moral reality and another belief which he regards as having formally played a similar role as the basis of morality; the belief in God. (This is in response to the idea that coming to believe that values do not exist rationally compels taking a different attitude toward one's moral commitments, as the existentialists did.)

Their belief in God was once the means by which people explained why morality matters to human beings. It matters and is taken seriously because, it was thought, God cares about us and is concerned about our well being. But when this belief in God was given up that did not make it rational to give up morality. Some, of course, did so because they thought that morality no longer had a point, but for society as a whole morality was treated just as seriously as it had been treated before. It was, and is, still rational to believe in morality even when we no longer believe in God.

For Blackburn, our response to accepting the truth of projectivism should be similar. Losing one's belief in moral reality no more rationally compels immoralism, or amoralism, or the feeling that making moral judgements is worthless, than did losing one's belief in God. As with the earlier loss of faith there will be some that regard the loss of faith in moral reality as a loss of faith in morality itself. To those it will

seem, as it seemed in a bygone age to the religious moralist, that everything is permitted. But such a reaction, in both cases, Blackburn argues, is not because of anything intrinsic to morality itself but is only consequential on certain (wrong) conceptions of morality, realist and theological respectively. The belief in moral reality or the belief in God as the foundation of morality are, for Blackburn, not part of moral practice per se. They are rather signs of a defective sensibility which leads such moralists to respect the wrong things (presumably moral reality and God rather than morality or moral attitudes itself and its social function). The most important consequence of this conclusion-and this is true whether one accepts that the belief in moral reality signifies a defective sensibility or just that it signifies a realist sensibility-is that it makes room for quasi-realism because, if true, it means that moral practice as such contains no claim to realism despite the appearances. Chapter 4 will discuss the pragmatic defence of moral grammar, which supports this conclusion.

[69] Ibid. Page 37

[70] Ibid. Page 38.

[71] Bambrough, Redford. Moral Scepticism and Moral Knowledge. (Routledge) 1979. Page 18.

[72] It has been suggested that denial of this sort of absolutism is nevertheless compatible with the existence of systems, not yet codified, and known only to God, which would always be able to get us out of a moral dilemma. An Omniscient Being could presumably list all the obligations people would have in different sorts of circumstances and could then formulate extremely complicated moral rules specifying all of these obligations. Then one set of moral rules would apply to everyone, although of course, they would tell people in different circumstances to do quite different things. This set of rules would state (at least a large part of) the one single true morality. This amounts to a form of moral absolutism; but this form of absolutism is no embarrassment to the realist. See Brink, David O. Moral Realism And The Foundations Of Ethics (Cambridge University Press) 1994.

[73] Op. Cit. Mackie Ethics Page. 38.

[74] Ibid. Page. 40.

[75] Ibid. Page. 37.

[76] See Finnis, John. The Fundamentals of Ethics.

[77] Mackie, J.L. Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong. (Penguin) 1977. Page 43.

[78] Husserl, Edmund. Logical investigations Vols. I & II Trans. Findley, J. N. (Routledge) London 1976.

[79] Mackie, J.L. Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong. (Penguin) 1977. Page 16.

[80] See Putnam, Ruth Anna "Weaving Seamless Webs" in Philosophy April 1987.

[81] Op.Cit. McDowell. Rule Following and Moral Realism PP 144-145

[82] For example Iris Murdoch in the Sovereignty of Good and Ruth Anna Putnam "Weaving Seamless Webs" in Philosophy April 1987.

[83] McDowell, John. "Are Moral Requirements Hypothetical Imperatives?" P.A.S. Suppl. Vol. 52. 1978 PP. 13-29. Also from the same author "Virtue And Reason" Monist 62 1979 PP 331-350.

[84] Cavell, Stanley. The Claim Of Reason (Oxford University Press) Oxford 1979 Chapter 10 "An Absence Of Morality".

[85] See Passim. Thompson, E. P. The Making of the English Working Class.

[86] ibid. Passim.

[87] This is a phrase used by Bernard Williams in Ethics and The Limits of Philosophy. (Fontana) 1985. Page 143. Robert Nozick also uses it.

[88] See Bernard Williams' discussion of "thick" moral concepts in Ethics and The Limits of Philosophy. PP 140-145.

[89] Ibid. Page. 143.

[90] Ethics and The Limits of Philosophy. PP.149-150.

[91] I am grateful to Nicola Ferguson of U.C.N. for discussing L'Etranger with me

[92] Jones, Rosemarie. Camus L'Etranger and La Chute. (Grant And Cutler) Spain 1994. Page 32.

[93] Ibid. Page 34.

[94] Op. cit. Page. 45.

Chapter 3.

The Analogy with Secondary Properties.

> The division of qualities into primary and secondary was a great discovery in methodology, not a metaphysical discovery... Everything that comes to us by way of the senses is part of reality and worthy of our attention.
>
> M.Drury.[1]

3.1. Rationale.

I do not wish to defend a model of moral realism based on an analogy with secondary properties; my main contribution to the debate is contained in chapter 5 where I claim the best model of moral realism is to be found in an analogy with aspect perception. I intend in this chapter, rather, to do three things: I shall firstly examine John McDowell's paper "Values and Secondary Qualities", since it has been the focus of much recent debate. It is a direct response to the arguments of Mackie in the first chapter of Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong. In it, McDowell argues for two main points: that Mackie is incorrect in his assessment of secondary qualities as `subjective' (or that his idea of `subjectivity' is confused); and that his notion of what is or can be `real' is too `thin', i.e. impoverished. McDowell does not specifically offer an actual model of how moral values can be based on an analogy with secondary properties. He simply argues that such a model is possible. Therefore, I shall attempt secondly, to build upon his ideas in order to `flesh out' such a model by offering a dispositional thesis, based upon his arguments. Thirdly, I shall examine how well the analogy with secondary properties copes with criticisms by Jonathan Dancy in his paper "Two Conceptions Of Moral

Realism" and his recently published book Moral Reasons. I shall also offer my own criticisms.

3.2. Values And Secondary Properties.

In "Values and Secondary Qualities", McDowell starts off by agreeing with Mackie that "ordinary evaluative thought presents itself as a matter of sensitivity to the world"[2], but disagrees with him as to whether this phenomenological observation is an accurate representation of how things actually are. In endeavouring to find an account of value experience that will fit with the phenomenology, it seems natural to try to devise a perceptual model. Mackie thinks that no such model can work and therefore that the phenomenology expresses an error we all make. McDowell believes that a perceptual model can be made to work. Mackie's reasons for rejecting the perceptual model are those discussed in Chapter 2, and have two main steps. Firstly he thinks a perceptual model of value experience must be a primary quality model, since 'pre-philosophical' awareness of secondary qualities just takes them to be primary qualities, committing a 'projective error'. To adopt a 'philosophically corrected secondary quality model'[3] of awareness of values cannot justifiably be done since to do so would be to abandon the phenomenology altogether. Secondly, Mackie cannot accept the idea that values are analogous to primary qualities i.e. 'out there in the world' independent of us and of anyone's being aware of them, and yet at the same time

> "intrinsically such as to elicit some "attitude" or state of will from someone who becomes aware of them".[4]

Further, a model of value experience based on an analogy with primary qualities would, says McDowell, require proposing some sort of 'intuition' by which we become aware of 'objective rational connections' that are just 'brutally and absolutely *there*'.[5]

This, he says, "turns the epistemology of value into mere mystification".[6] This is so because McDowell takes value apprehension to be an intellectual rather than a mere sensory matter.[7] Values have to somehow elicit our responses, yet sensory perception does not `mirror' the role of reason in the intellectual apprehension of value. A primary quality model of value apprehension would involve a picture where values imprinted themselves on a passive consciousness. The perceptual model has nothing to say about how such an `intuition' of values might work, or how we can come by knowledge of values. So McDowell is quite willing to concede to Mackie without any resistance that such a `primary quality model' will not do. What he really wants to deliberate upon and question is Mackie's belief that a `secondary quality model' will not do either.

Mackie rejected the possibility of a secondary quality model because `ordinary pre-philosophical consciousness' commits a `projective error' in its perception of secondary qualities, thinking that there is something `out there', which is in fact just in their minds. This is where McDowell disagrees. His account of secondary qualities is as follows. Take a secondary quality, say, that of redness. McDowell analyses what it is for an object to be understood as having this quality, a move which seems to take a step away from the phenomenological questions he was so concerned to keep to earlier. He justifies this by saying:

> I have written of what property-ascriptions are understood to be true in virtue of, rather than of what they are true in virtue of. No doubt it is true that a given thing is red in virtue of some microscopic textural property of its surface; but a predication understood only in such terms- not in terms of how the object would look-would not be an ascription of the secondary quality of redness. [8]

To continue with McDowell's account. An object is understood to have the secondary quality of redness if it has "a disposition to present a certain sort of perceptual experience"[9] i.e. it has a disposition to look red to a normal perceiver (i.e. in standard conditions to someone who possesses colour vision). This quality may be analysed, e.g. in terms of the object's surface being textured in such a way as to reflect certain wavelengths of the electromagnetic spectrum. But to predicate such things of the object is not to predicate the secondary quality of redness of that object. The secondary quality of redness can only be predicated of the object in terms of its being such as to look red. The error that Mackie alleges we commit in our perception of secondary qualities is that of supposing that they are 'thoroughly objective', but McDowell argues that in saying this Mackie is failing to demarcate two senses of 'objective'. One sense is that in which a property is 'in the world', there exclusively of its being perceived by anyone. The other is the sense in which it is possible to define the concept sufficiently without referring to anyone's subjective states. Just because a concept is not objective in the second sense does not mean that it cannot be objective in the first. McDowell points out that secondary qualities are objective in the first sense since the disposition to, e.g. look red is always present *independently of any actual case of looking red to someone*. The 'power to produce sensations in us' is always there. I am inclined to feel that it is highly questionable whether this is what a 'pre-philosophical consciousness' means when it thinks that an object is red. It seems more in keeping with the phenomenology of our common everyday experience to think that we ascribe *redness* to the object as being there independently of anyone seeing it, rather than a *disposition* to look red. However, I shall examine later an argument offered by Colin McGinn that attempts to resolve this issue.

I do think that McDowell's distinction between two senses of 'objective' is a good one, however. He thinks that primary qualities are objective and secondary qualities subjective in the sense that secondary qualities are necessarily conceived of in terms of subjective states and reactions e.g. *seeing something as 'looking red'*. What it is for an object to have any particular primary quality can be conceived without any need for reference to subjective states of any perceivers at all. McDowell argues that Mackie has confused this sense of the word 'objective' with that in which to say something is 'objective' is to say it is really in the world, and to say that something is 'subjective' is to say that it only really exists in the subject's mind, even though the subject believes it to be in the world. Just because secondary qualities cannot be conceived of except in terms of subjective states, that has no bearing on the question of whether or not they exist in the world. McDowell connects this to what he claims is the conflation of two distinct ideas by Locke. These are firstly the idea of the possibility that perceptions can be veridical, i.e. the objects of perception are really there-'objective' in the first sense; and secondly the idea that some properties of objects are not 'essentially phenomenal in character', that is to say they can be conceived without reference to subjective states: 'objectivity' in the second sense. With this distinction in mind, we can see that there is a genuine distinction between primary and secondary perceptual qualities, but that this need not have any consequences for the veridicality of our experience of either. The senses of 'objective' are thus: A. f is mind-independent. And B. something is f but needs to be described as f. E.g. something is red but needs to be described as looking red (to normal perceivers in standard conditions).

To the two senses of 'objective' and 'subjective' above, I should like to add a third. This is the sense in which something is f but the apprehension of f depends on the possession of the concept of f. For example, racism is wrong, but the perception of the moral value in a case of racism depends upon the observer's possession of the concept of racism. This can be illustrated by consideration of the phenomenon of aspect perception as discussed by the later Wittgenstein. The duck-rabbit can be seen as a duck and/or a rabbit (but not, for instance, an elephant) because of its real visual features. However, the rabbit aspect can only be observed by people who possess the concept of a rabbit. Since these features are there even if they go unnoticed, but nevertheless are reliant upon concepts, we may say that moral values, conceived of as aspects, are perception-independent, but not *conception-independent*. I shall discuss fully the topic of moral aspect-perception in chapter 5.

It will now be obvious that the difference between McDowell and Mackie here is one of what they take the 'common understanding' of the nature of secondary qualities to be. McDowell thinks that we understand a thing's being red as its having a disposition to look red to us. Mackie supposes that if we think a thing is red we are not thinking that it is disposed to give rise to perceptions of redness in us (as McDowell does); we think that the very redness is in it in much the same way that we think its shape is, and in thinking this we are, Mackie says, in error. I feel more inclined to agree with Mackie on the point about ascribing redness to an object as being there independently of anyone seeing it, rather than being a *disposition* to look red. But I disagree that in doing so we are in error. More will be said about this later on. The analogy presented by McDowell between moral values and secondary qualities, is that moral values may well be subjective in the sense that we cannot conceive of them without reference to subjective states, but he wishes to argue that they are objective in being 'real'; part of the real world and capable of being experienced veridically. Mackie's major objection to the possibility of the existence of objective values and secondary qualities is that our experience of them can be better or more economically explained along projectivist lines. Both the argument from relativity

and the argument from queerness in the end come down to saying that the respective difficulties are better explained by our being in error than by postulating objective values. McDowell's response is that although we need not refer to an object's being such as to look red in a causal explanation (in terms of reflection of certain wavelengths due to textural properties for example) of its having the secondary quality of redness, we cannot deny that it is such as to look red. The point is that

> 'The right explanatory test is not whether something pulls its own weight in the favoured explanation ... but whether the explainer can consistently deny its reality".[10]

McDowell is arguing, correspondingly, that although an explanation of our experience of values can be made without needing to refer to objective values (Mackie offers something like this in his section on "Patterns of Objectification" (see 2.6) in Chapter One of Ethics), that has no tendency to compel us to say that objective values do not exist in the world. Indeed he wishes to argue that we are even less likely to say that values do not exist than we are to deny the reality of redness or any other secondary quality, because of what he calls a 'crucial disanalogy' between the two. The analogy between them is roughly that both kinds of thing in the world give rise to subjective states, such as seeing something as red and feeling that something is wrong. The disanalogy is that values are thought of as meriting the feelings they give rise to whereas secondary qualities are just disposed to give rise to perceptions: there is no question of their meriting or not meriting them; they are merely elicited. This disanalogy, says McDowell,

> 'Makes it doubtful whether merely causal explanations of value experience (such as Mackie's) are relevant to the explanatory test...[11]

McDowell examines this feature of 'meriting' further in the case of 'danger', or the 'fearful'. He argues that a satisfactory account of the fearful is not possible if it is restricted to merely causal terms, at least not if we are engaged in what Simon Blackburn has called an "attempt to understand ourselves"[12]. To do that McDowell thinks that we need an account of fear as "a response to objects that merit such a response"[13]. To explain satisfactorily actual cases of fear we must be able to say why the person is afraid of what he is afraid of. A causal explanation cannot do this. It may explain fully how the sight of the object caused certain reactions in the brain and nervous system of the subject but it will not tell us <u>why</u> (in the sense of making it intelligible/appropriate/comprehensible) that subject felt fear in the presence of that object. For that, we need an explanation of the way in which the situation was such as to merit fear (or was such as the subject thought that it merited fear although in fact it did not). McDowell says

> For an object to merit fear just is for it to be fearful. So explanations of fear that manifest our capacity to understand ourselves in this region will simply not cohere with the claim that reality contains nothing in the way of fearfulness.[14]

I think McDowell's analogy is a good one and bears comparison to remarks made by Colin McGinn on the <u>separate issue</u> of the two senses of 'objective':

> It is supposed that if a quality is properly analysed by reference to something mental, then it must be a quality of something mental-hence it is not in the object. The argument turns on ambiguity in the phrase 'in the mind': this can mean either 'analysed by reference to something mental' or 'correctly predicated of something mental' the mistake is to think the former entails the latter.[15]

Now let's compare the property of being frightening: the property is 'in the mind' in the first sense, but it could be, but not necessarily, in the second. In the moral case, we make sense of moral indignation by seeing it as a response to an act that merits such a response; by being, say, an act of willful cruelty. The wrongness in the act is 'analysed by reference to something mental' but this does not mean that the wrongness is merely in the mind -as if the correct description was 'correctly predicated of something mental'-rather, in this instance, a thing's looking wrong is explained by the fact that it is wrong. Colours and values are not a function of consciousness. Rather, what is a function of consciousness is our ability to see them.

It may seem at first sight that there is a problem with this line of thought that would apply even more forcefully to moral values (to which this argument is intended to extend). Some people dread things that they themselves admit do not merit such a response (my own reaction to perfectly harmless snakes, for instance). Conversely, there are some situations or objects which most people would feel merited great fear and yet which some other people face without a tremor, or even enjoy, such as my great fear of heights compared to the calm of a scaffolder or the exhilaration of a climber. This seems to conflict with McDowell's assertion that "for an object to merit fear just is for it to be fearful"[16], and it certainly would not tend to support the notion of objective fearfulness existing in the world. But he is careful to admit the possibility of mistakes being made; indeed he is keen that these, too, be explicable by any satisfactory theory. We could, I feel, say that someone who failed to recognise that a situation merited fear was lacking in the faculty that should have revealed that to him; he failed to notice that aspect. (McDowell would presumably prefer an analogy with someone being colour-blind). This extends easily to people who enjoy dangerous sports; it is not the case that they are *without* fear, rather it is the case that they notice a different aspect of the ordinarily frightening situation, or see those situations in a different light, or however one wants to put it. This applies to an analogy with moral value: I cannot see the fearful as other people do without possession of similar capacities, and I cannot see what is wrong without a similar right sort of moral capacity such as a sympathy and concern for the

well-being of human beings. McDowell would want to argue that as colour is only visible in suitable conditions to those who possess colour vision, so, analogously, 'rightness' is only evident to those capable of being sympathetic to the concern of other humans. Unless you share human concerns and patterns of feeling, it is impossible to understand what it is for an action to be cruel and wrong or kind and right. If the determined non-cognitivist replies "This is all very well, but I still see no reason to think that values really exist in the world. Just because McDowell claims that we must suppose that they do in order to avoid undermining the intelligibility of explanations of our behaviour, that proves nothing about whether there genuinely are values in the world out there." McDowell's argument in "Non-cognitivism and Rule-Following" is intended to show that such desires for proof of objective values which are 'intelligible from a standpoint independent' of our tendency to actually perceive them is a mistake. The lack of such intelligibility is, he believes, of no consequence in the question of whether or not values can be objective. My discussion of that paper comes in chapter 5.2.

.2.i. A possible Analogy with Secondary Properties.

McDowell does not specifically offer an actual model of how moral values can be based on an analogy with secondary properties. He simply argues that such a model is possible. Therefore, I shall now attempt to 'flesh out' such a model by offering a dispositional thesis, based upon his arguments.

In making the now classic statement of the distinction between primary and secondary properties, John Locke says that primary properties-"solidity, extension, figure, motion or rest, and number"[17]

-are qualities which objects have in themselves. He contrasts this with secondary qualities "colours, sounds, tastes, etc."-which

are nothing in the objects themselves but powers to produce various sensations in us by their primary qualities, i.e. by the bulk, figure, texture and motion of their insensible parts.[18]

This is a dispositional thesis. Non-realists have argued for non-realism about secondary properties from this distinction. However, non-realism about secondary properties would only follow from this distinction if the explanation of secondary qualities outlined above were to be understood as justifying a reductive analysis of secondary qualities. Explanations featuring secondary quality terms could then be replaced, without loss of explanatory power, by explanations in terms of objects' primary qualities and their dispositions to appear in certain ways to observers in standard perceptual conditions. This non-realist conclusion seems to be justified by comparing the relation between the property and its perceptual appearance in the case of a primary property with the same relation in the case of a secondary property. Taking the primary quality of squareness, for example, the relation can be stated thus:

`X looks square because it is square.`

In contrast, for the relation in the case of a secondary quality, such as redness, the explanation is inverted:

`X is red because it looks red` (to normal perceivers in standard conditions).

Even though explanations of a thing's being red, sour, loud, cold, etc. in terms of how such things appear seem to threaten the reality of such properties there is a move open to the realist about secondary properties, short of simply denying the primary-secondary quality distinction. McDowell suggests as much in "Values And Secondary Properties" when referring to Colin McGinn, who argues for the following understanding of the dispositional thesis in his book The Subjective View . McGinn's case rests on the claim that the explanation in the case of secondary qualities is not an inversion of the primary quality explanation in all respects. The realist can claim that whilst it is true to say that a thing's looking red (to normal perceivers in standard conditions) explains its being red, inverting the explanation for primary properties, the realist denies that its looking red has semantic priority over its being red. This means that the type of explanation in the case of secondary qualities differs from that given for primary qualities. For secondary quality explanations, explanans and explanandum are conceptually equivalent: a things being red etc. is explained by its looking red etc. but also, conversely, and *contra* Locke, its looking red is explained by the fact that it is red.

This understanding of the primary-secondary quality distinction gives a dispositional thesis for secondary qualities, so-called because, in line with Locke's explanation, objects possessing secondary qualities have dispositions to appear in certain ways to perceivers. Colin McGinn, who argues for this understanding of the dispositional thesis, claims that the explanation avoids circularity because of what he calls "the 'inherent intentionality' of the explanans"[19] What this means is that we cannot explain what it is for something to be red without referring to how red things appear visually. But it is also true that we cannot explain those visual appearances other than in terms of the redness of the object which appears red.

3.2.ii. The reality of moral values.

     As with secondary qualities, the defence of moral values as real properties can be given by arguing for a dispositional thesis. It is possible to incorporate the conceptual equivalence of explanans and explanandum to explain the relation between our understanding of what it is to possess a moral property and how things possessing such properties appear perceptually. In the case of values the dispositional thesis states that:

     `X is cruel because it appears cruel...`

The analogy with secondary properties requires that such statements do not offer an analysis of what it means for something to possess moral properties but an explanation in which explanans and explanandum are conceptually equivalent. However, there is a disanalogy here in that with secondary properties it is perceptual appearances under ideal conditions which explains what it is for something to be red, say, (by depending on proper lighting, necessary colour vision, etc.) but in the case of moral properties we cannot complete the dispositional thesis by explaining what it is for something to be cruel simply in terms of how cruel things appear ideally. Jonathan Dancy says as much in objecting to McDowell's `weak' realism.[20] The objection rests on the allegation that the dispositional thesis for moral properties would have to be completed in terms of how values appear under ideal conditions. The problem is then that, whereas looking red, tasting sweet, feeling cold etc. under ideal conditions might be thought to explain what it is for something to be red, sweet, cold etc., the appearances of values under normal conditions cannot explain what it is for something to be cruel, courageous, just etc. In the case of secondary qualities, appearances might plausibly be thought to explain the existence of such properties because we have little difficulty in understanding how secondary qualities appear in ideal conditions. If the appearances of moral values are to be capable of explaining the existence of moral values, however, we will have to

understand how values appear in ideal conditions. But how can we understand this when such ideal conditions never prevail?

The first thing to notice about this objection is that it ignores the conceptual equivalence argued for between property and appearance in the case of secondary qualities. From the conceptual equivalence of being red and appearing red, or being cruel and appearing cruel, it follows that perceptual appearances do not explain the existence of properties by being understood independently of grasping the property's concepts. Furthermore, the fact that we grasp the concept and understand how the property appears together is a conceptual truth and not just a contingent fact. The explanation offered through the dispositional thesis, is one which itself can only be understood by one who already has the concept of the property being explained. It, therefore, in accordance with the dispositional thesis, presupposes understanding of how secondary qualities appear as well as a grasp of the relevant concept. Both Dancy and Blackburn have objected, however, that the appearances of moral values are not explicable in the same way that secondary quality appearances are, because of the need to understand how moral values appear in ideal conditions. If this difference cannot be explained, the disanalogy could/would threaten the appropriateness of the secondary quality model as an analogy for moral perception. However, I do not think that this is a good point. It is open to someone who proposes the dispositional thesis to offer an explanation on the lines that the reason we cannot explain something's being cruel, say, in terms of how cruel things appear ideally is that typically moral properties have greater variability, are more complex, and they are generally more difficult to perceive correctly than are secondary properties. Because of the greater complexity and variability of moral properties we ought to admit that our grasp of moral concepts is less complete than is our grasp of secondary qualities. But given that fact the disanalogy that we find between values and secondary properties is just what we would expect to find. Amongst the conditions which make moral properties more complex, and our understanding of moral concepts and the perception of moral properties more difficult, are our moral sensibilities. These sensibilities play an analogous role in moral perception to the role that our senses play in

ordinary sense perception. But as well as analogy we find here disanalogy. It is this disanalogy that has persuaded Dancy to adopt the idea first suggested by McDowell[21] that moral value is a disposition to elicit a merited response. This disanalogy is due to the fact that the contribution to moral perception of our moral sensibilities is one for which we are culpable. Unlike blindness or colour-blindness, deafness, dumbness, etc., the analogous notion of moral blindness is one for which we are responsible. It is this disanalogy and others which I shall go on to discuss, which has persuaded me that the analogy with secondary properties cannot fully account for the experience of moral perception (and especially moral blindness) in the way that my analogy with aspect perception can.

McDowell has explained this disanalogy by referring to the fact that whereas something's appearing red (under standard conditions) is merely caused or elicited by coming into perceptual contact with a red object, the appropriate moral response to a given situation, e.g. feeling remorse at having failed someone in their hour of need, is a reaction which is _merited_.

So there is a distinction here between a response which is elicited, and one which is _merited_. This distinction is very important to a defence of a non- Platonist realism, both in the analogy with secondary properties and aspect perception. For one thing it explains the need for a critical stance toward our moral judgements and beliefs and shows that the realist is not committed, as Blackburn insists that the realist is, to the picture of someone engaged in moral perception as

> a pure passive, receptive witness, who has no responsibility in the matter[22]

This is nothing but a caricature of what the realist means by the making of moral judgements (See also chapter 5.7). The other disanalogy that seems to follow on from this, is that if talk of perceiving moral properties is to be understood literally as talk about the perception of real properties, it would have to be possible to explain moral perception in the same way that other kinds of perception can be explained, i.e. causally. But as we have seen, to employ a causal explanation is to apply the wrong explanatory test. However, as we have just noted, the appearances of secondary properties are merely elicited, whereas the appearances of moral properties are *merited*. The relevant response in the case of moral value is approval (or not) and as such is an inclination of the will. The suggestion here is that moral perception involves judgement. There is an involvement with the intellect in moral perception that is absent in the 'raw' nature of colour perception.(A link with the will in moral aspect perception is implicit at chapter 5.7). I feel that this disanalogy, plus the added difference of the complex nature of moral perception, as opposed to the more simple 'raw' nature of colour perception, poses a problem for the secondary property analogy. It follows that if these disanalogies persist, then moral perception cannot bear analogy with perception of secondary properties. Even worse, colour blindness, or whatever is involved in mis-perception, cannot be the same for the perception of moral properties, because in moral perception we are culpable in cases of moral blindness, but not held culpable for colour blindness.

It is interesting to note that John McDowell agrees with Blackburn that moral perception cannot be explained causally[23] and that, although we are to take our moral awareness as awareness of real properties, the perceptual model is only a model and talk of perception is only metaphorical rather than literal.[24] Richard Norman also takes this view. He describes 'moral vision' as a metaphor, albeit an appropriate one.[25] Norman's reasons for regarding moral perception as not involving literal vision differ from McDowell's in that Norman sees moral vision as not literal vision but pattern recognition. It is, he says, more like "Seeing a gestalt"[26]. McDowell's reasons for denying that moral perception is perception in a literal sense are, of course, different from Blackburn's reasons in so far that he is a realist. McDowell claims that a 'causal gloss' is

inappropriate to the perceptual awareness of moral properties. Although he does not state the connection explicitly his reason for denying this seems to be due to the disanalogy he notes between moral perception and secondary quality perception, where the appearances in the secondary property case are elicited while in the case of moral properties, they are merited. We may elucidate the difference by noting that whereas colour can be described as intrinsically phenomenal, moral value is intrinsically *motivational*. This leads him to claim that moral perception is intellectual perception rather than sensory perception. Perception which is intellectual, according to McDowell, is only perception in a metaphorical sense.[27] There are two distinctions here. The merited response versus the merely elicited response, and a response which is merely descriptive as opposed to a response which is motivational.(We must not run these together since they have no necessary connection. See 5.7.).

Against McDowell, I believe that the perception of moral values depends on intellectual as well as non-intellectual capacities. I shall argue for the involvement of the intellect in moral perception in chapter 5 by showing how moral aspect perception has a necessary link with the will through the necessary mastery and correct application of concepts. It is through this phenomenon of aspect perception that moral value shows itself to be motivational. Our responsibility for discerning merited appearances is due to the fact that sensibilities over which we have some control are amongst the conditions of moral experience, and there is no reason for not counting those sensibilities as conditions of perceptual experience, taking perception in its literal sense.[28] As a way of distinguishing perceptual experiences of different kinds of property this appears to be harmless enough. 'Intellectual perception', we might say, is a term warranted by experience in which we have responsibility for the way things appear to us. However, in going on from this to claim that only sensory perception is perception in the literal sense, McDowell is in danger of accepting the very same dichotomy which he elsewhere seeks to reject as a dogma of eighteenth century philosophy of mind viz. the sense-reason dichotomy.[29] Denying the sense-reason dichotomy, as a radical distinction between our intellectual and non-intellectual capacities, depends on accepting both intellectual and

sensory perception as perception in the literal sense. Both kinds of perception depend on our capacity for sense experience and our intellectual capacity. Our responsibility for merited appearances is a case of 'seeing-as', and due to the fact that sensibilities over which we have some control are amongst the conditions of moral experience. There is no reason for not counting these sensibilities as conditions of perceptual experience in moral perception. An example of this will be something like this: imagine that I am admiring a parked car that I wish I could afford. All the appearances are merely elicited; I notice that it has a certain shape, colour, and design features, especially the latest magnesium alloy wheels, which grab my attention. Then, as the owner gets in and prepares to drive off, I notice that the front offside wheel is deflated, so I knock on the driver's side window and tell her that she has a puncture. The elicited appearances of the situation also had a moral feature, that I eventually noticed. This feature was *uncovered* by my meritorious reaction. The merited appearance was manifested in (uncovered by) my response.

3.3. Appearance and Reality.

To continue with my exposition of the analogy with secondary properties. The test of the reality of properties is, in line with the secondary quality analogy, independent of the question of whether they are subjective or objective. "Laws of subjectivity seem not to be capturable in physicalist terms".[30] A property is subjective if the explanation or understanding of it depends on a reference or understanding of how an object with that property appears perceptually. Secondary qualities, and moral values, are subjective in that sense. Primary qualities, on the other hand, are objective properties because they can be understood without reference to the dispositions of objects possessing those properties to appear in certain ways experientially.

For the secondary property analogy the question of the reality of any type of property is governed by the application to them of the explanatory test. A type of property is real if properties of that type are ineliminable from explanatory contexts. In the case of secondary properties, the realist can argue for their reality because explanations of their

appearances make ineliminable, and therefore essential, reference to secondary qualities. The reductionist move is thus resisted due to the insistence on the conceptual equivalence of explanans and explanandum. It is the case that explanations of secondary qualities need to refer to their appearances and vice versa: we cannot understand the one without the other. It may seem problematic to be accepting the dispositional thesis and denying the reduction of secondary qualities but this can be justified. Because of the conceptual equivalence of secondary qualities and secondary quality appearances the dispositional thesis provides an explanation only and not an analysis. That is, the dispositional thesis as it has been explained, does not commit the realist to the view that, say, `being red` means `appearing red` (to normal perceivers in standard conditions).

The real importance of defending this conception of the dispositional thesis for secondary properties is shown when we see Mackie arguing that realism about moral properties or secondary qualities is committed to modelling the awareness of such properties on primary quality perception[31] thus presupposing that the realist must deny the primary-secondary quality distinction. As we have already noted, for Mackie, moral realism modelled on the perception of primary qualities is an intelligible position which happens to be false. McDowell has argued, however, that Mackie's conception of realism is not just false but unintelligible.[32] McDowell's reasons for rejecting this idea of realism are in part due to his acceptance of the understanding of the primary-secondary quality distinction argued for above. But he also reinforces the idea of secondary qualities (and moral values) as subjective but real, by explaining the false assumptions underlying Mackie's non-realist position. These assumptions concern the conception of reality that Mackie is working with.

McDowell sees Mackie's phrase 'The fabric of the world' as belonging to an argument involving a second sense of objective, in which

> To call a putative object of awareness 'objective' is to say it is there to be experienced, as opposed to being a mere figment of the subjective state that purports to be an experience of it.[33]

The conception of reality which allows only what is objective to be real has been explained in terms of various metaphors such as, the Archimedian point, a God's Eye View and the Absolute conception of reality.[34] Mackie is employing a notion of objectivity which derives from the Absolute conception of reality. Philosophers who accept that this Absolute conception is the conception of reality, from which (ideally) the whole of reality can be grasped, have a tendency to regard themselves as defenders of a scientific outlook in comparison to others, who, in denying the identity of objectivity and reality, are proclaimed unscientific. To say that secondary qualities are subjective in the first sense, is not to give support to the idea that they are subjective in Mackie's Absolute conception. In the realist picture, primary and secondary qualities are on a par, because the disposition to produce subjective states is a quality of the object, and in that sense is real, though its conception is, nevertheless, subjective. There is a need for a sentient being to make sense of colour, but that reaction is to how the world is:

> How things strike someone as being, is, in a clear sense, a subjective matter; there is no conceiving it in abstraction from the subject of the experience[35]

So we can quite properly regard values as in the world despite their involvement with our psychology: moral values are properties; moral predicates are quite correctly and literally applicable to external objects and states of affairs, events, etc-it is just that their being so constitutively involves a relation to the reactions of moral evaluations.

Although Mackie argues for reductive analyses of values and secondary properties, claiming that ordinary thought about these properties involves an error, there is reason to believe that the real motivation behind Mackie's non-realism is this Absolute conception of reality, assumed rather than argued for, in which only what is objective can be real. If ineliminability from explanatory contexts were the actual criterion of reality (as the reductionist would claim) then that should be able to justify the identification of objectivity with reality. But, as we have seen, once we separate the real/non-real distinction from the subjective/objective distinction there is no reason for denying reality to subjective properties qua subjective.

I must insist that whilst it is legitimate to attempt to aim for an objective point of view which transcends all local, subjective points of view, that does not warrant the claim that only what can be understood objectively, without requiring an understanding of how things appear, can be real. The so-called Absolute conception is one point of view from which real properties can be grasped, those properties which can be used in scientific explanations, but it is not the only such view. As the explanatory test for secondary qualities shows, in denying the reduction of secondary to primary qualities and their power to produce sensations, secondary qualities are one type of real property which cannot be understood objectively. The Absolute conception is too 'thin' (i.e. impoverished) a conception to cope with those real properties which are also subjective.[36] To deny reality to such properties is thus to be scientistic rather than scientific i.e. it is to regard science as the only possible standard of reality. Opposing this scientistic view is 'the manifest image', which accepts the reality of properties that have a necessary link with our psychology such as tastes, smells, sounds, colours and values. I have argued

against the scientistic outlook by taking a closer look at the idea of scientific knowledge presupposed by the Absolute conception of reality. I would argue that science, even if it attempts legitimately to transcend local points of view, is only one part of a larger human outlook. Whilst it deals with properties and concepts which can rightly be called objective it is still a necessary, rather than a merely contingent, limitation on our scientific knowledge that it can proceed only from within a human conceptual system.

Operating with a different image of scientific progress, one in which scientific knowledge, like all of our knowledge, is necessarily knowledge within a human conceptual framework, the scientific standpoint loses its claim to be the conception of reality. Within a common framework primary and secondary qualities can still be distinguished as objective and subjective respectively. But they have the same entitlement to be thought of as real. Whether one supports the analogy with secondary properties or not, the realist who supports the manifest image need not think of what is real as independent of our particular way of conceiving the world. This conception of the world can find room for moral value. I accept the manifest image of sounds, tastes, colours and values, but I differ from someone who supports the analogy with secondary properties, in that I conceive of moral values as obtaining independently of our peculiar viewpoint. A cruel action is wrong whether or not anyone sees it.

3.4. Criticisms.

The above discussion has shown moral value to be anthropocentric, in that there is need to take into account human responses to value appearance. The first sense of anthropocentric offered by McDowell (where moral value exists but depends on perception), can be contrasted with a second sense where moral value exists independently of perceptions, constituted by the possibility of our availability to provide a characteristic human response. There is no reason to suppose that these two notions of the anthropocentric necessarily go together. We may call the two conceptions of moral realism a 'weak' and a 'strong' conception. On the weaker conception, a property is a real property of an object if it is a property which exists subjective to a particular experience of it: it exists subjectively but is nonetheless real. The stronger conception has properties of objects existing independently of perception, they are 'out there in the world' waiting to be experienced. In the stronger conception, moral value exists independently of perception, relying on concepts, and the possibility of apprehension by an observer who possesses the appropriate concepts. Someone who holds that the weaker conception is right, might not accept that moral properties, qua real, are anthropocentric in the stronger case. The weaker sense claims less.

Jonathan Dancy insists that realists should be brave, and maintain that the stronger form of moral realism is the only one possible. He therefore criticises McDowell for being insufficiently realist. Dancy's position needs to be summed up and contrasted with the position of McDowell. McDowell has moral value as a property resulting from the disposition of a moral event to elicit a merited response, relying on perception in ideal conditions. (A morally sensitive observer, being fully informed, etc). Dancy sees the moral property as the disposition itself, existing independently from perception:

> real properties are those which are not constituted by the
> availability or possibility of a human response.[37]

Weak realism, in taking moral properties to be constituted by the possibility of such a response, fails to support the idea, which McDowell himself insists upon,[38], that there are objective moral circumstances (i.e. moral facts) internally related to the will.[39] A disposition to elicit a merited response can be there in the world, independent of human response, and therefore be a *fact of the matter*.

As I said previously, it seems more in keeping with the phenomenology of our common everyday experience to think that we ascribe *redness* to the object as being there independently of anyone seeing it, rather than a *disposition* to look red. In the moral case, it does seem to be undeniably true that inflicting harm on an innocent would be wrong whatever anyone thought about it.

If we take McDowell's account of secondary properties as having the colour exist in virtue of a disposition, the sort of double awareness entailed in such moral perception makes moral value an emergent quality: speaking as he does of value existing *in virtue of* a disposition to elicit a merited response. The danger here, is that it puts something between us and our direct singular apprehension of the object we are contemplating. The more we pull away the secondary properties from the object and nearer to ourselves, the more we step away from the direct realist's feeling that in perception we are presented with and exposed to the world as it is before us. Therefore some of the way the world presents itself to us is abstracted from it by the distinction between primary and secondary qualities, becoming more of an aspect of our response than an aspect of that to which perception is a response. It can be seen from this that it is hard to make sense of the idea that moral properties can be experienced. Our moral experiences, on this approach, seem to be more like manifestations of the disposition than experiences of it. This realisation is one of the reasons in favour of accepting the stronger direct realism.

Dancy's conception of value in "Two Conceptions Of Moral Realism" as being identical with the disposition has the advantage of offering a secondary objectivity that is there anyway, awaiting recognition, a reality not dependent on perception, but conception, in the sense that moral perception is essentially concept-dependent; perception of the value is only possible by beings who possess the right moral concepts. As we have seen, the weaker model can be accused of being insufficiently realist, making moral value an emergent property, because it isn't brave enough to recognise the disposition as identical with the value. Objections have been raised that when McDowell insists that

> Evaluative 'attitudes' or states of will are like (say) colour experience in being unintelligible except as modifications of a sensibility like ours[40]

(Something's being red is, in McDowell's own phrase, only able to be understood as true, if true, in virtue of a disposition it has to cause a certain response in a perceiver) Then if the response is taken to be an experience it can be argued that, in the case of moral value, no such experience occurs. (See Dancy's Moral Reasons 1993.) McDowell's answer is that the relevant response is not an experience, but approval, a merited response, and thereby an inclination of the will. There is a subtle shift here, from a notion of a secondary objectivity as being (a) There anyway, waiting to be experienced, to (b) There anyway, awaiting recognition. The direct realist can adopt this idea of moral values being a disposition of the moral situation to elicit a merited response, resulting in an improved conception of moral values, seen as real values that exist in the world awaiting recognition, which makes values both objective and intrinsically related to the will. Dancy is quite prepared to adopt such a conception because it has:

> ... the pleasing consequence that values could not systematically outrun our ability to discern them. If we conceive of them as dispositions to elicit a certain merited response (an inclination of the will) from us, we have already rejected any excessively transcendental realism about ethical truth[41]

But what of the relation between the colour/value and the disposition to petition a response in us; are these to be conceived as identical or not? Our experience of colour does not seem to be the experience of a disposition. Dancy has come to think that the idea of a disposition to elicit a response in an observer will hold for value, but not in the case of colour. As he says, colour seems stubbornly non-dispositional.[42] McDowell speaks ambiguously of ascriptions of value as only able to be understood *as true* if true *in virtue of* a disposition and Dancy points out that it is only by conceiving of the value as a disposition to elicit a merited response that McDowell will be able to have the value as internally or intrinsically related to the will.

> If the value were distinct from the disposition, this move would not work[43]

This is because perception of moral value due to a merited response is an inclination of the will, involving judgement, an intellectual capacity. If the moral value were distinct from the disposition, Dancy argues, it would be just there to be noticed rather than recognised. Identifying the colour or value with a disposition to elicit a merited response yields the thought that colour is essentially phenomenal and value essentially *motivational*. I shall argue in chapter 5, however, that moral values are there in the world as aspects, and it is the concept dependent nature of aspect perception that provides a link with the will: the moral value (aspect) will not be recognised by someone who lacks the relevant concepts.

3.5. Summary.

Faced with a weak realist claiming values to be dispositional properties but denying that they appear phenomenologically as dispositions, Dancy agrees that values do not appear as dispositions and made realism consistent with the phenomenology by denying that values are dispositonal properties. That denial he then takes to entail the denial of the primary-secondary quality distinction with the corollary that moral perception cannot be modelled on secondary quality perception, (consistent with the phenomenological argument for moral realism). The phenomenological argument for realism aims to show that the world is as our experience represents it to us as being. Dancy objects that weak realism is incompatible with the phenomenological argument, because it understands values to be dispositional properties. To be true to the phenomenology, he thinks, therefore, would mean claiming that we experience values as dispositions. But, phenomenologically, our experience is more like manifestations of dispositions than experiences of dispositions.[44] The problem is due to McDowell's attempt to model moral perception on emergent properties. Because he takes moral properties to be emergent, the problem is exacerbated by the claim that secondary properties do not exist as perceived.[45] In the case of values the analogy with secondary qualities leads McDowell to say that

> Values are not brutally there-not there independently of our sensibility-any more than colours are: though, as with colours, this does not stop us supposing that they are there independently of any particular apparent experience of them.[46]

Dancy suggests that the experience of value is narrative, essentially for us;

> The experience of value is the experience of a situation as calling for a certain response, and we can see this as a disposition in the case to extract a merited response from us.[47]

Now can the same thing be said about colour?

> There is a certain `raw' nature to experienced colour which it strains credulity to see as any sort of disposition, no matter how thin.[48]

Dancy says we should distinguish awareness of a shirt as blue from awareness of it as being such as to look blue (pp 161-162). I can be aware of an object as being such as to look a certain way, but this is not the way I am aware of the blueness in a normal situation; there doesn't seem to be such a raw nature to moral experience. Dancy's preferred model of moral perception involves an appeal to a concept of a narrative involving shape and salience. Given the stress on narrative structures in the world, it is one conception available to those who identify value with a disposition, just as much as to those who want to keep the two apart. I shall offer an alternative analogy, that of `seeing aspects` but we should, I think, hold on to the positive parts of the analogy with colour, we should accept the `manifest image' argued for in this and previous chapters. This `manifest image' is opposed to the scientistic Absolute conception, which is simply too impoverished to cope with the reality of qualities that have a necessary link with our psychology, such as colours and values.

Moral value conceived of as McDowell presents it, cannot outrun our peculiar viewpoint, because

> evaluative attitudes or states of will are unintelligible
> except as modifications of a sensibility like ours.[49]

However, we are easily able to conceive of value as being able to exist in the world independent of perceiving minds: wilful murder just is wrong despite whatever people think, so conceiving of value as existing in the world independently as a disposition to petition is attractive. However it is possible to doubt the validity of speaking of colour as identical with a disposition; we can doubt whether it can be said that we see a disposition; the disposition exists in virtue of the colour-the disposition to cause a certain experience exists in virtue of the phenomenal property in the object.

The above discussion has brought out enough disanalogies to doubt whether moral value experience should be modelled on secondary property experience. The conception of a perception-independent moral reality, and its reliance on our possession of the right sort of concepts, which is the way value is intrinsically related to the will, though part of the objective world to which our valuings are responses, is where the analogy with colour breaks down. The contribution to moral perception of our moral sensibilities is one for which we are culpable-moral blindness is not strictly the same as colour-blindness. Also, moral perception is not sensory whilst colour perception is sensory. Colour perception is elicited, whereas moral perception is of something merited (or not). Colour perception does not rely on any emotional or affective response while moral value is essentially *motivational*. Moral perception involves judgement in a way colour perception does not; i.e. moral features are not just there to be noticed like colours are. Values must be recognised. This makes moral perception different from the perception of a simple property like colour. Morality shows itself to be *complex*.

McGinn's argument for the dispositional thesis used in a McDowellian way for moral value perception, can be objected to. For example, X could appear cruel without being so and vice versa. As I shall fully explore in chapter 5, moral context is very important here, the notion of meaningfulness plays a critical role in our noticing the moral aspects of a situation. This can be realised when one considers the role of persuasion in moral argument. I cannot be dissuaded from my conviction that the bright-red fire-engine I am directly looking at is any other colour, no matter how many times an alternative is offered. (This is true in both the aesthetic and moral case, in that only something plausible can show itself. See 5.8). In the moral case, however, I may be persuaded, after vigorous argument, to reconsider my moral stance on a subject I have passionate feelings about, and come to see situations differently, with a subsequent change in my attitude.

The analogy with colour has been useful in establishing the idea of moral value as part of the objective world. It has been valuable in bringing to light the recognition that what is objective need not be prised away from our subjective viewpoint; it is in this way intrinsically related to the will, it can be perceived by a subject who possess the right concepts, the petition from the world will force its aspect upon the subject of the experience who is in possession of the right receptive 'equipment' for moral vision. McDowell has insisted that moral reality is to be thought of as perception independent but not conception independent. But although it is true that our particular view of the world is conception dependent, surely the world is there whether or not anyone conceives of it. Dancy has claimed in Moral Reasons that it is not the properties which are dispositions but rather objects possessing those properties have dispositions to appear perceptually in certain ways. This much cannot be problematic, for precisely the same is true of objects in virtue of their primary qualities. Then we can recognise that a moral situation can have a disposition to elicit a merited response even if no minds are present. If we say that moral value can have a disposition to elicit a response, this admission

would entail the separation of the disposition from the value. So which is it to be; does the disposition exist *in virtue* of the value, or does the value exist *in virtue* of the disposition? Modelling moral perception on secondary property perception cannot be made consistent with the claim that values do not appear as dispositions, unless it can defend the distinction without taking secondary qualities to be dispositional properties. Dancy has admitted as much, and abandoned the analogy with colour altogether. He now attempts to establish the essential connection between value and the will directly by an appeal to narrative structures in the world; to impress upon us the idea that value is essentially *for us*. It is by his identifying the conception of shape as narrative structure that shows the sort of response that makes value possible to be an inclination of the will.

Dancy's conception of moral realism is stronger than McDowell's. By identifying the moral property of meriting a response with the disposition to elicit a merited response, we get a stronger mind-independence than by keeping them apart; a disposition to petition can exist without perceiving minds. It also fits the metaphysical nature of the situation without distorting the phenomenology of everyday value experience. This way, value merits directly. The response is not an experience, for we do not experience a disposition, rather the response is something itself that makes value possible, namely an inclination of the will. It is the shape of the situation, conceived of as narrative structure that has a disposition to elicit a merited response. It is in this way that moral value merits directly. Value is identical with the disposition, but the disposition is now so 'thin' as to be transparent; by noticing the shape and salience of the situation, we will have recognised the meaningfulness of the state of affairs under contemplation (provided that we possess the necessary concepts to see it fully, i.e. correctly) and so the disposition will have already affected us. It is the case that narrative structures in the world have powers to affect us by appearing perceptually in certain ways, and that the way in which we are affected is a merited response to the shape and salience of the situation; the merited response is therefore to the disposition the shape of the situation has. It can be seen now how the disposition has become so 'thin' as to be almost transparent. Dancy claims that

this 'thining down' of the disposition makes us aware of the moral value directly; the value conceived of in this way is a disposition to elicit a merited response.

Although I shall offer an altogether different model of moral realism than Dancy's, I agree with his identification of moral values with narrative structures in the world; we perceive the moral properties we do, not because of their role in a theory of how the world works, but to aid us practically, in the conduct of our lives, just as John Locke insisted.[50] Moral value perception shows in our practical engagement with the world. Like Dancy, I too shall argue that moral seeing is not like the 'raw' awareness of simple properties like colour. But, I shall also argue that our experience of moral values is not as 'direct' as Dancy claims it is: rather, moral perception is better understood as having a more complex nature. Unlike Dancy, I will argue that moral perception can be taken as sometimes literal perception, sometimes not, as interpretation on occasion and sometimes not so, taken to be sometimes a case of aspect perception, sometimes not, as "like seeing, and again not like"[51]. This is the major strength of modelling the phenomenology of moral experience on aspect perception. This means, in particular, that the objects of vision are not necessarily <u>obvious</u>. Any realistic account of our moral experience represents morality as difficult, both in the sense of being difficult to live up to, and, also, in the sense of being difficult to comprehend. I shall show in chapter 5 how moral value can exist <u>totally</u> mind-independently, and still, due to the concept-dependent nature of aspect perception, have a link with the will, without having to rely on talk about 'dispositions'.

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[1] Dury M.O'C. The Danger of Words. pp 78-79

[2] McDowell, John. "Values And Secondary Qualities" Page 110.

[3] Ibid. Page 111.

[4] Ibid. Page 111

[5] McDowell, John. "Values And Secondary Qualities" in Darwall, Stephen, Gibbard, Allan, Railton, Peter. Moral Discourse And Practice Some Philosophical Approaches (Oxford University Press) Oxford. Page202.

[6] Op.Cit. McDowell. Page 111

[7] Op.Cit McDowell. Page 202.

[8] Op.Cit McDowell Page 112.

[9] Ibid. Page 111.

[10] Ibid. Page 118.

[11] Ibid. Page 118

[12] Spreading the Word Page 16.

[13] Ibid. Page 119.

[14] McDowell, John. "Values And Secondary Qualities" Page 119.

[15] McGinn, Colin. The Subjective View (Oxford University Press) 1982 page 130.

[16] Op.Cit McDowell. Page 119.

[17] Lock, John, An Essay Concerning human Understanding Book II, Chapter III, 9.

[18] ibid. II, VIII, 10.

[19] McGinn, Colin. The Subjective View. chapter 2.

[20] Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society 1986 pp178-80.

[21] Values as Secondary Properties. P 118.

[22] Spreading the word. P 198.

[23] Blackburn claims that if moral perception can be understood as perception of real properties, then it would have to be possible to explain moral perception in the same way that other kinds of perception can be explained. Specifically, as a causal notion, and supporting the explanation of our moral experience with a theory of counterfactuals. The causal explanation, he claims to be impossible, and counterfactuals can only be explained quasi-realistically. Talk of moral perception by itself has no explanatory power but is merely an empty metaphor. Ibid. P 16. Chapter 5 will eventually show that it is a mistake to try and give a causal explanation our perceptual experience of moral aspects

[24] 'Critical Notice'. p 380

[25] Norman, Richard. "Making Sense Of Moral Realism". P.4.

[26] Ibid. Page. 6.

[27] McDowell does not specifically state these connections.

[28] Dancy, Jonathan. Moral Reasons.

[29] See "Non-cognitivism and Rule-Following". pp. 154 -7. This dichotomy is a central issue in the argument of moral value perception as analogous to aspect-perception given in chapter 5.

[30] ibid. 33.

[31] Mackie, John. Hume's Moral Theory . P34.

[32] "Values and Secondary Qualities" pp 111-3

[33] op.cit. Page 114.

[34] These metaphors are used respectively by McDowell (AV p.13) Putnam, H. Reason truth and History p.49 and Williams, B. Descartes p.65

[35] ibid. Page 116.

[36] Values and secondary qualities. Page 121.

[37] ibid. p. 168.

[38] Values as secondary Qualities. P.111-117.

[39] ibid p172.

[40] Op.Cit. Values as secondary Qualities. p.113

[41] ibid. page 157

[42] ibid. page 158

[43] ibid. page 158

[44] ibid. 174-5.

[45] The phrase itself, that secondary qualities do not "exist as perceived" comes from Gareth Evans, "Things without The Mind" in Philosophical Subjects ed. Van Straaten p. 99 McDowell credits, and follows, Evans in "Values as secondary Qualities" p.112 and in note 9.

[46] Values as secondary qualities p.120.

[47] Moral Reasons Page 162.

[48] ibid. page 162

[49] Values as secondary Qualities. p.113

[50] Locke, John. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding. (Selby Bigge) book IV especially Xii 11.

[51] See Wittgenstein, Ludwig. Philosophical Investigations. (Blackwell) 1994.

Chapter 4   Quasi-realism.

4.1. Rationale.

The purpose of this chapter is both expository and critical. I aim to explain the quasi-realist position, in order to clarify and sharpen the challenge that it presents the realist with, before going on to criticise both its metaphysics and its understanding of the phenomenology of ordinary moral discourse, both in its own conception of these and what it understands the realist position to involve. I shall examine its main proponent Simon Blackburn's motives for a projective theory of moral value which underpins the challenge quasi-realism poses to realism, especially Blackburn's claim that quasi-realism wins out over moral realism because it can successfully say all of the things realism can, without the need to postulate moral properties, leading to the charge that it makes no difference (apart from an ontological difference) which theory one subscribes to. Contrary to this, I shall defend realism against this `no difference' thesis, as the moral theory best placed to explain the phenomenology and metaphysics of ordinary moral thought and practice.

I aim to show how quasi-realism is best understood as an attempt to defuse the realist argument against projectivism from the previous chapters, namely that projectivism cannot explain moral phenomenology and metaphysics in the way realism can. Contrary to this, I shall argue that quasi-realism ultimately fails to capture key features of serious moral thought and talk. I shall show realism to be able to account for these features, and as the moral theory best placed to explain the phenomenology of ordinary moral thought and practice.

I shall begin my exposition of the challenge of quasi-realism, by noting that Blackburn acknowledges that the phenomenology of our ordinary moral thought and talk 'tempts us toward realism' but thinks that this temptation can be resisted without recourse to denying the phenomenology. The quasi-realist is attempting to earn our right to talk of moral truth, while insisting on the subjective sources of all our judgements, inside our own attitudes, needs, desires, and natures. Quasi-realism is the project of trying to explain and justify the realistic-seeming nature of our common moral practice without having to <u>revise</u> that practice. Therefore quasi-realism is a non-revisionary, <u>descriptive</u> project.

In his complete moral theory Blackburn distinguishes between projectivism, his non-realist theory of value, and quasi-realism, which "seeks to explain, and justify, the realistic-seeming nature of our talk of evaluations".[1] Because he takes this to be a distinction between two independent elements in his moral theory Blackburn has separate arguments in their support. In beginning now my exposition of his theory, I shall therefore look at Blackburn's defence of projectivism. The arguments which constitute this defence, Blackburn says, do not add up to anything like a proof but seek rather " to ensure that a projective theory starts at reasonable odds".[2] It should be noted that Blackburn gives three reasons for preferring a projective theory of value. One of these, presupposing the belief-desire model for the explanation of intentional actions, will be examined but not criticised in any great detail, since in my thesis I am only interested in pursuing arguments which involve the phenomenological account of moral experience. These arguments will be given full exposition, since they shed light upon what Blackburn takes projectivism to involve; namely "spreading an attitude on to the world"[3].

4.2. Blackburn's Motives For Preferring A Projective Theory Of Value.

Blackburn presents his reasons for preferring projectivism, supporting them with arguments based on economy, metaphysics and the explanation of behaviour. In stating these arguments I shall also attempt to clarify just what each one establishes. Blackburn puts them forward as motives for preferring projectivism over realist theories of value but says nothing about whether other non-realist accounts of value could also make use of these arguments. Where they can the arguments will obviously only motivate non-realism in general rather than projectivism in particular. (One problem here is coming up with anti-realist accounts of value other than projectivism. Blackburn gives no examples of such but assumes that there must be others as he allows for the possibility of a quasi-realism not based on projectivism [4] This problem of having no details of other possible anti-realist accounts of value makes it difficult to decide in the case of the third argument whether it supports general non-realism or projectivism in particular).

4.2.i. Economy.

Blackburn's first argument, his argument from economy, is essentially his version of Mackie's argument from `queerness'.[5] The difference between them is one of emphasis. Blackburn stresses the application of `Occam's razor', the view that entities should not be multiplied beyond necessity.[6] This is in contrast to realism, which, for Blackburn, has an ontology of moral values and a mysterious faculty of moral intuition through which we can become aware of those values. Blackburn's Quasi-realist position allows us to talk as if we perceived moral values but when we come to the level of moral theory, explaining and justifying such talk, we come to the realisation that such talk is metaphorical, a mere *facon de parler*. [7] An anti-realist theory of value is thus to be preferred because it requires

no more of the world than what we know is there-the
ordinary features of things on the basis of which we make
decisions about them, like or dislike them, fear them and avoid
them, desire them and seek them out. It asks no more than this:
a natural world, and patterns of reaction to it.[8]

I have claimed that Blackburn's argument from economy is essentially like
Mackie's argument from `queerness'. I shall further justify this by the observation
that Mackie could just as easily have argued for the greater economy of his error
theory. Conversely, Blackburn might have argued from the `queerness' of realism's
postulates and he does, indeed, imply elsewhere[9] that real moral values must be
something like Platonic entities, which are `queer entities' if anything is. The realist
answer to this has been given in chapter 3 in the discussion of the analogy with
colour; whilst the examples in chapter two (2.5) showing how the `disentangling
manouevre' could not always be carried out, produced a problem for the projectivist;
if *naturally* one cannot describe an action as cruel, how can the projection take place?
After all, there must be something in the act sufficient to excite a projection.

It should be clear that this argument, as far as it goes, motivates anti-realism
about value in general rather than the specific theory of projectivism. This is far from
being true of Blackburn's second argument, based on metaphysics, which I shall now
discuss.

4.2.ii. Blackburn's Metaphysical Motive For Projectivism-Supervenience.

This argument[10] to motivate projectivism is also touched upon by Mackie in his argument from `queerness'. For another way to bring out the `queerness' involved in realism, according to Mackie, is to look at the realist's explanation of

> the connection between the natural fact that an action is a piece of deliberate cruelty-say, causing pain just for fun-and the moral fact that it is wrong.[11]

(I must clarify something at this point. When I follow the anti-realist's distinction between natural and moral properties or facts, I am not to be understood as accepting the implication that moral properties or facts are non-natural. An objectivist may claim that moral properties are naturally occurring properties. The objectivist holds that a moral judgement such as "Killing innocent people is always wrong" is a proposition which is true or false. It ascribes a property to all actions of a certain type. Rightness, wrongness, goodness, badness, are, the objectivist holds, moral properties. As a naturalist, I may claim that possession of a moral property just is possession of a natural property-is the fact that an action is a piece of deliberate cruelty a natural fact as opposed to a moral fact? From the point of view of the realism I shall defend in chapter 5, moral facts are aspects of the manifest image,[12] and as such are natural facts, although, of course, not all natural facts are moral facts.)

Ruling out the possibility that a thing's natural properties either entail or semantically necessitate its moral properties, Mackie says that moral properties must be held to supervene on natural properties. But this supervenience relation he rejects in favour of the `simpler' and `more comprehensible' explanation of projectivism.

Whilst agreeing with Mackie in thinking that realism has difficulties explaining the connection between natural and moral properties, Blackburn takes projectivism to explain the relation of supervenience. Thus, for Blackburn, it isn't the fact that realism takes the moral to supervene on the natural that he finds problematic, for he accepts that supervenience. But what is interesting about supervenience, Blackburn says, is not that it holds but the reason why it holds and this, he thinks, realism cannot explain.

It is not my intention in this thesis to attack the theory of supervenience. Since realism and non-realism agree that changes in a thing's non-moral features are necessary to produce changes in their moral features, I shall defend realism against Blackburn's objection that, because it is necessary that a thing's natural properties fix its moral properties, moral supervenience must involve a ban on a `mixed' world (where, say, some cases of wanton cruelty are wrong and some cases of wanton cruelty are not wrong), and that whilst projectivism can explain the ban on a mixed world which supervenience entails, realism cannot. For this purpose, I shall give a very brief description of the notion of supervenience, (basically the one outlined by Davidson in "Essays on Actions and Events") to get quickly to the relation of moral properties to non-moral properties introduced by Blackburn, that he terms necessity.

In general, supervenience holds between sets of properties. These properties we can call A and B. B -properties non-causally necessitate A-properties such that no object or event possessing an A-property can change in respect of that property without having changed in respect of its B-properties. No two objects or events can possess identical B-properties and differ in respect of any A -property. Calling B-properties `base properties' and A -properties `supervening properties', base properties fix supervening properties but not vice versa. For example, taking the moral case, it is the natural properties of a thing or state of affairs which, as the base properties, fix its moral properties. A change in moral properties, therefore, can only be explained as being due to a change in natural properties. And two objects or events having the same natural properties must have the same moral properties. As the point

is usually put, it is a conceptual truth that the moral supervenes on the natural; there can be no moral difference without a difference in naturalistic features. Supervenience is thus a <u>modal</u> claim; the connection between that which supervenes and that upon which it supervenes is not gratuitous, but *necessary*.

This asymmetry between the two sets of properties can be explained by looking at another area where supervenience is often argued for. In the philosophy of mind the mental is sometimes said to supervene on the physical. This is because it is held that whilst different people, or one person at different times, in the same physical state, would have to be in the same mental state, it is only conceivable from the point of view of a type-identity theorist that identity of mental states necessitates identity of physical states.[13]

Supervenience is a principle constraining what truths there <u>can be</u>, given certain others, not merely a constraint on what it is to make moral judgements, though if we seek moral truths, we do well to heed that constraint in our judgements: if someone makes a particular moral judgement about a state of affairs with certain ordinary, everyday, non-moral features (or `naturalistic' features as they are called)-suppose she judges a particular act of inflicting pain on a cat, simply for the sake of amusement, to be wrong-but refuses to make the same judgement about another act identical in all natural respects-another act of inflicting the same amount of pain on a similar cat for similar amusement-related reasons-then she thereby displays a lack of understanding of moral language.

This brief account of the nature of supervenience shows that the relation provides a necessary link between two sets of properties. But there is always a question in respect of any area where supervenience holds concerning the type of necessity involved (and hence the scope of the supervenience relation). For this reason, Blackburn introduces the distinction between two types of supervenience, one which he calls simply supervenience the other which he calls <u>necessity</u>. 14

To explain the distinction Blackburn imagines an object with properties B* on which supervene property A. B*/A supervenience requires merely that in any world in which something is B* and A then anything which is B* must also be A. The stronger requirement of B*/A necessity is that if something is B* and A then anything which is B* must be A in <u>all possible worlds</u>.

The difference between these two relations can thus be understood as one of scope. B*/A necessity requires that supervenience holds across all possible worlds whilst B*/A supervenience allows two kinds of world, one in which all things which are B* are also A, and the other world, in which things which are B* are not A.

The relationship between the two relations is:
1. For all x (if Bx then Ax)
i.e. anything which is B is A. This excludes mixed worlds where some Bs are not As.

And in the case of necessity,
2. Nec.(For all x(if Bx then Ax))
i.e. anything which is B is A *in all possible worlds.*
The stronger relation is a <u>De-dicto</u> necessity (I will say more on this shortly).

Now we come to the alleged difficulty for realism. The difficulty for the realist, according to Blackburn, is to explain how natural and moral properties are linked by the relation of B*/A supervenience. Specifically, Blackburn says the realist cannot explain the ban on a mixed world which the relation requires. The charge is that moral realism is incapable of explaining the relations that bind moral properties and the base properties on which they supervene.[15]

The problem emerges should the realist embrace a lack of entailment thesis at the conceptual level and rule out the possibility that a thing's natural properties either entail or semantically necessitate its moral properties. Competent speakers of a language can conceive of a world in which the base properties that actually underlie particular moral ones fail to do so. This becomes problematic when the non entailment thesis is combined with the supervenience relation that rules out a mixed world:

Now this distribution of possible worlds needs explanation. For at first sight there should be a further mixed kind allowed-in which some things are B* and A; but in which some things are like those whose possibility is already allowed-B* and not A. So we need to explain the *ban on mixed worlds*, and the argument goes that anti-realism does this better than realism.[16]

The projectivist explains this ban as it is a constraint on projecting our attitudes properly, that is we do not approve of e.g. some cases of wanton cruelty whilst disapproving of others. Blackburn's explanation is essentially based upon pragmatic or conventional considerations. For the projectivist, supervenience is a reflection of a constraint on attitude formation that is imposed by our desire to live well. To the extent that we want to live integrated lives that flourish, we will be motivated to respond in similar ways to similar states of affairs. There is nothing mysterious about requiring consistency of attitude while denying that there are any metaphysical or conceptual entailment relations between natural states of affairs and moral attitudes. If (as Blackburn believes) any outlook deserving the name `moral' requires consistency of attitude, supervenience regarding morality is a conceptual truth. But it is a conceptual truth that concerns our attitudes and desires to flourish, rather than any realistic relations obtaining between moral and natural properties. Thus the ban on mixed worlds in a projectivist ethic is straightforwardly explicable.

For the realist, however, dealing with two sets of real properties it is a mystery, claims Blackburn, how realism can explain that if wanton cruelty is wrong in a certain world then all cases of wanton cruelty are wrong in that world.[17]

In his review,[18] Russ Shafer-Landau offers three ways the realist might respond to Blackburn's use of the problem of supervenience and `mixed worlds'. He points out that the alleged mixed worlds problem arises from Blackburn's insistence that full specifications of configurations of natural properties do not necessitate any particular moral evaluation (the lack of entailment thesis). When we combine supervenience with this lack of entailment thesis, it makes supervenience mysterious. For if no natural description entails any moral evaluation, then it should be possible for some natural state of affairs to sometimes be good and at other times bad. But supervenience tells us that any such `mixed world' is impossible, that if some set of base properties B* once underlies some supervening property A, then B* must (in that world) always give rise to A. Endorsing the lack of entailment thesis makes it very difficult to explain why supervenience holds. I believe the best realist response to be not to accept the lack of entailment thesis and explain the ban on mixed worlds by claiming that a duly specified set of non-moral properties metaphysically must give rise to a certain moral property. I shall show later how the realist can explain the ban on a mixed world by accepting the supervenience relation to be one of necessity. But for now I will look at Russ Shafer-Landau's three possible ways of responding to Blackburn's use of the problem of supervenience and `mixed worlds'.

Since Blackburn cites an inability *to explain* supervenience as the relevant theoretical liability,[19] one possible response is to simply accept supervenience as a *brute* metaphysical fact. Should we take supervenience as a conceptual truth, and take the relations involved to be realistic relations, then we can simply claim that there need be no deep explanation of supervenience. After all, conceptual truths are thought obvious to all who understand the terms employed. In this case, explanatory failure would not be a theoretical deficit, since it is not clear that supervenience requires

explanation. This point is strengthened by consideration of supervenience claims in the philosophy of mind.

> The relevant supervenience claim here would be (Supervenience of Mental Properties): if physical state B* once underlay mental state S, then in that world it must always do so. I don't believe any `explanation' of SMP can be provided...SMP doesn't seek to establish that any given B* and S are actually related, but rather that if they are once related in a special way, they will always be so. That seems a conceptual truth, in no need of justification. The same is true of supervenience claims in ethics.[20]

Another response suggested by Shaffer-Landau is to claim that should Blackburn's arguments prove successful, this would imply a global anti-realism. (And so does not, contra Blackburn, amount to a special problem for realism in ethics). The strategy is to read B*/A supervenience claims in other domains (e.g., mental and physical states, chemical and atomic facts) as follows: `whatever configuration of base properties underlies a mental or chemical one, when once it does so, it must always do so'. In the moral case, B*/A supervenience would read as: `if a concatenation of natural properties once underlies a moral one, then it must(in that world) always do so'. Both are conceptual truths.[21] Blackburn, accepting lack of entailment, would maintain that it is implausible for each domain to claim that there are conceptual truths that express entailment relations linking the particular base and supervenient properties. So there is (for Blackburn) a problem about explaining the ban on mixed worlds in these areas. Should we allow this argument to succeed, we should have to be non-realist about chemical `facts', mental states, natural kinds, colours, etc, and expunge these from our ontology; the only way of `retaining' them would be to explain them as a matter of projection. I am not saying that the realist *should* accept that this alleged difficulty is sufficient to create a case against a realistic interpretation of the relevant domain. Rather, I am following Shafer-Landau in pointing out that if wholesale anti-realism follows from accepting Blackburn's conclusion from the mixed worlds argument, then Blackburn cannot claim that there is a *special* problem for moral realism.[22]

Shafer-Landau's way of *realistically* explaining the nature of B*/A supervenience, involves the claim that Blackburn has mischaracterised the nature of the relevant claim. The relevant claim *is not* `necessarily, if X is morally evaluable, then its evaluation must be made in virtue of physical properties that X possesses'. Rather, the supervenience claim says that

> ...necessarily, if anything possessing base properties B* also possesses S, and S is S in virtue of being B*, then (in that world) anything else that is also B* must be S. This claim is a conceptual truth, *no matter what sorts of properties are substituted for the variables B* and S.*[23]

So a realist explanation of B*/A supervenience is readily available for moral and other domains. I now turn to another way of explaining the ban on mixed worlds that B*/A supervenience involves (Shafer-Landau also considers a version of this as an option for the realist)[24] namely that of accepting the thesis of necessary entailment. Blackburn himself notes the possibility of such a response.[25]

The mixed worlds objection is a problem, Blackburn says, only if the realist should take the relation between natural and non-natural properties to be one of B*/A supervenience; this is not a problem for the realist if the realist will not take the relation between natural and moral properties to be one of B*/A supervenience, but of B*/A necessity. With this, Blackburn admits, the realist can claim that if wanton cruelty *is* wrong then any act of wanton cruelty is wrong, in any possible world.[26]

So the realist can also explain the ban on mixed worlds that B*/A supervenience involves, by accepting B*/A necessity.[27]

I said in chapter 1 that moral aspects were properties in being correctly predicated of people, objects and events. I maintain that a case of logical or conceptual necessity is involved; that a case of wanton cruelty is wrong De-dicto.

Some sentences are used De-re and some are used De-dicto. Consider the sentence "Everything is made of matter."

> ...in evaluating formulae which contain operators *within* the scope of objectual quantifiers, the identity of the objects in the domains of the various worlds is important. Thus, if `(Vx)▨(x is made of matter)' is to be true at a world w, this requires that the objects which exist at w are made of matter at every world; but if `▨(Vx)(x is made of matter)' is to be true at w, the *identity* of the objects made of matter at other worlds is irrelevant.[28]

The irrelevance of the identity of transworld objects is due to `▨(Vx)(x is made of matter)' being a De-dicto formulation. The proposition "That cruel act is wrong" has necessarily to be true, De-dicto if uttered by someone who believes she has witnessed such a cruel act; it is a report of her belief, which is fully specifiable as a cognitive state about the way the situation appears perceptually to her; to say something is cruel, is to have recognised it as wrong; there is a necessary connection: cruelty simply is a wrongful act: anything which involves hurting unnecessarily or for fun is cruel-the meaning of cruel is fixed in this way. This way of explaining the necessary connection between the act of causing pain just for fun and the fact that it is cruel (and therefore wrong) is not susceptible to Blackburn's mixed worlds argument.

Therefore the realist explanation of why it is necessary that a thing's natural properties fix its moral properties, and how this must involve a ban on a mixed world where, say, some cases of wanton cruelty are wrong and some cases of wanton cruelty are not wrong, is explained by the example of taking a case of, say, wanton cruelty, to be wrong De-dicto and explaining this as a case of B*/A neccessity. The realist thereby explains the ban on mixed worlds by claiming that a duly specified set of non-moral properties metaphysically *must* give rise to a certain moral property. The reason any given B* cannot give rise both to A and not-A is that the presence of B*

entails the presence of A. For instance, it would be necessarily true that the intentional torture of another for pleasure is wrong. Someone who viewed the torture of innocents as intrinsically desirable is evil in every possible world.

4.2.iii. Blackburn's Argument From The Explanation Of Behaviour.

Blackburn's third argument[29] in favour of projectivism presupposes the belief-desire model for the explanation of intentional actions. On this model, referred to by Blackburn as "the standard model",[30] an action can be explained as rational if it can be shown to follow from the attribution to the agent of an appropriate pair of states, one a belief (or other cognitive state) the other a desire (or pro-attitude). For example, attributing to someone a desire to quench her thirst and a belief that this can most easily be done by going to the kitchen to get a drink of water, we can explain why she is walking toward the kitchen.[31]

Such a pair, of course, only gives a reason for acting which may be overridden in other circumstances where the pair are attributable. Knowing that the tap water is contaminated or having some more urgent task which she thinks she ought to perform, for example, will explain why she does not walk to the kitchen even though she wants to quench her thirst and she believes that she can do so most easily by getting a drink from the kitchen tap. Even irrational actions, indeed, rely on this belief-desire model. Psychoanalytic explanations, for example, explain irrational actions in terms of repressed or unconscious desires and beliefs. These are rationalising explanations which conform to the model by showing the actions to be motivated by reasons that the agent sees as reasons for acting. It is the fact that these reasons are taken by psychoanalysts to be the result of some clinical condition which enables psychoanalysts to explain the actions as irrational. But at the same time those explanations help the analyst to understand why the patient acted irrationally. If no such explanation were available the behaviour would be mysterious and inexplicable, not irrational but non- rational.

Presupposing this model, then, Blackburn argues that a projective account of evaluation is better able to explain moral behaviour as rational than the realist account. The argument begins by stating that projectivist and realist have different conceptions of moral commitments. For the projectivist a moral commitment is the expression of an attitude whereas for the realist it is a belief.

On the projectivist account, therefore, a moral commitment, qua attitude, occupies the desire side of the belief-desire model. Once a commitment is attributed to an agent a reason-giving explanation of the appropriate action requires from a projectivist only the additional attribution of a relevant belief to complete the explanatory model. This attribution, Blackburn thinks, is (in most cases) not problematic. For example, someone who is committed to helping their friends when in trouble, sees a friend being pestered by some stranger and rescues them by making an intervention. To rationally explain that intervention given the aforementioned commitment requires only attributing the belief to the agent that their friend is in trouble to complete the explanatory pair of belief and desire. That is a straightforward attribution given that the agent sees a friend being pestered.

For the realist, on the other hand, the matter is not so straightforward, or so Blackburn argues, as, for the realist, a moral commitment is interpreted as a belief rather than as a desire. The completion of the explanatory model requires the additional attribution of a desire or some other attitude in order to explain the resultant action. But the addition of an attitude to an already present belief is more problematic, Blackburn argues, than the addition of a belief to an attitude. Applied to the previous example the argument is that if one believes that one desires to help friends when in trouble and one sees on a particular occasion that a friend is in trouble there are still no rational constraints which compel the desire to help. One might believe one ought to help whilst being indifferent to actually helping.

To complete the explanation the realist needs, Blackburn argues, to revert to a second stage. The first stage, described in the previous paragraph, leads one to

discover whether the truth-conditions of the commitment are satisfied, whether this is a case where I ought to help. Only at the second stage can one form "desires to which those truth-conditions matter".[32] i.e. form the desire to help.

Without acknowledging the picture that Blackburn draws of realism here I think that it is possible to understand how projectivism is meant to be motivated as a theory of value over realism in respect of their applications to action-explanation. The important point is the prima-facie difficulty that if moral commitments are interpreted as beliefs then the realist has to explain how those commitments provide reasons for action. If that is the main problem for realism it seems likely that this argument motivates anti-realism about value in general rather than the specific type of anti-realism represented by projectivism. For anti-realism per se explains moral commitments in terms of attitudes, feelings, emotions, etc. rather than in terms of cognitive states such as beliefs. For the non-cognitivist, a belief is a cognitive state, while a desire is a non-cognitive state. Cognitive states are beliefs about the way the world is. The non-realists insist that they can be said to provide no motivational force, in that they are inert, being merely passive states. A non-cognitive state such as a desire, however, can be said to be motivational. Therefore both a desire and a belief are needed to explain action. However, while I can agree with Blackburn that possessing an appropriate range of emotional responses is indeed a pre-condition of having any moral experience, that does not make our awareness of moral properties any the less cognitive. For the realist, seeing the moral situation as wrong involves being in a cognitive state; the person sees the moral value of the situation.

The psychological state of such a perceiving subject is fully specifiable as a belief state about the way the world is. There is nothing odd about a belief providing a reason to act. It is this belief that the act is wrong that incorporates a merited response.(see 5.5) The realist sees a morally good person as someone with well developed moral sensibilities, emotions, needs, feelings, etc. which are necessary for the perception of moral values. This picture rejects the split between reason on the one hand, and sense, feeling, passion, etc. on the other, preferring a world in which moral emotions and feelings have an essential role in moral reasoning. It is the careful

belief that is motivationally loaded. (See 5.8). Moral reasons can therefore motivate because they are moral reasons. For example, let us imagine John, a white male, waiting for a cab. In front of him in the queue is a black woman and her child. They are heavy laden with shopping. The taxi pulls up in front of him, ignoring the black woman and child.

With relief, John jumps in the cab. His relief at securing the cab might block from his full awareness the cab driver's having ignored the black woman and child in favour of him. In chapter 3 I noted Dancy's observations that moral perception involves noticing shape and salience. Salient in John's perception at that particular moment might simply be the presence of the cab. I also noted previously McDowell's observation that moral perception involves "coming to see things in a certain light". Now suppose that once in the cab, John, idly ruminating, puts the pieces of the situation together and comes to see it, in retrospect, in a certain light, i.e. in a different way. He now perceives that the driver deliberately passed over the mother and child for racist reasons. Whether John is correct in this inference is not so important here as whether the new perception is a plausible one, which I am assuming it to be. This perception of racism now becomes John's `take' on the situation. He gains moral insight and wonders why he didn't see it before. Regardless of any action John might now take, it is a morally better thing for him to have recognised the racial injustice than to have not done so. John's (ultimate though not initial) perception of the situation involves both construal and inference: he has to construe the situation in a certain way to see it as `the cab driver passing up a black woman and her child.' And he has to infer the racist motive. Both these processes involve some degree of imagination. The example indicates how perception depends on the agent's already possessing certain moral concepts. Let us imagine, however implausibly, that John had never before heard of or experienced racial discrimination. He would have been able to recognise the unfairness of the driver's action, but not the further wrongness of racial injustice. Lacking the moral concept of `racism' or `racial discrimination' he would not have been able to perceive the racism in the situation. John is not led to suppose the racist motive as a result of deliberating on how to act in the situation; (as Blackburn would have it, focusing as he does on the presumed `fork' between belief

and desire as cognitive and non-cognitive states) he is merely focusing idly on the situation, not necessarily intentionally or even fully conscious that he is doing so. The point is that perception occurs prior to deliberation, and prior to taking the situation to be one in which one needs to deliberate. It is precisely because the situation is seen in a certain way that the agent takes it as one in which he feels moved to deliberate. Once an agent begins deliberating in a situation, the process of deliberation can further affect his perception of the situation. It can lead him to see different aspects, to see as applicable moral concepts that he initially did not, and to see previous aspects with a different degree of salience. That perception will then provide the context for the next level of deliberation. To know what to do about the cab driver's presumed racism, John must know that racism is a morally significant feature of the situation that he must take into account in figuring out how best to act. It is moral perception that constructs what an agent is faced with 'as a moral situation' in the first place. It is moral perception of the moral facts of the case that construes the situation, thus providing a setting in which moral judgement carries out its task. In subsequent cases of John's perception of the act as racist, this belief that it is motivates him to refuse the cab. Someone else (say, a female) may see a further aspect of the situation that escapes John-say, as a violation of dignity. This further perception is due to the other person's moral characteristics-she is more attuned to, and more concerned about, issues of dignity in people's lives, and possesses a deeper understanding of why such concepts are important. It informs her emotional reactions to things, what she notices, what is salient for her, and the like, and particular actions and emotions can be seen as stemming from this sensitivity. John McDowell has noted the collapsing of the significance of moral perception into judgement of right action-and a consequent masking of its full value-the notion of salience is cashed out as that moral consideration among all those present which would be picked out as the one to act on if the agent is to engage in right action.[33] McDowell focuses on the Murdochian view that awareness of moral reality is a moral task and accomplishment *in its own right* and action is only one part of the appropriate response to the perceiving of moral reality.[34] I would also recognise the idea of moral reality the accurate perception of which is both morally good in its own right and also provides the setting in which moral response takes place.[35]

This, then, completes the arguments putatively favouring projectivism over realism. These arguments have proven to be unconvincing; the argument from economy being dealt with in previous chapters, and a realist explanation of B*/A necessity provided. The non-realist understanding of what the realist position involves, i.e. something corresponding to Platonic Forms, has also been refuted in earlier chapters. I have also given a brief account of a realist explanation of the explanation of behaviour. We are now in a position to present fully Blackburn's argument for quasi-realism.

4.3. The Challenge of Quasi-realism.

Quasi-realism is best understood as an argument against an argument against projectivism. This argument against projectivism is that projectivism is hopeless as an account of the metaphysics and phenomenology of morality, because it is at variance with the way we actually think morally. So if we accept it, we must regard moral thought and talk as embodying a mistake. Quasi-realism tries to bring projectivism back into line with the way we actually think. As Blackburn says:

> ...quasi-realism at least removes the most important range of objections to projectivism-namely, that it cannot account for the phenomena of ordinary moral thinking.[36]

The first premise of the realist's argument then, is that projectivism cannot do justice to the moral phenomenology, it fails to do justice to the way we think or talk in some area; it must embrace an `error theory'. We must add a second premise, that an error theory is not acceptable. Given these two premises, we have a very good argument for realism. This then, is the dialectic. Put more simply we have an argument which runs;

Projectivism implies an error-theory;

An error-theory is false (or unacceptable);

So

Projectivism is false (or unacceptable).

(This argument is of the form; P--->E, not-E, so not-P.)

The quasi-realist aims to rebut the argument by contesting the first premise.

The second premise is needed, not just for the realist's argument-but also to explain the motivation that the projectivist is supposed to have for pursuing quasi-realism in the first place. I do not intend to discuss what, if anything, is wrong with embracing such an error theory.[37] I shall be content with assuming that an error-theory is undesirable; we do not want an error-theory because we want to keep certain crucial features of our moral thought-and we want to keep them because, only if we keep them, can we take value seriously. This is the motivation for realism.

The point of quasi-realism is that it intends to destroy the motivation for realism, by proving itself capable of explaining and justifying moral phenomenology without resorting to an error theory. The motivation for moral realism is roughly this:

> (A) We want to take morality seriously; we think
> that morality and value 'matter'.

> (B) This means that the conception of truth for moral judgements is one which can give a descriptively adequate account of the features of our moral thought. Objectivity is one such feature. So for example, because we think of moral truth as 'objective', we can preserve the apparently assertoric nature of moral discourse.

Add the view that

> (C) A conception of moral truth which preserves the features of the way we think and talk morally (i.e. assertoric) requires cognitivism and realism.

And we can infer that

> (D) Cognitivism and realism are mandatory for anyone who wishes to give a descriptively adequate account of morality.

Quasi-realism aims to remove (C). If quasi-realism is successful, a projectivist can also conceive of truth as able to preserve the features of (serious) moral thought and thus can also take morality `seriously' and be fully able to account for the way we speak and think morally. Therefore, if quasi-realism can say all the things a realist can, minus the realist's specific ontological commitments, it will have succeeded in destroying the motivation for realism, with the implication that there will be no difference between the two theories (apart from an ontological difference).

The argument against projectivism then, is that there are some features of our thought for which it can make no room. Quasi-realism aims to take over those features on behalf of the projectivist, thereby defusing the argument. So the more specific realist argument goes like this:

> (1) Our thought in some area D has a certain feature F.

> (2) Projectivism cannot explain this feature of our thought (or projectivism is incompatible with our D thought having that feature).

> (3) Our D thought is legitimate; it is not `diseased' or `fraudulent'.

> (4) Projectivism is false (or `mysterious').

Argument `(1-4)' leaves three strategies open to the projectivist corresponding to each of the realist's premises. Quasi-realism denies (2); a non-realist such as Mackie who accepted the error theory, would reject (3); and someone might deny that some proposed feature really is a feature of our thought-rejecting (1).

So far, I have been talking rather abstractly of accounting for `the way we speak and think morally'. I shall mostly be interested in certain specific features of our moral thought and talk. I shall call these the `F-features'. The three features I shall be particularly interested in are `necessity', `objectivity', and `fallibility' or `mind -independence'. I shall call a conception of moral truth which is objective, mind-independent and fallible, and `necessary' a `thick' conception of truth.

I shall now discuss the features around which quasi-realism will be critically discussed. Not only do we need to know more about them, but there is a debate about which they ought to be. These features are candidates for criteria of cognition. Blackburn takes supervenience to be one of the features of our moral thought that quasi-realism needs to `capture' on behalf of the projectivist. I have provided above a realist explanation of supervenience in that I take the `supervenience' relation to be that of B*/A <u>necessity</u>. I discuss the realist explanation of mind-independence and objectivity later.

4.4. The F-features.

4.4.i. Truth and Thin Truth.

The first thing to say is that truth as such, is not interesting! What is interesting is our conception of truth. If quasi-realism is going to be capable of explaining and justifying moral phenomenology without resorting to an error theory, it will need a notion of moral truth (or quasi-truth, i.e. something which functions (mostly) like truth functions for realism). This is necessary to account for such aspects of moral phenomenology as the propositional form of moral statements, the apparent mind-independence of moral facts, and the salience of moral claims.

I believe that it is possible to separate (at least) three conceptions of truth. (1) 'Thin truth', which means that all there is to be said about it can be said by means of the 'equivalence' or `disquotation' principle, which says that 'p' is true iff p.[38] (2) 'Thick truth', which in morals means objective, mind-independent and necessary truth-to which judgements expressive of projected attitudes may be able to aspire. (I shall soon say more about these ideas.) And (3) 'Realistic truth', where there is some fact or state of affairs in virtue of which a belief or statement is true when true. (Blackburn uses the word 'genuine' but I prefer 'realistic'.)

I am inclined to think that there is just no such thing as the concept of truth. So it would be silly for a realist to assume, say, a generally realistic theory of truth (a 'correspondence' or 'substantive' theory)-and then deduce that a projectivist has no right to a truth predicate at all. What is controversial is whether there can be thick truth which is not realistic. This is the goal of quasi-realism. If there can, this truth might be available to projectivism.

We should not make much of the claim of our moral judgements to what I called 'thin' truth, as one of the disputed features which quasi-realism needs to capture. The reasons are these:

Firstly, even our thought about comedy and niceness can have access to it. So this sort of truth is not much of a victory for the moral projectivist. I may signal concurrence in the non-cognitive attitude expressed by the indicative sentence 'Licorice is lovely' , or 'Woody Allen is not funny' by saying 'True enough'. But such judgements lack objective or mind-independent validity (and do not supervene on the natural). We do not take humour `seriously' in the sense of operating with a `thick' notion of comic truth.[39] Many jokes wear thin after a while. (I shall assume that comic and niceness truth is not thick, though this could be doubted. I only appeal to the comic and niceness cases to illustrate the possibility of thin but not thick truth.) This means that thin truth, and its accomplice, the indicativeness of moral sentences would not be adequate criteria of cognition.

I do not see why we cannot take any emotion term and turn it into a predicate. One could speak of situations as 'prideful', desireful, expectful, just as in chapter 3, we talked of the fearful. (Athough there the fearful was not necessarily talked of in a non-cognitve way.) This would be sufficient for thin truth and an indicative sentence form. Thin truth is adequate for truth functional formal operations. For example, thin truth allows us to perform truth functional operations on propositions. Surely there are virtually no constraints on 'erecting' non-cognitive states in this way, although there is then an interesting question about why we tend to do so in some cases and not others. At any rate, because of the possibility of thin but not thick truth, I doubt that Dummett is right that the notion of truth is always 'normative', involving the idea of correctness in assertion.[40] For correctness must be objective correctness or incorrectness, and that is a thick idea. But comic and niceness truth is not 'normative' in this way.[41]

The second reason for not being interested in thin truth is that if quasi-realism persuades us that thick truth is within the grasp of the projectivist, then thin truth is either already achieved, or can be thrown in as a bonus.

I leave it to the next section to explain why I think projectivists can help themselves to the biconditional involved in thin truth, in spite of the fact that Blackburn takes there to be a problem about the availability of conditionals to a projectivist.

4.4.ii Indirect Contexts and Constructing Truth

> It's rather a pity that people are apt to invoke a new use of language whenever they feel so inclined, to help them out of this, that, or the other well-known philosophical tangle.
>
> J.L.Austin, "Performative Utterances"[42]

I now wish to discuss Blackburn's favourite problem; Geach's query over indirect contexts. Blackburn introduces it as a major hurdle for Quasi realism. In "Assertion",[43] Geach has utilised a point made originally by Frege that Blackburn insists would effectively rule out expressive theories should it prove successful. The point revolves around the use of non-cognitivist linguistic acts as they occur in unasserted contexts; the claim is that moral judgements cannot be expressive of attitudes because of the way moral propositions often occur unasserted in `indirect contexts', such as conditionals. Since no attitude is expressed in such contexts, the

unasserted statement cannot have the same meaning as when asserted-but that is unacceptable, and therefore a failure of inference. For example:

> "It is wrong to tell lies.
>
> If it is wrong to tell lies, then it is
>
> wrong to get your little brother to tell lies.

So   Therefore, it is wrong to get your little brother to tell lies".

has the form p; if p then q; therefore q. it is of this valid form only because the sentence "It is wrong to tell lies." means the same on each occasion. The problem for the non-cognitivist is just how to explain this identity of meaning. For he faces the objection that anyone asserting the second, hypothetical premise is <u>not</u> expressing an attitude of condemnation to telling lies. In this unasserted context, nothing shows the speaker as committed to any attitude. And so it seems that expressive theories cannot cope with unasserted contexts.

> In unasserted contexts no attitude, etc, is evinced when the sentence is uttered; the meaning is the same as in direct contexts when such an attitude is evinced; therefore this (variable) feature does not give the (constant) meaning.[44]

Geach originally directed his argument at the speech-act non-cognitivism which was popular when he was writing. But it also seems to threaten Blackburn, who takes the argument to require a quasi-realist explanation.

Blackburn takes it upon himself to explain how quasi-realism can account for the logical relations which we take to exist between evaluative statements. He gives the same example of the type of argument he wants to allow:

> "It is wrong to tell lies.
>
> If it is wrong to tell lies, then it is
>
> wrong to get your little brother to tell lies.

So   Therefore, it is wrong to get your little brother to tell lies."[45]

As we have seen, schematically, this argument has the form, p; if p then q; therefore q. Its validity depends on the phrase which replaces P having the same meaning in both premises. When P represents a proposition, as " it is wrong to tell lies" does for a realist, there is no difficulty. The quasi-realist, however, qua projectivist, argues that evaluative statements are not propositional but are expressions of attitude. The difficulty for expressive theories such as projectivism is for them to explain the identity of meaning when the phrase occurs in different contexts in the two premises. In the first premise "It is wrong to tell lies" expresses disapproval of lying. This is then an asserted context. But in the second premise the phrase, as the antecedent of a conditional statement, is unasserted, and expresses a proposition. As such it can be uttered without indicating what the utterer's attitude toward lying is. Hence equivocation.[46] In the case of realism, there is a `content' (sometimes called the propositional content) which can be: asserted; doubted; speculated about etc. (For example: the content "that the door is shut" can be asserted: It is the case that...; or doubted: It is unlikely that...; or speculated about: I wonder whether it is the case that...). That same `content' is invariably present in all cases, although the so-called `propositional attitude' towards it changes... That is why inference is straightforward, and one can move from e.g. doubting to believing one and the very same `content'. But, in the case of `expressive theories' of e.g. "Beer is good", what we have here is not the taking up of an attitude to a propositional content, but the evincing or expressing of approval of beer. That, we are told, is the meaning of the term `good'-it evinces or expresses favour. But, in the hypothetical context, "If beer is good, then breweries will make a lot of money", no favour towards beer is expressed. What, then, does `good' mean in that context? That is (part of) the problem-no meaning has been given to the term in non-asserted contexts. Blackburn is left with answering the problem of non-asserted or indirect contexts. Blackburn tackles this problem by asking what `we are up to' when we make such remarks:

> Unnasserted contexts show us treating moral predicates like others, as though by their means we can introduce objects of doubt, belief, knowledge, things which can be supposed, queried, pondered. Can the projectivist say why we do this?[47]

Blackburn wants to know why it is that we put commitments into conditionals. His answer is that we do this so that we can work out their implications. But he forsees the objection that though we all know beliefs have implications, it is far from clear that attitudes can. To counter this, Blackburn introduces the notion of a `moral sensibility'. On the projective view, a sensibility is to be defined "by a function from input of belief to output of attitude"[48] Sensibilities, of course, are not all on a par. Particularly in the moral sphere we want to rank, and order sensibilities. We want to endorse admirable ones and reject coarse ones, or fickle ones. This is because sensibilities affect the way people behave, and so output of attitude is extremely important for us to evaluate. But the actual output of attitudes is not the only feature of sensibilities which merits concern; the interaction between sensibilities is important also. I shall examine Blackburn's technique of assessing attitudes and sensibilities later. To return to the example, consider the pairing of sensibilities "It is wrong to tell lies" and "It is ok for my brother to tell lies". Would most people endorse such a pairing? One thinks that most people would regard such a pairing as an instance of weakness in a sensibility. Most people would want to endorse the attitude that telling lies is wrong together with an attitude which expresses disapproval towards my little brother telling lies. The pairing of these two attitudes in a sensibility would seem to make it an admirable one. But now we can see why it is we want to put commitments in conditional form; we do so because "the conditional form shows me expressing this endorsement".[49] It may be objected that in endorsing admirable sensibilities, one is already committed to the expression of a moral point of view. One finds a certain sensibility admirable because it endorses a function from an input of belief that

something is commendable to the output of satisfaction with it. But, Blackburn counters, the task was not to show that the conditional does not express a moral point of view, but to explain what it does at all.

Dummett can be taken to reinforce Blackburn's proposal. He too suggests that we may assign assertoric use to the antecedent of a conditional if the sentence under consideration is one that we might have an interest in eliciting from others. Take sentences of the form "If I were to assert that A, then I should assert that B". Dummett says that

> It would be of interest to say something of this kind in a discussion in which the other person was trying to induce my assent to his assertion that B: by such a conditional utterance, I should indicate to him that he can acheive this if he can first induce me to assent to the assertion that A.[50]

The linguistic acts represented, on an expressive theorist's account, by evaluative words such as `wrong', `good', etc., do represent a committment to some course of action or mode of conduct that we are interested in eliciting from others. Therefore a use for a conditional form expressing conditional linkage of two such attitudes or acts is readily conceivable. Geach's test, Dummett argues, should not, then, be used to discriminate between cognitivist and non-cognitivist, but should, rather, serve to discriminate between utterances we might have an interest in eliciting-`quasi-assertions'-and utterances that we have no interest in eliciting. Geach has responded to both Blackburn and Dummett[51] and has charged them both with failing to deal with his extention of Frege's argument to cases involving generality; it could cite any unasserted context. The quasi-realist would then be faced with an endless task.

Blackburn's proposal, then, is that what underpins the quoted inference and others like it, is not that it would be logically inconsistent to assent to the premises but reject the conclusion, but that accepting the premises but rejecting the conclusion involves one in a `clash of attitudes', resulting in an attitudinal inconsistency. The

important thing about the example above is, according to Blackburn, that if one accepts the inference, one is committed to disapproving of anyone who disapproves of lying but who does not disapprove of getting others to lie. Anyone who does not hold this pair has a `fractured sensibility' and such a sensibility "...cannot fulfil the practical purposes for which we evaluate things."[52] Now the failure to make one's attitudes cohere with one's other attitudes appeals to a notion of moral inconsistency which is plausible independently of a projective theory. This renders Blackburn's theory the more persuasive, but moral judgements take other forms than the ones that are discussed, and so Blackburn's theory will have to be extended. This is the point that Geach tries to press in his claim that such theories must cover cases of generality. For example, Blackburn would be hard pressed to extend his account to cases of mixed conditionals, where the consequent is a sentence which expresses an attitude, but the antecedent is a candidate for truth.

I think we must separate two problems here. Geach's problem was over the availability of indirect locutions to a projectivist. But Blackburn takes his problem to be one of giving an account of what we are up to in such contexts. I shall make three comments on Geach's problem before turning to Blackburn's.

Firstly, perhaps solving Geach's problem only requires thin truth-and thick truth is not necessary. Consider that we might say, 'If being hit in the face with one custard pie is funny, then so is being hit in the face with two custard pies', or, 'If garlic is nice in muesli, then it is also nice in blackcurrant jelly'. Once we have thin truth, we can easily go ahead and account for indirect construction by applying the whole 'truth-functional calculus' of logic text-books. The appeal to thick truth would be to crack a nut with a sledgehammer. This is because thin truth can be nothing more than the expression of attitudes.

Secondly, perhaps solving Geach's problem does not require any sort of truth at all. Consider that commands or questions may employ 'truth functional connectives'.[53] I might say 'If it's raining, take your coat or your umbrella'. These two points show that Blackburn cannot be right when he says:

> Unasserted contexts show us treating moral predicates
> like others, <u>as though</u> by these means we can introduce objects
> of doubt, belief, knowledge, things which can be supposed,
> queried, pondered.[54]

Blackburn overplays the importance of Geach's objection; it is easier to meet than he thinks. We do not need to 'turn to the projective picture'[55] to meet it.[56] One way of overcoming it would be through the notion of thin truth. We do not need to 'construct' thin truth, merely to help ourselves to it. Thin truth is enough to put attitudes into conditionals.

Thirdly, I am not sure that the semantic account Blackburn proposes helps with Geach's problem. Let [H! (X)] and [B! (X)] stand for the approval and disapproval of X respectively and let `;' read 'coupled with' (as at <u>Spreading The Word</u> p.194). This is Blackburn's 'Eex' language. Say we read the conditional `If X is wrong, then so is Y' as {[H! ([B! (X)] ; [B! (Y)])} or even as {[B!([B!(X)] ; [H!(Y)])} (see <u>Spreading The Word</u> p. 195). Then how, along with [B! (X)], are we helped to infer [B! (Y)]? For Geach, it is this inference which is problematic. Thin truth would enable this inference to go smoothly ahead, since we can help ourselves to standard classical logic. But as Hale points out in his review,[57] Blackburn's account needs supplementing by a <u>rule of inference</u> according to which the conclusion can be inferred from the two premises. But the whole point of Blackburn's semantic account was to explain how attitudes can have implications [58]The rule of inference will then become what is problematic. Hale tries to get round this by appealing to 'consistency', the idea being that someone who does not Boo! Y, is 'inconsistent'.[59] But then the projectivist is just <u>helping himself</u> to a notion of `objectivity'-that {[H! ([B! (X)]; [H! (Y)])} is something to be ashamed of. And it is unclear how the account could deal with other unasserted contexts, such as merely entertaining a moral proposition, or propositional attitude contexts. Blackburn's semantic account leaves untouched the original question of how, as in comic thought, embedded propostions mean the same as when asserted. Indeed he actually makes this problematic, since he really says that

these conditionals do express attitudes, but not those signified in the embedded clause, it is rather, a more complex, compound attitude. But that is to deny what he needed to account for.

However, the other question was about what someone would be 'up to' (as Blackburn puts it) in asserting these conditionals. I think this is a different problem. Let us first ask what someone would be 'up to' in comic or niceness conditionals, such as 'If X is funny then so is Y'. Presumably it is just a question of knowing how I, or people in general, are in fact likely to react, and their pattern of reactions. For example, we might explain the conditional by saying that someone who finds X funny, is also likely to find Y funny. There is no denying that this is not all a quasi-realist in morals would have to say. We are 'up to' more than this in 'If X is wrong, then so is Y', because we do not merely mean that we expect someone who disapproves of X, also to disapprove of Y-but that they ought to. Blackburn may need more than thin truth to explain what we are 'up to' in moral indirect contexts. To explain what we are 'up to' in moral indirect contexts may require explanation by quasi-realism. But the point is that that is because what we are 'up to' is connected with other features of truth in the area. In comedy or niceness thought, our practice with such conditionals does not involve our awareness of certain normative constraints on reactions, such as those of the F-features, as it does in morals. But if Blackburn's indirect context problem just introduces the problem of thick truth then we might have started there and skipped the indirect context problem. The solution to Blackburn's problem over indirect contexts will be a mere bonus if a projectivist can capture thick truth. If quasi-realism can show that moral projections have the right to thick truth, then it is no great further leap to say that it can explain the manner in which they occur unasserted and in 'truth-functional' combination with non – evaluative and other evaluative judgements. This is because moral judgements which require thick truth are not attitudinal-hence Geach's point. So I shall focus on the features already mentioned.

The second aspect of Blackburn's quasi-realism is his 'construction of truth' and the 'tree structure'.[60] The problem is supposedly about why various improving

systems of attitudes should converge in some ideal best possible system of attitudes, in which some commitment either will, or will not be present. This confuses the issue by introducing temporal considerations. An 'improvement' is just a change for the better-so the root idea we are after is that of better or worse attitudes-but this idea is just that of objectivity. Once an attitude can really be better than its opposite, or can really be defective, then we have achieved an objective truth about which of two attitudes is preferable. So perhaps if we have captured objectivity, then the idea that in the ideally improved system of attitudes, either an attitude exists or it does not, is already captured and no extra step is needed.

Of course, there may also be some opposing pairs of attitudes for which there is no truth about which is better, as in Hume's Ovid/Tacitus example[61]-but this is not important, as long as there are some pairs which are not like this. An improved attitude can hold that both of these writers are of equal merit.

On the other hand, perhaps there can be opposing attitudes, one of which is clearly better than the other-yet even the better one is defective in some respects-so neither of them would be in the ideal set. This would not lead to any indeterminacy about which is the better attitude, but it would mean that the idea of an ideal set of attitudes requires more than objectivity. The problem then, is that the idea of an ideal set, is not obviously a desirable one for either a projectivist or a realist.[62] (I shall supply some diagnosis of why Blackburn sees an independent indeterminacy problem in endnote 87.)

4.4.iii. Thick Truth

I want now to try to characterise the features on which I shall concentrate: *objectivity*, *mind-independence*, and *necessity*. If quasi-realism fails, these features will provide us with adequate criteria for cognition. We need to characterise them so that there can be an interesting argument over whether or not quasi-realism can capture them on behalf of projectivism. These features are best thought of as characterising our conception of truth in some area of judgement and morality. We

must not build in realism by arguing that to engage in ordinary moral practice is to engage in a practice in which one has and applies (perhaps implicitly) a realist moral theory. That approach would make it only trivially true that moral realism is the only theory that can sucessfully account for the features of our serious moral thought. On this point, then, I am in agreement with Blackburn's statement

That it is wrong simply to identify bivalent logical practice with acceptance of realism.[63]

But whilst it is wrong to assume at the outset that cognitivism and realism are mandatory for anyone who wishes to give an adequate account of morality it does not follow that any type of moral theory will be able to adequately explain either moral practice or moral phenomenology (not that this has been suggested). That is a matter for further investigation.

Now to characterize the F-features. Let us start with `mind-independence'. In morals, as elsewhere, there is a distinction between our thinking that something is so and its being so. We think that things would have been so, whatever we had thought about them. This idea is often connected with the `hallowed' being/seeming or appearance/reality distinction, that occupied a good deal of chapter 3, but it is better to put it here more modestly; in terms of thinking something so and being so.

Moral realism can be defined as "a claim that moral judgements are independent of certain mental states"[64] Realism is usually linked with cognitivism. "For a sentence in ethics to be true is...for that sentence to correspond to the objective "moral facts" ,[65] where a moral fact is, at the least, believed to be

" that the injunctions, prohibitions, and values incorporated in our moral code have a standing, an authority, independent of our society's requiring adherence to them."[66]

(Making sense of objective moral facts is dealt with in greater detail in chapter 5).

Dummett has also argued along these lines, that as well as a claim about ontology realism can also be understood as a claim about language, characterising it as "the belief that statements of the disputed class possess an objective truth-value, independently of our means of knowing it".[67] Opposed to this, anti-realism seeks to explain truth (or some substitute for truth) in terms of our means of knowing i.e. in terms of verification, evidence, warranted assertibility etc.

Although this is applicable to any area of discourse there is an obvious attraction for applying it in the case of moral discourse. From the non-realist's point of view, with the social nature of morality and its purpose of guiding public and private conduct it will be an advantage for any theory to be able to explain moral truth, or quasi-truth, in terms of our ability to know (`know').[68] This does not mean that non-realism has to be verificationist in a crude sense, identifying `truth' with what is known in any community (or what is warranted as assertible in any community).

With Blackburn's quasi-realism moral quasi-truth is explained in terms of attitudes which would be projected under ideal epistemic conditions. Although he thinks such conditions are practically unattainable quasi-realism, with its non-realist theory of value, still displays that feature which is common to all non-realists; a conception of truth, or quasi-truth, which is dependent on capacity to compute that truth, even if beyond our practical capacity to compute it.

The label `mind-independence' may be misleading in the moral case, simply because we often make moral judgements about our own minds. Blackburn notes that we might think that rudeness is wrong because of its effects on people's minds.[69] But of course those effects are still independent of the mind of the person who makes the judgement. The case of moral judgement about oneself is more telling. Even in this case, what I think is one thing, and the facts of the matter are another, even though both are contained in the same mind. `Judgement-independence' is what is really in question. Blackburn elucidates `mind-independence' in counterfactual terms. A is

mind-independent of B iff it is not the case that A iff B. What Blackburn calls an 'unlovely counterfactual' says: 'Had I not been committed to p, p would not have been true', or: 'If I had been committed to p, p would have been true'.

On this account, mind-independence is closely related to fallibility, which says that we can be ignorant of evaluative truths (or probabilistic, causal, or mathematical truths); we do not necessarily believe what is true. This amounts to the counterfactual 'It is not the case that, if p, then I believe that p'. Mind-independence is the reverse of this, i.e. 'If p then I believe that p'.

The second feature I am interested in, is *objectivity*. This idea is often appealed to in moral philosophy (where it does not just mean 'real' as it does for Mackie). This notion is often closely allied with mind-independence, but I think it means something different and more basic. An example from morals, would be Russell's feeling that one's attitudes to bullfighting are <u>right</u>. And Blackburn expresses this feature when he says:

> It is no part of a projectivist metaphysics to claim that one projection is as good as another. Some may be inferior, some superior, and even the best may in principle be capable of improvement.[70]

Objectivity is essentially an idea of normativity or correctness in judgement. It certainly means, at least, that the judgement that p and the judgement that not-p cannot both be true, or are not equally 'assertible'. But objectivity may be a more substantial idea than this sparse formal principle suggests. A fleshed out notion may explain why the formal principle applies in some area. The claim to objectivity explains why (in at least some cases) when two people disagree, one must be wrong. The notions of disagreement and objectivity are linked.

I shall now try to elucidate this idea. Moore says:

"Any particular action cannot be both right and wrong either at the same time or at different times". (P.40 Ethics.)

My suspicion is that if we rephrase Moore's idea, we reveal its true nature:

`If two people, or one person at two times, assert the same judgement about an individual, then the truth value of each assertion must be the same'.

or

`The truth value of judgements about an individual cannot change unless the individual changes'.

This pattern should start to look familiar from the earlier discussion of supervenience. I suggest (though I shall not argue) that the objectivity of truth means that the genuine facts about an individual determine the truth of judgements about it. Mind-independence merely says that the truth-value of a judgement is not determined by facts about the judger of the individual.[71]

This concludes my fuller explanation of `objectivity' and I have already provided a realist explanation of necessity. (See 4.2.ii.)

How are these features related to each other? Objectivity is the most basic of the three. It applies wherever realism is tempting. Mind-independence will apply in all cases where realism is tempting. Necessity seems to apply in all local cases where we like realism.

These three features give us criteria for cognition which have great appeal. For example, they give us reason to be realistic about the spatial world, but not about comedy, and that fits our intuitions. They might be thought to be points at which quasi-realism stops short. Blackburn disputes this and so queries whether these features are adequate criteria. [72] These features are clearly necessary conditions for (moral) cognition-but quasi-realism maintains that they are not sufficient, because

projectivism can also have access to them. Quasi-realism wants to explain the appearance that we are making judgements with realistic truth-conditions; it can do this to the extent to which it can account for the thick conception of truth we take to be applicable to moral judgements. But perhaps to think of moral truth thickly is not ipso facto to think realistically. So there may be a theoretical space (a `vista') whereby projectivism can avoid an error-theory. If the realist can argue that quasi-realism is not successful, and it is moral realism that is the theory most able to account for these features, then we will have arrived at realism.

4.5. Space, Time, and Causality

There is another aspect of quasi-realism which I have not yet mentioned. According to a bare expressive theory, moral commitments are said to be merely `expressive' of attitudes towards naturally conceived facts, not beliefs about moral facts. Such a theory would be a simple `Boo hooray' theory. There may then be quasi-realist sophistications to add to this theory. Projectivism however, is the variety of expressivism, according to which we come to think of our mere subjective `attitudes' to things as corresponding to real evaluative features of those things, i.e. as moral facts. This is something further. As we saw in chapter 2, it involves coming to think of values as existing out there where the things to which we have the attitude exist (see 2.3.ii). This is a crucial preliminary aspect of quasi-realism which we might overlook. It is not wholly metaphorical, or a mere picture to say that on Blackburn/Hume's view, attitudes are projected or spread onto the world. If I project a paper dart, it comes to occupy a different spatial position–or if I spread butter, I increase its spatial extension over a certain time. Our evaluative thought has this in common with comic thought, for we also think of comedy as a feature of the things at which we laugh; we spread comedy. We might define `projectivism' as that part of quasi-realism which accounts for this way of thinking. But I shall somewhat arbitrarily stipulate that spatio-temporality is not an F-feature. Blackburn's explanation of what we are `up to' in treating attitudes as commitments, i.e. `mapping attitudes onto the world' does not involve a psychological projection. In his Eex language, the language would invent a predicate answering to the attitude, and treat

commitments as if they were judgements, and then use all the natural commitments for debating truth. Therefore, *in his hands* the notion of 'projection' describes the act of 'inventing' the appropriate linguistic device. Quasi-realism is an argument against an argument against projectivism; it is no support for psychological projectivism at all.

If projectivism can explain the idea that value appears to have a spatio-temporal location, then it can similarly explain the idea that values seem to posses a causal role. An anti-realist will not accept that values actually have a causal role, for the simple reason that they do not believe that there are any values. Only real things can cause and be caused. But a quasi-realist should agree that in our ordinary moral thought and talk, we speak and think as if evaluative properties causally interact, and they should try to 'explain' such an idea as a 'projection', as with the apparent spatio-temporality of values. In fact, to explain the former they need do no more than explain the latter, because of the way in which causality and spatio-temporality are linked in our thought.[73] The notion of a 'physical' 'material', or 'natural' thing, is at least the notion of something which both causally interacts and is in space and time. Virtually all philosophers are committed to the reality of such things. So in coming to think of values as if they had a space-time location, we thereby come to think of them as having a causal role and in doing that, we come to think of them as in the world, as real. The same is even true of comic projections. E.g. consider 'The comedienne Victoria Wood makes me laugh because she is so funny.'

However, I shall be more interested in the thick features of our ordinary thought and talk, for this is more problematic for a projectivist than our conception of evaluative states of things as part of the same world as the natural bearers of those features. It is relatively easy for the projectivist to account for this, because the very same story applies to comedy, niceness, (and possibly secondary qualities) etc. We cannot use the previous, merely 'projective' explanation of our thinking of values spatio-temporally, in order to account for thick moral truth. This must be independently accounted for.[74] Non-realism about judgements of humour, niceness (and perhaps secondary qualities) is justified because they lack the F-features. They

cannot be part of the spatio-temporal world where we had spread them, because our conception of truth for judgements about that world is objective and mind-independent, and these are not. I suspect that whatever moves the quasi-realist makes with the F-features, a projectivist in morals must still hold that the spatio-temporality of our moral thought is an error. So a projectivist must embrace a partial error theory. Mackie was right about this aspect of our moral thought. This remains true even if we need to `project' attitudes (it is then a needed error).

4.6. The Realist's Explanations

In the next section I will turn to see what the quasi-realist can say, but I want first to show how well the realist does with these F-features. For, with the economy arguments against realism dealt with (see chapter 2), the realist will have a good economy argument against projectivism, if it can account for the features more easily than projectivism. (See Spreading The Word p.195-6, and chapter 2 and below).

It is very easy for the realist to account for objectivity. For moral realism, commitments function as beliefs at both the practical and the theoretical level. Beliefs are cognitive states, so if there are indeed evaluative beliefs, they are fact dependent. What explains the objectivity of beliefs, is the primitive metaphysical fact that the fact or state of affairs which a belief represents cannot both obtain and not obtain.

Mind-independence is easy too, for in a literal sense, the facts of the matter are one thing, and our beliefs about them are another. Cases of wanton cruelty would be wrong regardless of whatever anyone thought. Mind-independence is closely related to fallibility, since there could exist some moral aspects of the situation that the judger fails to notice.(This is dealt with in chapter 5.2.i). This explains how a cognitive mental state can be defective, because it purports to represent the facts of the matter. For the realist, moral judgments are propositions about what is the case; which means that their truth is grounded in facts about the real world. This does not mean that there is but *one* moral aspect of the situation (see chapter 5.2.i), rather, it

implies judgement-independence; that the truth-value of a judgement is not determined by facts about the judger.

We have seen how realism is also capable of explaining the ban on a mixed world by accepting B*/A necessity. Both the realist and quasi-realist agree that changes in a thing's non-moral features are necessary to produce changes in their moral features. This can all be explained on a realist metaphysic without implying anything mysterious about the necessary relation involved. For example, the act of `causing pain just for fun' necessitates such an act being cruel, and this cruel act is necessarily wrong De dicto. The meaning of cruel is fixed in this way. It is important for the analogy with aspect perception that I shall introduce in chapter 5, to note that the sense of `wrong' is not identical to the sense of any particular description of non-moral properties, since we are speaking here of supervenience relations, and not identity. Necessity is compatible with the multiple realizability of moral aspects, so the realist need not cite any one particular non-moral property (or concatenation of properties) that constitutes the exclusive reduction base for any moral property. Further, the realist can retain the autonomy of morality compatibly with the supervenience relation of necessity. For example, chemistry is an autonomous area of inquiry even though chemical facts supervene on atomic ones, and this is so despite the fact that we can sometimes cite (metaphysical) entailment relations that obtain between atomic and chemical statements. Having explained all that, as I have shown realism to be capable of, the realist has, quite simply, explained necessity.

It is not as easy as it is for the realist for the projectivist to account for the F-features. Blackburn's work is important because he attempts to do this. For instance, he is concerned to allow that attitudes can be defective. (Defectiveness for Blackburn is a matter of 'objective incorrectness'.) How can we have so much as the idea of defectiveness? The projectivist needs to avoid the view that one projection is as good as another. How are defective attitudes possible? And how can the projectivist account for the fact that in some cases, if two people express opposite attitudes, only one is right? How can attitudes clash?[75] For the realist, all this is easy. But how, for example, can a non-cognitive mental state be defective, if it does not purport to

represent an independent reality? Desires, emotions, or feelngs cannot fail in that way. Quasi-realism seeks another way with talk of sensibilities and their `consistency'.[76]

Blackburn needs to show how projectivism can still allow for criticism of our attitudes. I shall now examine two quasi-realist techniques which Blackburn employs to do this.

4.6.i. Two Quasi-realist Techniques.

Firstly, there is his idea that we can have second-order attitudes to a moral 'sensibility'; I call this the `step back'. Secondly, there is the `internal', or `first-order' reading of mind-independence, that I shall refer to as the `internal reading technique' which I shall elucidate later.

Blackburn uses different techniques to deal with different F-features. But I lean towards thinking that all the techniques are equally applicable to all the features. For example, I do not think that mind-independence is more suited to being read internally than supervenience, or that supervenience is more suited to his third technique (an appeal to our `purposes' or `needs' in moralising)[77] than mind-independence. However, I shall mostly assess the techniques where Blackburn applies them. I also suspect that if one F-feature is within the quasi-realists' grasp, so are all; none is fundamentally more problematic than the others.

The three techniques are, of course, not employed separately. The use of one may presuppose another. My general strategy is to isolate the nub of quasi-realism and then concentrate on undermining that. I am inclined to think that any interdependency among the techniques is bad news for quasi-realism, since I shall argue that both of the techniques I have chosen to discuss ultimately fail.

4.6.ii The Step Back.

Let us start with the step back, which at first sight seems to be the centre-piece of Blackburn's quasi-realist defence of projectivism in moral philosophy. The aim is to show how projectivism can still allow for criticism of our attitudes. Blackburn makes a similar point whenever he writes about the subject:

> "But it is extremely important to us to rank sensibilities, and to endorse some and to reject others". (Spreading The Word P.192.)

> "... we can turn our judgements on our own appetitive construction, and may find it lacking." (`Rule-Following And Moral Realism' p.175.)

> "The quasi-realist will see [this claim to objectivity] as a proper expression of an attitude to our own attitudes." (`Ethics And The Phenomenology Of Value' p.5.)

> ...there is nothing to prevent an emotivist from holding attitudes to the inter-relations of attitudes and to the relation of attitudes and beliefs. (`Truth, Realism, And The Regulation Of Theory' p.357.)

> ...I am pressuposing one kind of evaluation in giving sense to the possible deficiencies of the other. An attitude to processes of attitude formation is used to give sense to the possibility, not merely of change but of an improvement in moral judgement'. (`Opinions And Chances' p.180.)

Common ground here is that a `sensibility' can be the object of attitudes. The idea is that this gives quasi-realism a perspective from which to criticize our attitudes; namely, other attitudes.[78] This is the `step back'. This process in which we are led to endorse or reject certain attitudes and pairings of attitudes is undertaken from a particular moral point of view. We set about improving the set of attitudes which we have by critically assessing some of them whilst assuming others, usually the ones we have most confidence in. This may seem like hauling ourselves up with our own bootstraps[79] like an exercise in self-justification, but it is, says Blackburn, not necessarily so, even if it must be admitted as a danger.[80] The process recalls the analogy that Neurath provided for the development of science, that of a boat at sea which has to be rebuilt plank by plank, standing on one part of the boat in which we have reasonable confidence in order to repair its more shaky members.

> But there is no circularity in using our own evaluations to enable us to assess, refine, improve upon, our own evaluations, any more than there is in rebuilding Neurath's boat at sea.[81]

This suggestion is extremely interesting, and it looks like the nub of quasi-realism, since, as we shall see later, the internal reading technique (and his appeal to our `purposes' or `needs' in moralising) pressuposes it.

The first task is to consider that which we are said to reflect upon in the above passages. Blackburn appeals to a critique of a diversity of different things. We have `sensibilities', `appetitive constructions', `evaluations', `attitudes', `the inter-relations of attitudes and the relation of attitudes and beliefs', and `processes of attitude formation'. My strategy is as follows. I shall first argue that the distilled essence of the step back must be the critique of `simple' and particular attitudes. To this end I shall attempt to exclude various other objects of criticism as of more limited moral relevance. I shall then argue that the step back fails if it merely concerns these. I then have a second objection which is quite independent of these refinements.

Blackburn says:

> 'A moral <u>sensibility</u> is defined on [the projectivist picture] by a function from <u>input</u> of belief to <u>output</u> of attitude'. (<u>Spreading The Word</u> p.192, his emphasis.)

`Function' here leaves a lot open. It <u>may</u> refer to our dispositions to form moral attitudes <u>on the basis of</u> our natural beliefs, which thus determine the natural content of the attitude. A total moral sensibility would then be the total structure of such dispositions. This interpretation would coincide with an earlier definition:

> on [the projectivist picture] a moral disposition or sensibility is the tendency to seek, wish for, admire, emulate, desire, things according to some other feature which one believes them to possess. (`Rule-Following And Moral Realism' p.175).

This would cover cases where we actually have an attitude, as well as cases where we merely have a disposition to have an attitude, were we to acquire a certain belief. For example I might not actually disapprove of John-but were I to come to believe that he had treated Jim in such and such a way, then maybe I would disapprove of him. I shall call these `actual attitudes' and `attitude dispositions', and by simply `attitudes' I shall mean the sum of these two.

What we should notice, however, is that the `Rule-Following And Moral Realism' definition of a sensibility, omits reference to how these sort of tendencies arise in a subject. The <u>Spreading The Word</u> definition must have been meant to be broader than just actual and dispositional attitudes, since a moral sensibility is very often also said to include our `ways of forming attitudes'; it is not just a matter of the

nature and structure of attitudes formed as causal consequence of such ways of forming attitudes. We can see that this is often what Blackburn has in mind if we consider the examples of criticisms of sensibilities which he gives:

> Now not all sensibilities are admirable. Some are coarse, insensitive, some are plain horrendous, some are conservative and inflexible, others fickle and unreliable; some are too quick to form strict and passionately held attitudes, some are too sluggish to care about anything.[82]

> I know that people are capable of habits of projection which from my own standpoint are deplorable; they judge things of which they are ignorant, their views are the function of fears and fantasies, blind traditions, prejudice and so on [rather than] ... the proper use of knowledge, real capacity for sympathy, and so on. But then: who am I to be sure that I am free of these defects? [83]

Little of this would get included on the narrower 'Rule-Following And Moral Realism' definition of a sensibility. What is 'horrendous' or 'deplorable' are indeed attitudes, and we can see that these are plainly in question in most of the original quotations. But criticisms such as 'conservative', 'unreliable', or 'inflexible', are criticisms of ways of arriving at attitudes, rather than the attitudes themselves (whether actual or dispositional). Blackburn does not clearly distinguish these. His use of the term of art 'moral sensibility' ignores this distinction. A 'way of forming attitudes' is a matter of the wider causal antecedents of attitudes, such as character traits, or features of our reasoning. The beliefs which determine the content of the attitude 'rationally cause' the attitude, but the causal role of fears, fantasies and inflexibility, is not 'rational' in this way. A 'moral sensibility', then, might be a 'product' or a 'mechanism', or a compound of these two.

There is also some tendency in Blackburn for a critique of a `sensibility'
merely to mean a critique of our ways of forming the relevant natural beliefs-for
example, when Blackburn speaks of `an imaginative capacity to put oneself in another
persons' place, or to see what it is like from his point of view'. [84]This is just a matter
of the acquisition of natural beliefs about what it is like for them, and this is different
again from our acquisition of attitudes.

What shapes and sizes do attitudes come in? We have already noted the
distinction between actual and dispositional attitudes. Both of these are different from
dispositions to form such actual or dispositional attitudes. Secondly, actual or
dispositional attitudes may be `simple' or relatively `complex'. Attitudes are complex
when their objects are logically complex; for instance we might approve of [either A
or B but not both]. And thirdly, there is also a distinction between individual
attitudes, and patterns or combinations of attitudes. As Blackburn says:

> And amongst the features of sensibilities which
> matter are, of course, not only the actual attitudes which
> are the output, but the interactions between them.[85]

Blackburn's favourite example is of someone who disapproves of lying, but not of
getting someone else to lie. Another example would be someone who only likes one
football team or religion and dislikes all others-a form of intolerance. (In his accounts
of mind-dependence and indirect contexts, Blackburn supposes that patterns of
attitudes are the object of a complex disapproval.)

A sensibility then, might be a matter of: (a) actual or dispositional attitudes,
(b) simple or complex attitudes, (c) patterns of attitudes or individual attitudes. Or it
might not be a matter of attitudes so much as (d) ways of forming attitudes, or even
(e) our ability to acquire the relevant natural beliefs.

When Blackburn introduces the idea of the step back, it looks as if he simply has in mind attitudes to attitudes; (a), (b), and (c). But when he gives examples of the step back, it looks as if (d) and (e) are in question. I shall now cast doubt on the interest of criticism of ways of forming attitudes or natural beliefs, before we go on to look at the attitudes themselves.

A critique of our ways of forming natural beliefs could not help with any of the semantic features of moral judgement in which we are interested. The failings of Ayer's account of moral disagreement are parallel. He tried to account for it as arising from disagreement over natural facts. But this simply fails to account for moral disagreement. [86]Consider someone who asks a child engaged in pulling the tail of a cat, to imagine how it feels to be Tibbles. What shows the limited moral relevance of our ways of acquiring natural beliefs, is that the child might reply that they know that what they are doing hurts Tibbles-that's why they are doing it.

What about ways of forming attitudes? At one point, on p.180 `Opinions And Chances', Blackburn goes as far as to say that the value of an individual projection is determined by the value of the ways of forming attitudes of which it is the output. I think this is the wrong way round. The value of ways of forming attitudes must be derivative from the attitudes which those `ways' form (whether actual or dispositional, simple or complex). This is plausible if we consider the ludicrousness of someone who was wholly indifferent to people's attitudes, but felt strongly about the way their attitudes were formed. This is not to say that ways of forming attitudes have no value at all, merely that their value is wholly instrumental. I shall call this point the `process/product' point. Together with the point about ways of forming beliefs, this shows that the step back must turn on a criticism of attitudes themselves.[87]

I now want to argue that patterns or combinations of attitudes are of limited moral interest in distinction to particular attitudes. This is relevant because a projectivist might say that certain F-features correspond to patterns of attitudes, or combinations of attitudes with other attitudes or with beliefs, or dispositions to move from one attitude to another-and not to any particular attitude. The idea would be that we disapprove of a system of attitudes in which the F-feature is not respected.

Surely it is peculiar to think that there could be a second-order attitude to a set of attitudes without a second-order attitude to at least some of the particular attitudes in that set-whether simple, complex, actual or dispositional. An example which brings this out, is Blackburn's own explanation of why it is not desirable to pair the disapproval of lying with the approval of getting little brother to lie (on p.192 Spreading The Word). He says that "...its absence opens a dangerous weakness in a sensibility". But that weakness is, he says, "Its owner would have the wrong attitudes to indirect ways of getting lies told...". This seems right, and what it shows is that the pairing is only undesirable because of the undesirable attitudes it yields.

Are complex attitudes of interest over and above simple attitudes? Blackburn thinks so, but I am less sure. For example, can we disapprove of the attitude which according to Blackburn expresses the dependence of the wrongness of kicking dogs on our attitudes-without the idea that we might simply disapprove of the approval of kicking dogs? The intolerance case is less easy. We might plausibly disapprove of someone who only approves of one football team or religion, and condemns the rest, that is:

{[B! (([H! (x)] ; ((Vy) (not-(y=x)---> [B! (y)]))}. This gives us "I disapprove of an attitude that approves of x and for all those y's not like x disapproves of y". This seems not to be rooted in an attitude to any particular attitude to a team or religion. Is there some other simple attitude which explains such complex attitudes? One

possibility is that we disapprove of both the wild, uncompromising approval of one team/religion, and of the wild, uncompromising rejection of others. The idea would be that what is wrong with intolerance or narrow-mindedness, is not so much how the attitudes combine, as that the strengths of the attitudes are inappropriate to their objects.(People should not get so het up about football or religion!) Or perhaps we are simply failing to have the appropriate approval for other, equally 'valid' teams or religions. The examples I have given could be challenged, and other examples could be provided. But I think we can be fairly confident of the weak point, that we cannot have a critique which was only of complex attitudes without involving, at least implicitly, a critique of simple attitudes.

In all then, ways of forming either attitudes or naturalistic beliefs looked of limited interest. And attitudes to combinations of attitudes and complex attitudes must be consequential on attitudes to the particular and simple attitudes, which are the output of the sensibility. The attitudes which are criticized need not always be particular and simple, but sometimes they must be. This is enough to see that particular and simple attitudes are of central importance.

4.6.iii The 'Ascent' Objection

My first objection to the refined idea of a step back, is that it lacks any interesting content. The problem is over what it could be to have an attitude to an attitude. Say A disapproves of X. Surely the only reason we could have for approving of A's attitude, is that we also disapprove of X. But this is just a first-order attitude. What other reason could one have for having that second-order attitude? We seem to be left with

$$\{[H! ([H! (x)]) < --- > [H! (x)]\}$$
and $$\{[H! ([B! (x)]) < --- > [B! (x)]\}$$

i.e. that an approval of an attitude of approval of x is based upon an approval of x, and an approval of a disapproval of x is based upon a disapproval of x as theorems of 'Boo-Hooray logic'. As theorems, of course, they should be propositions that can be

determined by argument. But these are more like axioms, since their truth appears to be self-evident. Of course it does not always follow that

{[B! ([H! (x)])] <--- > [(B! (x)]}, because our attitude might be one of neutrality (`[N! (x)]'); but in some cases we are not neutral in this way. An example would be our disapproval of those who condone or apologize for apartheid, for this just stems from our (first-order) disapproval of apartheid.

It must be conceded that attitudes to combinations of attitudes with attitudes and with beliefs, or attitudes to patterns of attitudes, do not `collapse' in this way. So this objection would not apply to them. But I argued in my discussion of the `process/product' and `pattern/particular' and `simple/complex' points that these cases cannot be of primary significance. It requires that the essence of the step back is an attitude to a simple attitude (whether actual or dispositional).

Beliefs look analogous. There can be second-order beliefs, which hold that another belief is true. But our reason for holding such second-order beliefs is that we have the first-order belief. We have the same ascent problem, in the case of both beliefs and attitudes.

It is true that there is no general ban on having interesting attitudes to attitudes among intentional states more generally. For example, I may be jealous of someone's interest in my neighbour. Or I might even be angry at my own anger, or feel disgusted at my own disgust. But the fact that there undoubtedly are these `uncollapsible' cases does not undermine the intuition that the moral and belief cases are of the `collapsible' sort. Until we are given a reason to reject that intuition, the ascent objection can go ahead.

The objection is that if the approval of an approval of X could be based on nothing more than one's first-order approval of X, then projectivism has not after all achieved a perspective from which to criticize our attitudes. I think it is the slide from considering the assessment of particular attitudes to vaguely considering assessments

of our whole 'sensibility' which makes it look for a moment as if Blackburn genuinely can go second-order. But that move is just a distraction. If going second-order is problematic, then the step back is impotent and cannot perform the task for which it was intended. If the ascent point holds, it is decisive, for it shows that the step back cannot secure the F-features for the projectivist. This would mean that this sort of quasi-realism is unsuccessful. And in the absence of any other sort, we then have an argument for realism-assuming that we do not want an error-theory.

A last point is that to say that we can deplore another's sensibility (e.g. 'Opinions And Chances' quoted above p.354-5) may show that one is already operating with a notion of objectivity. What needs explaining is why we might go in for this. Perhaps when Blackburn begins by saying "Not all sensibilities are admirable" (p.192 Spreading The Word), he is simply helping himself to what he needs-not earning it. For example, if the starting position is any set of attitudes that our upbringing has provided us with, how could merely following rational constraints guarantee that one would end up with a best possible set of attitudes? This would suggest that the step back cannot provide objectivity, for it presupposes it.

4.6. iv The Regress Objection.

The second objection is more obvious. It is that the step back threatens to lead to a regress. Overall, our search is for some adequate source of normative contraints on attitudes. Second-order attitudes allegedly give us this. But we then have the same problem about the normative constraints on second-order attitudes. So we have not made progess. The assessment of first-order attitudes by second-order attitudes, cannot help us understand the possibility that first-order attitudes can be defective, if we have no independent account of how second-order attitudes can be defective. For there might be conflicting second-order attitudes to first-order attitudes. For instance, we might have the attitude of disapproval to any change in my sensibility whereby I come to approve of Nazis. But what reason would we have to suppose that this attitude is one which a decent sensibility ought to have? A negative attitude to a drastic change in my sensibility is yet another attitude. We began with the question of

whether a projectivist can avoid any attitude being as good as any other. Now we have the question of whether any second-order attitude is as good as any other. How can second-order attitudes be assessed without invoking third-order attitudes -thus starting an infinite regress. Third-level attitudes require fourth level ones, and so on. The possibility of assessment by a higher-order attitude applies to every attitude, including higher-order ones. (None will be `grounded'.) So it seems that we will never be justified in relying on any, and so the step back fails to help us make sense of the idea that first-order attitudes can be defective. How can there be objectivity or mind-independence unless `justification comes to an end'? It seems that no level of attitudes can give us the required perspective from which to criticise other attitudes. I don't think the obviousness of this `regress' argument robs it of force.

The regress objection does not assume the preliminary refinements which the ascent objection required. We have the same problem with attitudes to sensibilities as a whole. Call a system of thought which fails to respect or which rejects one or more of the F-features, `shmoralizing'. Perhaps one sort of quasi-realism then says that shmoralizing is just immoral; nice people do not shmoralize. But surely the initial 'B!' and 'H!' in [H! (moralizing)] and [B! (shmoralizing)] is just as precarious and inexplicable as any first-order approval. What is wrong with shmoralizing? What normative constraints are there on the choice between moralizing and shmoralizing? Is it an arbitary, optional, whim on our part that we moralise? The objection works equally well whether the second-order attitude is held to actual or dispositional attitudes, to simple or complex attitudes, to individual attitudes or patterns of attitudes, or even to ways of forming attitudes or naturalistic beliefs. Wherever we rely on second-order attitudes, the regress threatens to undercut the claim of the step back to make sense of any F-feature.

The ascent objection was more basic. The problem there was that we could not see how to go second-order at all in any interesting sense. I was dubious about whether the step back got going-not about what it achieves when it does! But the regress argument says that if Blackburn can start to ascend, he cannot stop!

How might the quasi-realist respond? A quasi-realist cannot <u>swallow</u> the regress and think that it is nothing to worry about, for that would be to give up the objectivity of truth, for it might always be the case of some attitude at level n that there is an attitude at level n+1 which is a disapproval of that n-level attitude. I think they must say that the regress argument only looks bad if the regress cannot be blocked. Perhaps quasi-realism can somehow bring the regress to a halt at some point, say at the sixth level. If quasi-realism can do this, the regress objection may fail. But how could it do this? We need there to be some source of our right to block the regress.

It may be that a quasi-realist will say that some attitudes are justified, not by reference to other attitudes, but from some other source. And this sub-class of attitudes is the basis from which we can criticise the rest. For example, perhaps we should approve of moralising because of our needs or purposes. However, this would take us into the other quasi-realist techniques, and it would be an admission that the step back is not successful on its own.

While I think it does quite well, the regress objection may not be completely crushing. There is a straw which the quasi-realist can clutch at. Perhaps we do not need a justification for blocking the regress-it is merely a matter of fact we only ascend to a certain point, and this is what explains objectivity and so on. If the regress is blocked in this way, then a certain sort of mind-independence is lost, because the validity of the attitude which blocks the regress is just a given. But it might still explain our assent to something which looks rather like mind-independence.

Call what has been lost `strong' mind-independence, and call what may have been captured `weak' mind-independence. To undermine this response to the regress

objection, we need to show that a naturalistic explanation of the appearence of (say) mind-independence in someone's 'practices' or thought, falls short of establishing the reality of it. The idea would be that we admit that weak mind-independence is an easy victim of quasi-realist kidnapping, but it is strong mind-independence that we need, and that has not been captured. The success of the step back depends upon whether the regress can be blocked and whether 'weak' mind-independence is sufficient.

But at any rate, I think that the combined weight of the regress and ascent objections is considerable. Together they make the prospects for the step back by itself look dim.

4.6.v. The Internal-Reading Technique.

In attempting to show how quasi-realism can account for the F-feature of mind-independence, Blackburn uses what I have called the 'internal reading technique'. To be successful, quasi-realism will have to account for the conceptual necessity of mind-independence; the way that mind-independence is *constitutive* of value realism. On the face of it, a quasi-realist has not merely to account for the fact that we hold the F-features to be true, but also for the fact that their modal status is radically different from any first-order commitment. They cannot simply deny this, because this is an aspect of their meaning which this piece of quasi-realism is attempting to capture for projectivism.

While Blackburn allows that the goodness of something can depend on our attitudes:

> Of course there are moral truths and counterfactuals which are mind-dependent. Behaviour which we call rude is often wrong only because people think that it is wrong.[88]

he describes what he is trying to do as trying to give cogency to the following:

The utterance "Whatever I or we or anyone else ever thought about it, there would still have been (causes, counterfactual truths, numbers, duties)" can be endorsed even if we accept the projective picture, and work in terms of an explanation of the sayings which gives them a subjective source.[89]

I shall firstly attempt to clarify the sense in which the modal status of the F-features is radically different from any first-order commitment.

Quasi-realism can be characterised as the view that the truth-conditions of moral commitments are given by the existence or non-existence of the attitude expressed by any particular commitment in a best possible set of attitudes. The realist objection here will be concerned not so much with the kind of moral code that the projectivist will end up with as the <u>status</u> of the moral commitments included within that code. For quasi-realism there will be no difference at the ideal limit of critical rational enquiry between what seems morally right and what <u>is</u> morally right. (Which allows the conceptual possibility that it <u>might</u> have been the case that the goodness of something depended on our attitudes). While the truth conditions of moral judgements (the moral authority) may transcend individual subjective reactions, neither moral principles developed by commitments nor the judgement upon which they are based are independent of mental states, since they are developed merely out of objectified subjective commitments. This goes against the realist claim that the truth-conditions of moral judgements are independent of mental states. For the realist, moral judgments are propositions about what is the case; which means that their truth is grounded in facts about the real world. Necessity, too, for the realist, is a principle constraining what truths there <u>can be</u>, given certain others, not merely a constraint on what it is to make moral judgments. This is why the F-features are *constitutive* of value realism. This needs bearing in mind as I now turn to an examination of the 'internal reading' technique. Blackburn says:

The counterfactual "If we had different attitudes it would not be wrong to kick dogs" expresses the moral view that the feature which makes it wrong to kick dogs is our reaction. But this is an absurd moral view, and not one to which the projectivist has the least inclination. Like anyone else he thinks that what makes it wrong to kick dogs is that it causes them pain.[90]

The technique is to read the 'unlovely counterfactual' ('If we had different attitudes it would have been alright to kick dogs') as expressing a first-order moral view (i.e. as a statement that it is wrong).

The internal-reading technique cannot be sufficient for quasi-realism. We need an independent source for the right to the idea of defectiveness, for otherwise we would have no right to think that the attitude which mind-independence expresses is any preferable to the attitude expressed by mind-dependence. So the internal-reading must be supplemented, perhaps by a higher-order approval of the F-feature which has been read internally (e.g. Blackburn on mind-independence), or else by appeal to our own needs in a certain discipline of thought (e.g. Blackburn on legal bivalence). So any problems those quasi-realist techniques have, will infect the internal reading technique. But I shall try and show the internal reading to be suspect, whether or not it is employed in conjunction with other techniques.

In 'Quasi-realism And Mind-Dependence', Rasmussen simply responds to Blackburn's view that "It is immoral to regard truth as mind-dependent" [91] (as Rasmussen puts it), by saying that it is obviously absurd. And he thinks this absurdity is more obvious with (B) 'Had our sentiments been different, the moral truth would

have been different too' than with (A) 'If our sentiments had been (suitably) different, then it would have been right to kick dogs'. But he does not explain why it is absurd. I agree with him about this absurdity, but Blackburn might not agree. So the accusation of absurdity needs to be supported.

The main difficulty for the internal reading arises from the modal status of mind-independence (or necessity etc.). The problem is that the truth of the F-features is conceptually necessary,[92] while the truth of any first-order judgement is not necessary in that same sense. The internal reading denies this. And this is why a first-order reading of (say) mind-independence as just one more moral view among many, is plainly unintuitive.

Can we give an argument for the status difference, which does not beg the question against projectivism? I think we can.

The argument for the status difference is this. There is a strong intuition that it would be inappropriate to condemn someone morally for flouting or rejecting mind-independence or supervenience. Someone who rejected say, supervenience, would be prepared to endorse something today which possessed the same natural features as something condemmed yesterday. It is much more natural to say that someone who lets their attitudes turn on how things affect them, has more a bizarre, than a bad way of thinking morally. What lies behind this intuition? What is supposed to be disreputable is a sensibility that needs "beliefs about our attitudes as an input in order to yield the reaction of disapproval as output" ('Rule Following and Moral Realism' p.179). Whereas the sensibility should rather have "a tendency to seek...things according to some other feature which one believes them to possess" (Ibid. p.175) i.e. a moral sensibility needs input of belief to output of attitude; to form moral attitudes on the basis of our natural beliefs (Spreading The Word p. 192). But that is absurd because how could one's attitude to one thing be determined by one's beliefs about something quite different? Consider whether we would say that someone who found something funny because of the natural features of something quite different, merely has a weird sense of humour? Surely something more serious than this has gone

wrong. What sinks the internal reading is that someone who asserts an unlovely counterfactual does not have an absurd <u>moral</u> view; it is just plain absurd. Second-order claims cannot be construed as first-order. What the counterfactual `If we had different sensibilities the moral truth would be different too' *actually* means, is that moral truth is mind-dependent. This is a metaphysical claim, and the considerations which need to be advanced in favour of this second-order claim are quite different from those which would be advanced if it was a first-order claim. The internal reading technique denies this.

Necessarily connected with this is the fact that the quasi-realist allows the conceptual possibility that it <u>might</u> have been the case that the goodness of something depended on our attitudes. But that possibility is not there. If I believe that f, and it turns out that it is, in fact, not f, then that will change my attitude towards it. In other words, if p, then I believe that p. Blackburn's unlovely counterfactual states that 'Had our sentiments been different, the moral truth would have been different too' or `If I had not been commited to p, p would not have been true'. This amounts to the counterfactual `It is not the case that, if p, then I believe that p'. If the unlovely counterfactual expresses a moral view, then so must its 'lovely' negation-'The wrongness of kicking dogs does <u>not</u> depend on our attitudes'. The negation of any moral view must be a moral view; but an unlovely counterfactual is an absurdity. That is a significant semantic difference. Whereas for Blackburn an unlovely counterfactual is coherent, but false. Blackburn cannot (by means of this technique) account for the <u>conceptual</u> necessity of mind-independence. And this means that we have an argument against the internal-reading technique which does not beg the question against projectivism.

There is one direction in which Blackburn may lean which is certainly illegitimate and which cannot help him. This is to interpret mind-dependence causally-so that it says that X is wrong because it causes certain effects on me (my attitudes). The person asserting an unlovely counterfactual would be said to have a weird assessment of the compound of X plus my attitudes. But this causal sense is clearly not that of mind-independence. To have a convincing 'internal' interpretation,

Blackburn must have a case where 'dependence' means what it usually does, otherwise he will just be equivocating.

It is essential to remember that quasi-realism is not and should not be about imitating a form of words. That would make it quite trivial. We are interested in a form of thought. Blackburn admits that he has 'twisted' the sense of the mind-dependence counterfactuals, which accounts for their coming out false rather then meaningless:

> It should be noticed that because of the twist in construing these counterfactuals this way, it comes out *false* that if we had thought or felt otherwise, it would have been permissable to kick dogs.[93]

But if he has twisted their meaning, he has altered it-and so he is not capturing their sense for projectivism-merely their hollow, lifeless, linguistic form. It is not a question of how such counterfacuals 'can be construed', or of what they can be made to mean; but of what they do mean. The internal reading technique fails, then, because it changes the subject.

We can bring out these points by considering the sentence 'There are moral facts'. We can imagine a context, in which both a projectivist and a realist could be found, either asserting or denying these words in a first-order sense. However, the reasons behind such first-order assertions will be quite different from those behind their use in their usual formal or meta-theoretical sense. The place of that commitment in the holistic scheme of commitments will be very different on the two readings. Both a realist and a projectivist might say that 'There are no moral facts', as an expression of despondency, or metaphysical angst'! And both realist and non-realist might say the words 'There are moral facts', expressing a sense of the vividness and importance of moral issues-citing Augustine's Confessions, or Socrates' Apology. The considerations which would be advanced in favour of these first-order claims

would be quite different from those which would be advanced if they were metaphysical claims.

The projectivist might try to counter attack, by querying the realist's right to rely on the status distinction. If a moral realist can make nothing of the sense in which (for instance) mind-independence is more than just one more moral opinion, then the realist cannot object to projectivism on this score; so the realist argument would collapse. But this counter attack must fail because, as we saw earlier, it is simple for the realist to explain the status difference. To say that how things are in morals depends on us is not to hold an odd view but just to retract the realism. Mind-independence is <u>constitutive</u> of value realism. Necessity too, for the realist, is a principle constraining what truths there <u>can be</u>, given certain others, not merely a constraint on what it is to make moral judgements (though if we seek moral truths, we do well to heed that constraint in our judgements). A realist might hold other counterfactuals involving first-order commitments, but they will not have the conceptual necessity which attaches to mind-independence or necessity (or supervenience). The internal reading technique, according to which lovely and unlovely counterfactuals are just plain moral views, fails by failing to make sense of the status distinction, and I have argued that that is fatal, because it means that projectivism has no access to the conceptual content of mind-independence.

The project of quasi-realism, i.e. its aim to destroy the motivation for realism by `capturing' the F-features for projectivism, and thereby saying all a moral realist can, is, I have argued, ultimately a failure. On the other hand, I have shown realism to be able to <u>preserve</u> the F-features, and thereby lay claim to be the best theory capable of explaining the phenomenology and metaphysics of our ordinary moral thought and talk. Therefore a `thick' conception of truth for moral judgements requires cognitivism and realism.

4.7. Summary.

I began outlining the challenge of quasi-realism by discussing Blackburn's three motives for preferring a projective theory of value. Since his first argument, the argument from economy, was dealt with in chapter 3, I moved straight on to his second argument, the metaphysical motive for projectivism-supervenience. It was shown how realism can explain the ban on a mixed world that B*/A supervenience involves, by accepting B*/A necessity, and arguing that cases of wanton cruelty are wrong De-dicto.

Blackburn's third argument, that of the explanation of behaviour, was countered by offering an equally plausible realist explanation of behaviour.

The challenge presented by Quasi-realism was then argued as best understood as an argument against the claim that projectivism cannot explain the phenomenology of moral thought and talk. It was shown how Quasi-realism attempts to account for the phenomenology of moral discourse without the need for any realist ontology of values. Blackburn's attempt to show why we need to put attitudes into conditionals, in order to work out their implications, was examined, and I argued that a `thin' notion of truth was adequate for putting attitudes into conditionals, and could be used to deal with Geach's use of the Frege point about unasserted contexts.

I then turned to what I called a `thick' notion of truth, that the quasi-realist is trying to earn by capturing the `F-features' of *objectivity, mind-independence,* and (*necessity*) for projectivism. After outlining these F-features, it was shown how Quasi-realism tries to capture the features of moral thought and talk by a notion of (quasi) truth which depended on attitudes being improved up to an ideal limit, which we could have confidence in projecting. After a realist explanation of the F-features, the Quasi-realist technique of the `step-back' was examined, whereby attitudes can be

the object of other attitudes. It was argued that patterns or combinations of attitudes were of limited interest, and I concluded that particular and simple attitudes were of central

importance to the technique. These attitudes were shown to be vulnerable to both an `ascent' and a `regress' objection, and I concluded that the `step-back' could not capture the features of ordinary moral thought and talk, leaving the `internal reading technique, which was shown to fail, due to Blackburn's attempt to construe first-order claims as second-order ones. I concluded that the failure of Quasi-realism gave us good reason to believe that realism was the theory most able to account for the phenomenology and metaphysics of moral experience. The final chapter will now outline a realist theory capable of retaining a thick notion of moral truth, and which is fully able to account for the assertoric nature of our common moral experience.

[1] Spreading the Word. p.180. In fully outlining the project of quasi-realism, I shall usually follow Blackburn's practice in using the term "quasi-realism" to refer to this project of defending the way we think and talk about morality but I also sometimes refer to his complete moral theory as "quasi-realist" in a more embracing sense, including projectivism. Since Blackburn's own quasi-realism is based on the projective theory of value, this should not be a problem.

[2] ibid. P 182.

[3] Spreading the Word p.195.

[4] Spreading the Word p.180.

[5] ibid.p.182

[6] Although this is the usual expression of Occam's razor, Russell claims that no such phrase is to be found in the works of William of Occam himself. What can be found there, however, is the phrase translated as: "It is vain to do with more what can be done with fewer". History of Western Philosophy PP 462-3.

[7] See "Errors and the Phenomenology of Value" in Honderich p. 16.

[8] Spreading the Word p.182.

[9] Op.Cit. "Errors and the Phenomenology of Value" p 16.

[10] ibid. pp.182-7.

[11] Ethics. P.41.

[12] See my discussion of the manifest image in chapter 1. The relevant text is Nagel, The View from Nowhere. Also relevant is McGinn, The Subjective View

[13] For arguments against type-identity theory see Kenny, Anthony. The Metaphysics Of Mind (Oxford University Press) 1989 PP 151-153.

[14] Spreading the Word. P.183.

[15] Blackburn, Simon. "Supervenience Revisited" in Sayre-McCord, G. Essays On Moral Realism (1988) This builds upon his earlier "Moral Realism" in Casey, J. Moral Reasoning (1971) and on a section of Spreading The Word (1984) PP. 182-187.

[16] Op.Cit Page 184.

[17] The realist can agree with Blackburn that supervenience is indeed a constraint on moral practice, while pointing out that it is not only that. The realist maintains that supervenience between the moral and non--moral holds at least in part because of the realistic metaphysical relations that obtain regardless of essentially pragmatic or conventional considerations.

[18] Ratio (New Series) Vol. 7 Part 2 PP.145-152.

[19] As Blackburn is careful to note, he is not arguing that there is any logical inconsistency that attaches to realism by its adherence to supervenience. See "Supervenience Revisited" Pp.64, 73.

[20] Op. Cit Shafer-Landau Page 148.

[21] I am following the example of Shafer-Landau. Ibid. Page 150.

[22] Blackburn devotes a good part of "Supervenience Revisited" to attempts to show that the supervenience accounts of mental states, chemical facts and colours manage to avoid the problems he sees for moral properties. Shafer-Landau has claimed, however, that Blackburn is unsuccessful. Page 152 of "Supervenience and Moral Realism". Therefore, Shafer-Landau concludes, "Unless one is committed to global anti- realism, the argument from supervenience against moral realism is unpersuasive." Ibid. Page 152.

[23] Ibid. Page 152.

[24] Shafer-Landau's way of explaining the ban on mixed worlds is essentially the one Blackburn offers the realist. It is to pay attention to the different modalities involved, and to distinguish between conceptual necessity and metaphysical necessity. The realist may then accept the non entailment thesis whilst explaining the metaphysical supervenience relation *realistically* as

If a concatenation of natural properties once underlies a moral one, it must (in that world) always do so, and do so realistically, i.e., independently of any beliefs about this relations.Ibid.p.154.

The relevant lack of entailment thesis here will be conceptual truths, but the relevant supervenience thesis will not be. So no damaging supervenience/lack of entailment claims will appear at the same modality. The realist response at the level of metaphysical necessity can suffice as a response to the problem of mixed possible worlds.

[25] Spreading the Word. Page 184.

[26] Ibid. Page 184.

[27] This move has been extensively argued for by Klagge, J. "An Alleged Difficulty Concerning Moral Properties" Mind 93 (1984) and Brink, David. Moral Realism and the Foundations of Ethics (Cambridge) 1989. PP 160-61, 175-6, 191.

[28] Forbes, Graeme. The Metaphysics of Modality. (Clarendon) Oxford 1985.Page 48.

[29] Spreading the Word. Pp.187 -9.

[30] Ibid. Page 107.

[31] This 'hydraulic metaphor' belief/desire split has its roots in Hume. See A Treatise on Human Nature book 11 iii 3. Two very good expositions are "Hume's Psychology of Action" in Mackie, J.L. Hume's Moral Theory (Routledge) 1980. And Smith, Michael."The Humean Theory Of Motivation" Mind 96. 1987.

[32] Truth and Other Enigmas. P 146.

[33] McDowell, John. "Virtue and Reason" The Monist 62. (1979) PP 331 -50.

[34] Ibid. P.331.

[35] McDowell's defence of Aristotle's view that only judgement or discernment (perhaps guided by the idea of the mean) can inform an agent of the right or noble action *in the particular situation confronting the agent* is an interesting alternative to a principle-centered view of ethics. However, Aristotle does not confine himself to right action; for him emotions are an integral part of virtue, as has been emphasised

in Nancy Sherman's The Fabric of Character. Both Sherman and Lawrence Blum (Moral Perception and Particularity) attribute to Aristotle a moral view that does not restrict moral life to particular specific occasions (calling for action or emotion) which would fail to bring out that both the action and the emotion appropriate on specific occasions are expressions of sensitivities and forms of moral perception that pervade the agent's view of the world.

[36] Blackburn, Simon. Spreading the Word Page 180.

[37] As Simon Blackburn puts it:

"There is no real option to abandon conditional, moral, mathematical etc., thought..."
Why take value seriously? The moral realist has more than the Blackburnian anti-realist to deal with. There are more primitive opponents-wild, barbaric characters-who have no respect for our ordinary moral ways of thinking. These "nihilists", perhaps existentialists or depressives, reject moral thought as a mug's game. They have the same attitude to morality that the atheist has to talk of God. The atheist does not mess around with quasi-realism, attempting to capture features of ordinary theological talk. Talk of gods, angels etc., all goes out the window-into the conceptual dustbin. Similarly the moral nihilist says that taking values seriously is a mistake; values do not matter at all. (Or rather than saying that nothing matters, they might say that getting what you want, or having as much pleasure as possible is all that really matters.)

A nihilist is someone who rejects one or more of the features of serious moral thought, (I call these the `F-features') because to moralise is to respect those features. This would amount to denying all value and "meaning" in life. So for example, because they think that the feature of objectivity is in error, they are prepared to say that there is really nothing in it between kindness and cruelty; and scorning the feature of supervenience, they might be happy to endorse something which they know to be naturally identical to something they have condemned. It is important to notice that characterising nihilism in this fashion, avoids confusing it with the (silly) first-order moral view that nothing matters, (first-order "indifferentism"). For one could hold that everything has the value neutral, while accepting the feaures of serious thought-and one could reject them and make non--neutral judgements. The nihilist is the enemy of realism and quasi-realism alike.

[38] I owe the idea of `niceness' or aesthetic truth as `thin' to Wright, Crispin. "Truth In Ethics" Ratio New Series, 1995, Vol. 8, No. 3. PP. 209-226. And also

`Goodness, Truth And Beauty' Zangwill, N. P. M.Phil. Birkbeck College London. And in Scruton, Roger. Art and Imagination passim.

39 I am aware that McDowell might contest my claim that we do not take humour seriously. He may for example, suggest that the fact that our thought has some purpose or other does not differentiate moral attitudes from humour, since a good comedian may think in terms of comedy for the practical end of arousing laughter-humour has a purpose. It is important to us because a person's sense of humour tells us a great deal about their personality. This may all be true enough, but these considerations, as Crispin Wright points out in his review, should not be enough for us to "consider the ludicrous thesis that the comic supervenes upon the natural". Page 316.

40 Dummett, Michael. Frege: Philosophy of Language pp. 345-54

41 See Scruton's Art and Imagination, Op. Cit. p.137, on the way we withdraw judgements of niceness and say 'Well I like it anyway'.

42 In Wertheimer, Roger, The Significance of Sense. (Cornell) 1972 Chapter one, "The Philosophical Content" Page 1.

43 Geach, Peter. "Assertion" Mind Vol. 85 1976 PP. 436-49.

44 Spreading the Word p. 191.

45 Spreading the Word p. 190.

46 See Spreading the Word p. 190. I state the difficulty in the form that Blackbird presents it, taken from an objection made by Peter Geach to expressive theories, see "Assertion" in Mind Vol. 85 1976 PP. 436-49.

Although I regard this difficulty as something of a pseudo-problem I follow the objection through as Blackburn's response to it sheds an important light on the nature of his quasi-realism.

[47] Spreading The Word p.191

[48] Spreading the Word. Page. 192.

[49] Ibid. Page. 192.

[50] Dummett, M. Frege: Philosophy of Language (Duckworth) London. P.345

[51] Mind. Vol. 85, 1976. PP. 436-49.

[52] Op. Cit. Blackburn. Page 195.

[53] As Blackburn notes on p.191 SW, and see also Dummett at p.352-3 of Frege: Philosophy of Language (Duckworth)

[54] Spreading the Word p.191.

[55] Ibid.p.192

[56] The presentation of quasi-realism in Blackburn's book is unlike most of his papers, in that Geach's argument is misleadingly introduced as the first hurdle for quasi-realism.

[57] Hale R.L.V. "The Compleat Projectivist" The Philosophical Quarterly, 36. 1986. P.74.

[58] Blackburn, Simon. Spreading the Word p.192.

[59] Hale puts this rule as "Don't boo! What you do!"

[60] (See Spreading The Word 6.3, `Rule Following And Moral Realism' p.176-7 and `Truth, Realism, And The Regulation Of Theory' section V).

[61] Hume, David. `On The Standard Of Taste'

[62] Compare Putnam's famous attack on the idea that there is one true theory about physical reality.

[63] Spreading the Word Page 209.

[64] Sinnot Armstrong, Walter. "Moral Realisms and Moral Dilemmas" Journal of Philosophy 1987 p.263

[65] Elder, Crawford L. "Moral Realism: Its Etiology and a Consequent Dilemma" American Philosophical Quarterly 24. 1987 P.42.

[66] ibid. p. 36. See also Mackie's Ethics chapter 1.

[67] ibid.

[68] As Blackburn says

...The role of moralising (is) to guide desires and choices amongst the natural features of the world (S.R.p.56-7) See also his appeal to 'practical decision making' at Spreading the Word P.186. However, we need to be told something about how our desires and choices (etc) are to be guided, if they are to be guided morally. For we might, if we were unfortunate enough to be a 'southern pig breeder', guide our choices solely by considerations of financial profit.

[69] Op.Cit Spreading the Word p.218.

[70] 'Opinions And Chances' in Mellor (1980) P.179.

[71] There may be other features-but I think these three are the central ones. I shall not take much interest in bivalence, though it may be a feature of moral thought that in some cases, either the commitment is true, or it is false. Dummett now admits that bivalence is an inadequate litmus test of a realist stance in any area, though it may still be necessary (see 'Realism' Synthese 1982, p.55). It may even be disputable whether realism need always be combined with bivalence (at p.362 'Truth, Realism, And The Regulation Of Theory', Blackburn gives the counter- example of a possible realist view of counterfactuals which rejects bivalence).

[72] Stevenson also goes in for such 'quasi-realism' in his 'Ethical Fallibility' and Moore's Arguments against Certain Forms of Ethical Naturalism'. Stevenson's way of capturing objectivity for the anti-realist in the latter, was to explain it as arising from the fact that we cannot simultaneously approve and disapprove of something (p.74). But consistency in one's attitudes is not sufficient for the objectivity of truth; compare of course the 'coherence theory' of truth. And the very same argument would also capture objectivity for our comic thought, but that is undesirable. We cannot simultaneously find something funny and unfunny; but our comic truth is not objective. Stevenson fails to capture the sense in which, according to Moore, we think of conflicting moral judgements as 'logically incompatible'. Hale also points out that "No-one can coherently assert both that he believes that p and that p is false, but that does not of course warrant the supposition that he is infallible" (p.76 'The Compleat Projectivist').

[73] I outlined the way that Thomas Baldwin tries to do this with his theory of projectivism in chapter 2. The idea is that the intrinsic spatial reference of sense experience converts the subjective sensory quality of sense experience into the apparently objective quality of a physical object located before the subject: thus projecting the sensory qualities of sensation out into physical space. Baldwin has pointed out that this is a strongly externalist conception of the spatial features of sensory content: the projectivist is a real realist about the region of space she projects into. This is how Baldwin attempts to account for the apparent spatio-temporality of values.

[74] Blackburn's Eex is a system of thought that respects the F-features, but not spatio-temporality (see Spreading the Word. p.193.)

[75] A quasi-realist should side with Moore against Stevenson, arguing that moral disagreements are not like "Let's play poker" -"No, let's listen to a record", but are 'logically incompatible' assertions. (See

Moore's 'Reply to My Critics'.) If quasi-realism can construct a conception of moral goodness, then logical incompatibilities will be explicable.

[76]The realist should also argue that the (non--error-theoretic) projectivist has a problem with supervenience. This is not an argument that Blackburn considers a great deal-but a quasi-realist ought to take it as seriously, as say, mind-independence. What can a projectivist make of the fact that if a thing remains naturally unchanged, our attitude to it should also remain unchanged? How can there be any such constraints on projecting attitudes? If projectivism cannot provide such an explanation, it cannot take value seriously.

[77] I shall not be concerned with this particular technique

[78] We might note that Blackburn cannot obviously appeal to the analogy of Neuraths boat (Opinions and Chances p.180 and Rule-following And Moral Realism p.176. quoted above). For what we have there, is the combination of a coherence theory of evidence with a realistic (or 'correspondence') theory of truth. (See Davidson's 'Empirical Content' on this.) We only bother to readjust the planks on the boat, because of our concerns about mermaids, seamonsters, sunken-treasure, lost cities, pirates, and Jacques Cousteau. That is what the ship is for, and it gives point to rearranging the planks. There is nothing like this for a projectivist.

[79] See McDowell "Values and Secondary Qualities" Page 120.

[80] See Spreading the Word Page 243.

[81] Op. Cit. Blackburn. "Rule-Following and Moral Realism" p.176.

[82] Spreading the Word p.192.

[83] `Opinions And Chances' p.179-80 and see also `Rule-Following And Moral Realism' p.175.

[84] `Truth, Realism, And The Regulation Of Theory' p.357 and see also `Rule-Following And Moral Realism' p.175.

[85] Op. Cit. Spreading the Word. P.192

[86] See Language, Truth, and Logic. P.110-1.

[87] This over interest in ways of forming attitudes might be one explanation of why Blackburn sees an independent indeterminacy problem, for he thinks of the various improving sensibilities as improving in respect of processes rather than in product.

[88] Ibid. Page 218.

[89] Spreading the Word. Page 219.

[90] `Rule-Following And Moral Realism' p.179 and see also Spreading The Word p.217-18 and `Truth, Realism, And The Regulation Of Theory' p.356.

[91] "Quasi-realism and Mind-Dependence" Philosophical Quarterly .1985. Page 187.

[92] The F-features of objectivity, mind-independence, and necessity are, I believe, all best seen as patterns and habits of inference (they hold as a matter of conceptualnecessity)

[93] Spreading the Word. Footnote on Page 219.

Chapter 5.

Aspects, Perception, And Moral Value.

5.1. Rationale.

This chapter will argue that a significant part of our moral experience can be explained by an analogy with the phenomenon of aspect perception discussed by Wittgenstein in his Philosophical Investigations.

There is no need for an in depth examination of Wittgenstein's position. Rather, I shall give a positive account of moral experience using Wittgensteinian materials. The discernment of moral values will be argued to be a case of aspect perception, and the ability to perceive moral values will be shown to be tied in with the concept-dependency of moral perception, relying on discriminations that can only be made through the use of language, and hence through a shared form of life. This account will be shown to be fully capable of giving an account of our common moral experience. These arguments will prove not to be susceptible to Mackie's arguments from relativity or queerness, and will provide an answer to his challenge to the realist to provide a theory that can account for moral values as being both part of the external world and at the same time

> Intrinsically such as to elicit some 'attitude' or state of will from someone who becomes aware of them. [1]

I shall reveal how Wittgenstein's examination of seeing aspects sometimes shows aspect perception to be a matter of noticing alternatives, and that this is manifested in ways of responding to what one sees, exemplified in peoples' gestures, mannerisms, postures, etc. I shall argue, analagously, that we *uncover* moral aspects not by attention to 'ghostly' properties, but rather by attention to these "fine shades of behaviour". [2]

In Chapter 2 I used examples from aesthetics to criticize a projective account of value. Useful as this was, there are enough significant differences between a perceptual account of aesthetic values and a perceptual account of moral values for me to reject an analogy between them. There are some similarities between moral and aesthetic perception (both cases sometimes require the employment of our `cognitive stock' for example) but rather than being a case of seeing-as, I shall claim that in most cases the perception of aesthetic qualities is better understood as a case of `seeing-in', which is essentially interpretive,(`reading in') and as such differs significantly from explanations of cases of aspect-perception. It also became clear in chapter 4 that moral judgements are assertoric and require a`thick' conception of truth whilst aesthetic judgement is not under the same sort of normative constraints, so requires only a `thin' notion of truth.

Firstly, I shall examine an anti-projectivist argument against the `view from nowhere' position entailed by `Absolute' realism (see chapter 3.3). This will indicate the untenable assumptions of such realism, and reveal the perspectival outlook that lies behind an aspect-seeing account of moral perception, and also illuminate why the key issue for moral realism is the question of whether we can establish moral objectivity. I shall then go on to say how such objectivity is possible. Finally, I shall show how a Wittgensteinian analogy between moral values and aspects helps to explain our common moral experience.

5.2. The Argument Against Absolute Realism.

Since Mackie wrote Ethics, two main objectivist responses have emerged to defend the view that moral values are in some way objective. I have already examined one of these, the analogy with secondary qualities. There have also been several attempts to make a case for moral realism from a less absolutist perspective.[3] Such attempts tend to draw on a conventionalist interpretation of Wittgenstein's later position, where

consensus (is) a necessary as well as perhaps sufficient foundation for the notion of correctness.[4]

What is real and true on this reading of Wittgenstein, depends on community consensus. Similarly, it is argued, through consensus a community and its social practices set up standards for moral judgements, and these standards, being independent of individual moral judgements, become regarded as objective and real for that community.[5] This point is stressed by Sabina Lovibond:

Wittgenstein's conception of language incorporates a non-foundational epistemology which displays the notions of objectivity (sound judgement) and rationality (valid reasoning) as grounded in consensus...[6]

Both McDowell and Lovibond have argued for a realist position that relies greatly on a Wittgensteinian basis, if perhaps slightly less explicitly on actual Wittgensteinian arguments. McDowell's realist theory has not as yet been fully set out in one place as far as I know,[7] and has to be gleaned from several different papers which discuss different aspects of this area. I have already discussed his "Values and Secondary Qualities" in chapter 3. I now turn to "Non-cognitivism and Rule-Following".

McDowell believes that part of the reason that non-cognitivists (among whom he seems to include Mackie, oddly, since Mackie argues *against* non-cognitivism in favour of an error theory) hold the views that they do, is that they have a particular conception of what the (objective) world is like. This perception is that 'objective' things exist in the way that they do independently of how they are perceived to exist from any particular point of view. So on this 'Empiricist' conception, secondary qualities are not admitted to be 'genuine features of reality' since perception of them can be explained purely in terms

of primary qualities. Similarly it is believed that our experience of values can also be explained in this way: perception of the 'real' (value-free) world, gives rise to attitudes

in us which cause us to perceive the world mistakenly as having values in it: the 'projective error' described by Mackie. So I, from my particular point of view and perspective on the world (which I may share with others in my community or with the whole planet, but which is still just a point of view), perceive a real feature of the world but also project an attitude that I have to the feature back on to it.

McDowell has a powerful argument against such projectivism. He questions whether one can identify the real feature or a common cluster of features of the world to which ascribers of value are responding when they use the value concepts that they have. If this could be done, then an outsider to a particular community that used a particular moral concept would be able to know when to use the concept correctly without understanding either the concept or the perspective that gave rise to it. The outsider would be able to perceive the genuine feature of reality or cluster onto which the value is projected, but McDowell argues that it is not always possible. The non-cognitivist reply, he says, is that even if the genuine feature of reality cannot be identified it must nevertheless be there. McDowell employs Wittgensteinian arguments to try to show that this assertion (that there must be a genuine feature of reality there) is made out of a desire for a security that is actually quite illusory.[8]

The argument that McDowell takes from Wittgenstein to defend his view is taken from the sections of the Philosophical Investigations concerned with following a rule. He sets up the position he wishes to argue against like this. If a concept is being applied to different objects over time, then the people who do this are doing the same thing each time they apply the concept. And the practice of going on doing that same thing will be governed by rules. McDowell lends his opponents an analogy-the rules are like rails along which the practice runs like a train, unable to deviate from the correct path. The rails exist independently of the practice and of

the responses and reactions a propensity to which one acquires when one learns the practice[9].

So an observer could in principle tell that a person was following a rule correctly from a viewpoint outside that practice, i.e. without having acquired the `responses' mentioned above.

An apparently paradigm case of a practice in which going on doing the same thing is governed by a rule which the participant follows is offered by Wittgenstein: extending the mathematical series 2,4,6,8... by adding two each time. But McDowell, following Wittgenstein, believes that this whole picture is a misconception and that it can be shown to be so even in this apparently ideal case. He wants to show that although it is possible to be `objectively' correct in the practice, that cannot be demonstrated except from within the practice. Part of this picture that McDowell wants to argue against is the idea that to grasp the rule correctly is to have one's mental `wheels' securely in the independently existing `rails', such that if I understand the instruction to add two, i.e. I grasp the rule for extending the series 2,4,6,8... correctly, there is some psychological mechanism that will produce the correct results. But any occasion on which I appear to show that I understand the rule (an occasion on which I add two correctly), is merely a finite part of a possibly infinite range of behaviour, no matter how long the string of correct applications of the rule I have performed may be. So the evidence anyone has that I have grasped the rule correctly is compatible with my behaviour suddenly diverging from the requirements of the rule at any time. Wittgenstein gives the example of a person who abruptly starts adding four after he reaches one thousand. The point is that no amount of evidence ever justifies our supposing anyone (including ourselves, importantly) to have this psychological state of having our mental wheels secured in the `rails' of the independently existing rule. McDowell is keen to stress that this is not to say that we

226

should feel less confident that we will not go wrong, just that the source of our confidence is not in fact this supposed psychological state. The ground of our confidence that we and others will follow rules 'correctly' and go on doing the same thing, is not due to anything demonstrable or observable from some 'view from nowhere' outside the practices concerned. There is nothing that makes it certain that we will not 'go wrong', but we very rarely do, and expect that we shall not, because of our shared 'form of life'. This, according to McDowell, is at the root of all practices, rules and cases of applying a concept to more than one thing over time.

It is only because we share interests, standards, and all the rest (i.e language, beliefs, choices, etc. that go to make up a form of life) that we are confident that we will have the same understanding of rationality, communication, or following a rule. Nothing external to the form of life guarantees this. For many people, to think this way is to feel one's confidence being undermined, because confidence based solely on shared form of life seems to be no confidence at all. But attempts to restore our confidence in the face of this reaction (such as the picture of rules as rails) are all, McDowell believes, no more than "consoling myths"[10] which give us only "illusory security".

What those who feel the need for consoling myths require, according to McDowell, is for it to be possible to recognize that, e.g. a case of adding two was correct, independently of being part of the form of life with the arithmetical practices in question. McDowell calls this a kind of Platonism, and asserts that the picture lacks content. This sort of Platonism seems to give us the confidence we crave: we can say that two plus two equals four, and that we believe this to be true because it is in fact true, not just because people in our form of life "find such calculations compelling"[11] (no doubt because of childhood training). But, according to McDowell, we are deluding ourselves by saying such things. This Platonism cannot really be expressed by us (although we can be expected to know what point of view McDowell is criticizing and at least to 'seem' to or to 'feel' that we understand it). To say something like 'two plus two really does, objectively, equal four' is still to be speaking from within our form of life and

mathematical practices. It is impossible to speak from an independent point of view and 'expressions' of Platonism of this sort are in fact senseless. McDowell stresses the point that none of this should be taken to cast doubt on the incorrectness of saying, e.g. 'two plus two equals five', or to imply that this cannot be definitively proved to be wrong. If someone disagrees that two plus two equals four and argument is unsuccessful, McDowell points out that we then have nothing we can say except things like "You just aren't seeing it" and so on. It is useless to try to show that 'from an independent point of view' the concept applies. McDowell says

> We should accept that sometimes there may be nothing better to do than explicitly to appeal to a hoped-for community of human response[12]

i.e. we must depend on a shared form of life.

McDowell thinks it is a mistake to look for reassurance in the face of what he calls this 'vertigo': the feeling that our practices and beliefs are unfounded or lack the kind of certainty we once felt they possessed. Rather we should realize that we do not in fact need any reassurance. He says

> we would be protected against the vertigo if we could stop supposing that the relation to reality of some area of our thought and language needs to be contemplated from a standpoint independent of that anchoring in our human life that makes the thoughts what they are for us.[13]

The non-cognitivists, who insist that there are genuine features of reality which cause feelings that are projected back onto them as values, have failed to do this. This belief is due to their seeing the anthroprocentricity or ethnocentricity of an evaluative outlook as generating a threat of vertigo, but seeking to escape the threat by finding a solid,

externally recognizable foundation. This insistence of the non-cognitivists is thus presented to us by McDowell as just being a part or a symptom of a wider view they hold of the relation between thought and reality. This is a kind of realism, a kind that

> purports to conceive our understanding of what it is for things to be thus and so as independent of our limited abilities to find out whether they are.[14]

Someone who is a realist of this sort will have a 'thin' restrictive conception of the 'real' world as containing only primary qualities and no secondary qualities or values. McDowell hopes that having argued that such a kind of realism is incoherent it will be seen that there is no good reason to deny the existence of values, thereby allowing us to accept a less *impoverished* view of reality. We saw at chapter 3.3 how the impoverished conception tied in with 'scientism', the view that science can provide the only truly objective perspective. But there it was made clear that whilst it deals with properties and concepts which can rightly be called objective it is still a necessary, rather than a merely contingent limitation on our scientific knowledge that it can proceed only from within a human conceptual system.-i.e. the 'view from nowhere' is based on our interests in investigation.

McDowell never states or summarizes his final position on the exact nature of moral values but I believe that, from what he does say, it is possible to build upon his ideas.[15] We have seen the importance attached to Wittgenstein's idea of 'different forms of life'. Only from within their form of life is it possible to correct someone, to say that they have made a wrong calculation or hold an incorrect opinion. The corollary follows that only from within their form of life can someone say that someone else has performed any operation correctly.[16] The idea of 'getting something right' carries no implication of agreement with what the world is really like 'in itself'; it just means acting in accordance

with what is taken to be correct in the practice in question. On this account, moral truth is conformity to agreed standards relevant to the particular practice involved.

By refusing to accept a `thin', impoverished, conception of the world as containing in itself no values or secondary qualities, just those properties recognized by science, we can, I believe, arrive at an objectivist account of ethics. By showing that there is no `view from nowhere', we can show that all our concepts are dependent on our particular point of view. This being the case, it can be seen that moral values (and, for McDowell, secondary qualities) are just as `objective' (in the sense that veridical perception of them is possible) as primary qualities. The crucial point is that the assumptions that lie behind a `view from nowhere' are untenable; such a position is incoherent or impossible even to conceive, and thus that anything we take to be objective in a `Platonistic' sense, such as arithmetic, is in fact dependent on our agreement in form of life.

I would argue that a belief in a `competitor realm' where what is true really is independent of our choices, hopes and beliefs, is no more than a red herring; from a less absolutist perspective the supposed ontological distinctions between objective and subjective, real and non-real, are to be understood on a different footing, and won't be drawn at the same places. When we realize that there is no such `competitor', that everything, in fact, is a function of human activity-in particular, the authority relations which train and coerce members of communities into accepting a particular way of talking and thinking about the world-then we can stop feeling a sense of `vertigo'; the feeling that our practices and beliefs are unfounded or lack the kind of certainty we once felt in them.

Wittgenstein's view of language implicitly denies any metaphysical role to the idea of "reality"; it denies that we can draw any intelligible distinction between those parts of assertoric discourse which do, and those which do not, genuinely describe reality."[17]

What is real and true cannot be distinguished from what we call reality and what we hold to be true. Language and what we take to be objective, true, and real are constituted from a shared `form of life' based on community consensus.

According to Wittgenstein's conception of language, objective discourse "rests upon" or is "grounded in", a consensus within the speech community-an agreement initially in judgements, but ultimately in actions.[18]

Someone may object that the roles that values play in our thought and action still seem rather different from the roles played by facts. As Hare points out, for example,

We are free to form our own moral opinions in a much stronger sense than we are free to form our own opinions about what the facts are[19]

but that simply exemplifies one of the differences that exist among various language-games at a *phenomenological* level. *Metaphysically*, facts and values are quite homogeneous, for the language in which we have access to such things is fundamentally homogeneous as well. Sabina Lovibond derives this semantic homogeneity from the later Wittgenstein's refusal to make invidious distinctions among language-games:

On (Wittgenstein's) view, the only legitimate role for the idea of 'reality' is that in which it is coordinated with...the metaphysically neutral idea of 'talking about something'...It follows that 'reference to an objective reality' cannot intelligibly be set up as a target which some propositions-or rather some utterances couched in the indicative mood-may hit, while others fall short...The only way, then, in which an indicative statement can fail to describe reality is by *not being true*-i.e. by virtue of reality not being as the statement declares it to be.[20]

What makes the contrast between facts and values innocuous is not a denial of their evident differences in particular, nor a denial of the greater contribution of our own subjective inclinations to judgements about value, but rather situating that difference at a new explanatory level. Instead of trying to show that moral properties exist in traditionally conceived reality, the realist can maintain that saying that anything exists in this 'traditionally conceived' way is meaningless. Opponents of traditional realism such as Mackie or the non-cognitivists would say that a sentence such as 'That was wrong' does not refer to anything in the world, and therefore for non-cognitivism cannot be true or false, whilst on the error theory they are always false. For the McDowell or Lovibond-style realist, however, the truth or falsity of a sentence is not a matter of its truth being capable of confirmation from some 'Absolute' perspective, but instead depends on its being an appropriate sentence as determined by the norms and standards of the speaker's form of life. There is no view from nowhere, but only from within our forms of life. Hence truth-determination arises within forms of life. Correct judgement in ethics is:

conformity to the consensual norms of valid reasoning which happen to apply.[21]

Objectivist theories enable us to say of certain people that their actions genuinely are bad or that their moral opinions genuinely are incorrect, because moral truths do exist not just as a matter of people's feelings, preferences and so on, but in a way analogous to that in which, say, sounds exist. Moral categories, Lovibond says,

> can be seen as registering distinctions which are of unconditional practical interest to us.[22]

This account means that statements about moral situations are on a similar footing as far as being capable of truth and falsity goes, as any other kind of statement generally thought of as being truth-apt. Ethical activity, like human social activity in general, requires authority relationships, and the notion of an ethical judgement, like any judgement, depends for its objectivity upon its situation in a nexus of human agreement. For the person engaged in using moral language, making moral decisions, trying to structure an admirable life, moral considerations must be seen as answering to the facts of the matter, and this is grounded in consensus. For example, there is consensus among the members of the English speaking community about colours. Thus if someone says of a post-box that it is red, that statement will be true, due to the fact that it happens to be agreed among those who speak English that that is the colour normally possessed by post-boxes. Similarly it will be true for those people that grass is green. For speakers of Gaelic, grass could equally well be said to be blue, since the colour word used of grass in some circumstances, `gorm', is thought to be best translated as `blue'. In Homer, there is a description of `the wine-dark sea'. The point is that what colours may truly be ascribed to an object depends on what the community or form of life thinks is appropriate. The contention of realists is that all true statements depend on such agreement also. The possibility of discourse about an objective world is determined by the fact of agreement in form of life-where such agreement exists, the particular discourse grounded in it can properly be called `objective' regardless of its subject matter. This means that a moral

judgement made can be true in just the same way that any other statement can be true. If the moral judgement made is the appropriate response to the situation as such things are judged in that form of life then it is true. Truth is a matter of there happening to be consensus in a particular field among the members of a linguistic community. This is not because this must be so but just because it is held to be so in that form of life. It is an objective truth, nevertheless.

I shall now turn to an important point about the concept -dependentnesss of moral perception that could easily be misunderstood. I shall go on to show at 5.3 onwards how moral perception-like visual perception-is guided and limited by the facts of the world. So, for instance, with the visual case Wittgenstein's duck-rabbit can be seen as a duck and/or a rabbit (but not, for instance, an elephant) because of its real visual features. Seeing objectively in this case is just picking up the features that are, in fact, there. And these features are there even if some individuals or social groups fail to notice them because they have no experience of real ducks and rabbits and therefore no knowledge of the features that a drawing of a duck or a rabbit might exhibit. In the above discussion on rule-following, truth is a matter of there happening to be consensus in a particular field among the members of a linguistic community. Objective seeing is here guided and limited by the resources of the community -linguistic or otherwise-which a person happens to inhabit. These considerations may tempt the conclusion that such seeing is relative to social groups and not to the actual facts of the world. This would be inconsistent with my attack on the relativism of Mackie. Fortunately, this is not the case. The reasons are these.

A year ago someone told me that Buddhists do not see a man in the moon but a hare. Eventually I was able to see the hare aspect that I had been previously blind to. An ornithologist may insist he can see an ambiguous figure as a Cakapoe, the now extinct bird once indigenous to New Zealand. There would be a call for evidence from people who had no knowledge of the bird and pictures could be produced: "I see this", explanations used: "move your eyes along these lines" with the understanding that only something plausible may show itself. There may result consensus that such an aspect can be seen that people were previously blind to, or the claim may be rejected as being on a par with someone claiming to see the duck/rabbit as an elephant. However, these examples are quite different from someone claiming to see, for example, the duck/rabbit as a Snark, the creature from the Lewis Carrol poem "The Hunting of The Snark". We would dismiss this claim since no-one possesses the concept of a Snark (the creature is described only as the beast hunted by the Bellman). There cannot be a recognisable concept of a Snark unless it has a public role. Similarly, if no form of life possessed the concept 'racism' then` racism' would not be an aspect of a situation. This is because moral values are grounded ultimately in conceptions of the good and human flourishing. As such, moral aspects are immanent, not transcendent. To claim that racism would be simply wrong even if <u>no-one</u> possessed the concept `racism' is saying that moral aspects exist that no-one has the concept of, which is to accept a transcendent realism of the kind resisted by the later Wittgenstein in his considerations of rule-following. To accept such a substantive conception of moral values would be like accepting the picture of rules as rails. It would be saying that there might exist aspects, not yet conceptualised, that are nevertheless there and known only to God or from an Archemedian point on the Absolute Conception.

To claim that there may exist moral aspects that are outside our conceptual scheme that could nevertheless be known by someone who understood the concept, is to forget that our conceptual scheme is the only one we have. Moral value ultimately relates to conceptions of the good and to human flourishing within forms of life. Therefore, to want to have access to moral values from a standpoint independent of our conceptual scheme is to grasp at something quite illusory. This is quite different from one form of life for whom 'racism' means nothing, coming into contact with another form of life which recognises racism as wrong. (These sorts of experiences are fully examined at 5.3 onwards). Then one form of life could be persuaded to notice the racism. It is the case that the racism aspect is only there when the community responds to racist situations. and is uncovered by their response. I think that the temptation to say some actions are just racist even if the linguistic community fails to notice that they are stems from the simple fact that we all possess the concept of racism. But, once we have seen that a linguistic community may not possess the concept of racism, we can now realise that racism would not be an aspect of a situation, because it was not an extra item to be seen. Rather, it was revealed by their meritous response. To say it could be independently there is like claiming that 'Snark' (which no-one has any concept of), could be an aspect of an ambiguous figure. What would be the point of insisting that 'racism' would be wrong even if no-one knew what it was and could not therefore see it? Concept-dependence means that 'racism' could not be seen by the people in the form of life who did not possess the concept, therefore to expect a discussion of racism would plainly be silly. It would of course be possible for a sub-group within a form of life to not notice racism and have that aspect pointed out to them. I stated in chapter 2 that values are concept-dependent in that there is a need for possession of the concept of f in order to describe f. In moral discourse, there is no view from nowhere, but only from within our linguistic community. Hence truth determination arises within forms of life.

I said earlier that if someone makes a moral judgement which is an appropriate response to the situation as such things are judged in that form of life then it is true, because truth is a matter of there happening to be consensus in a particular field among the members of a linguistic community. A possible response would be to say "But couldn't a judgement be appropriate but untrue?" The key issue is whether it is possible to establish moral objectivity. We have seen how a form of life involves a community-derived conception of moral truth. I shall now show how objectivity can be best achieved by conceiving of morality as essentially about these human conceptions of the good and what contributes to human flourishing.

Any form of life which has moral discourse will have a conception of moral truth. In chapter 4 I argued for a distinction between the `thin' truth which applies to niceness and comedy, and the `thick truth' which applies to moral concepts. (see chapter 4.4.iii). Although they are community derived, the truth which applies to moral concepts does not depend on my attitudes (see 4.4.ii.), and from within our moral concepts we can distinguish between truth which is based on a common life and is grounded in conceptions of the good and of what constitutes human flourishing, inter-subjective agreement and individual opinion.

We saw at chapter 4.4.iii how the F-features of *objectivity, necessity* and *mind-independence* were involved in a conception of `thick' truth. Unlike the `thin' truth involved in niceness or comedy, which can be no more than the expression of attitudes (see 4.4.ii.),I explained how moral concepts involve necessary relations (see 4.6). For example, necessity says that if two things are N* and one of them is also M, then so is the other. Mind-independence says that it is not the case that the goodness of something depends upon our attitudes. Objectivity says

`If two people, or one person at two times, assert the same judgement about an individual, then the truth value of each assertion must be the same'.

Or

'The truth value of judgements about an individual cannot change unless the individual changes' (see 4.6).

I also suggested (though I did not argue) that the objectivity of truth means that genuine facts about an individual determine the truth of judgements about it. Mind-independence merely says that the truth-value of a judgement is not determined by facts about the judger of the individual.

The realist can preserve the F-features which apply to truth which is based on a common life and is grounded in conceptions of the good and of what constitutes human flourishing, inter-subjective agreement and individual opinion.

First of all, let us take individual opinion. As I have just stated, *necessity* says that if two things are N* and one of them is also M, then so is the other, while objectivity says that the truth value of judgements about an individual cannot change unless the individual changes (see 4.6). For example, the act of 'causing pain just for fun' necessitates such an act being cruel, and 'cruel' is a concept that is normatively loaded; a cruel act is necessarily wrong De dicto (see 4.3). The meaning of cruel is fixed in this way. Mind-independence says that it is not the case that the goodness of something depends upon our attitudes. So if someone's individual opinion is that torturing cats for fun is not wrong, then they are simply wrong if it is the case in the form of life that anything which involves causing pain for fun is cruel.

238

Next there is inter-subjective agreement. For thick truth, the facts of the matter are one thing, and our beliefs about them are another; the difference between thinking something so and it being so. Because of this feature of mind-independence, (see 4.6) moral acts are wrong regardless of whatever anyone thinks. Because mind-independence is a feature of our moral thought (see 4.4) we can think of moral truth as grounded in the fact of the matter, and therefore inter-subjective agreement is not sufficient for ascertaining the truth of a moral judgement; inter-subjectivity is mind-dependent. This feature of mind-independence is closely related to fallibility, since there could exist some moral aspects of the situation that the judgers fail to notice. This explains how moral concepts can be wrongly applied, because they are used in propositions that purport to represent the facts of the matter; which means that their truth is grounded in facts about the situation i.e. ultimately grounded in common conceptions of the good and what constitutes human flourishing as such things are judged in that form of life. This does not mean that there is but *one* moral aspect of the situation, because moral situations may contain multiple aspects, rather, it implies judgement-independence; that the truth-value of a judgement is not determined by facts about the judger of the situation. Our moral judgements are community-derived and are socially constrained, but there are procedures for change within a community. If I may offer an analogy: imagine several people sitting in a room who all agree that the clock on the wall is telling the right time. Here we have inter-subjective agreement. But, if it is the case that the clock is a good ten minutes slow, then inter-subjective agreement will not have been enough to ascertain the truth concerning the peoples' judgement of the right time. Objectivity says that 'the truth value of judgements about an individual cannot change unless the individual changes'. There will be generally agreed procedures to ascertain the right time, and objectivity will be grounded in such practices. These practices will be customary, time-honoured procedures concerning ascertaining and maintaining the right time; possibly involving clock mechanisms, other time-pieces, radio, or 'speaking clock' telephone, etc. that the community has faith in. Analogously, there may be inter-subjective moral agreement within the form of life that, say, homosexual practices are wrong. However, rational

assessment is rendered possible by the fact that the language-games of moral discourse are no more 'fixed and given once and for all' than are any others. Moral truth involves conformity to agreed standards relevant to the particular practice involved, but we can recognize that these standards are themselves not beyond question. Although too radical a critic may conceivably find himself condemned to solitude, ideals enshrined but imperfectly realized in the prevailing language-games (those concepts relating ultimately to values that contribute to human flourishing) may be used to criticize some particular practice, thereby changing communal agreement. I may offer my individual opinion that homosexual activity is a 'crime' with no victim, I may cite 'homophobia' as a prejudiced reason for communal disapproval and invoke concepts of liberty and tolerance in an attempt to persuade a seismic shift in community-derived judgement.

Lastly there is truth based on a common life and which is grounded in our practical interests, which ultimately involve our conceptions of human flourishing. Moral concepts have a kind of semantic depth (see 2.5). Starting from our ordinary grasp upon these concepts, together with some practical grasp upon the conditions of their application, we can proceed to investigate, to experience, the features within our form of life answering to these concepts, i.e. the personal and social happenings to which the concepts apply. The nature of our moral judgements is assertoric. When agents apply their thick moral concepts, in doing so they make judgements, and because the conception of truth for our moral judgements is 'thick' the judgements are under certain normative constraints; agents can withdraw judgements if the circumstances turn out to be not what was supposed, can make an alternative judgement if it would be more appropriate, and so on, until we arrive at commonly held truths.

The pursuit of ends which contribute to human flourishing would be arbitrarily (and irrationally) restricted if made immune to changed beliefs, or to reflection about their compatibility with other ends or beliefs held within a form of life. Therefore moral truth discovers means and revises ends, pays attention to consequences and alters individual opinion and inter-subjective agreement on the basis of the facts of the matter. Our view of 'the facts' is dependent on a whole range of practical determinations of the good which may change. In the example of individual opinion, the person who thought it was permissible to torture cats would find himself marginalised because of the way that moral objectivity is accounted for within community practices. Such cruelty would be seen as going against the norms of the community, norms which have been tried and tested through time. Because of our common practical engagement with the world, the conception of the good is not individual, but community-derived; the community sees the world in a certain way, and we are brought up to see the world in a certain way also, using socially-derived concepts to describe people's behaviour as morally acceptable or not (I shall show how it is possible to disallow illegitimate cases of putative moral perception at 5.8). Within this framework, torturing cats may be seen as cruel, and such cruelty seen as diminishing the humanity (and flourishing) of the one who is cruel.

In the case of inter-subjective agreement,[23] it may be the case that within a form of life there is agreement that surrogacy contracts are just a form of contract and a legitimate basis for a utility friendship. The people within the form of life regard these arrangements as expressing the mother's freedom to choose to use her body in a way she deems fit, and the commissioning parents' reproductive freedom to have a child. As such, the relationship between the parties is seen as one of mutual advantage, without exploitation. However, with time and greater familiarity with the actual consequences of these arrangements, the truth about these pronouncements concerning the justice of the contract and the legitimacy of the eugenic partnership may be revised, as different moral

aspects become apparent. Studies might show that upon birth of the child a majority of surrogate mothers undergo a deep sense of loss and abandonment that leads to a period of grieving for the `lost' child. Equally, it may be the case that the child typically goes through a period of traumatic identity confusion upon learning his biological origins, exacerbated by the lack of preparedness on the part of commissioning parents to deal adequately with the psychological complexities. Consequently, the wisdom of those that have been a party to such contracts could be that the psychological and emotional costs of the practice are simply too great. This could eventually be seen as diminishing the well-being of the individuals involved and of the society as a whole, and therefore the wrong thing to do, as we invoke deeper criteria of well-being.

From the above discussion it can be seen how objective truth arises within institutions. The truth of our moral judgements is grounded in the `fact of the matter'; the objective truth which obtains from the relationship between inter-subjective and community determination; objective truth is based on a common life ultimately grounded in our practical interests. We arrive at commonly held truths through certain procedures, customs, traditions, common patterns of life, values, etc. Moral facts form part of our institutions and our culture as well as our personal beliefs. Our perceptions, practices, and judgements as moral decision-makers are embedded in, and are an outcome of, these same institutions and social structures. This is how perspectives are grounded in ways of life. Like rule-following and language games, what we take to be valuable, and thus what we take to be a moral fact, changes because of cultural, historical, and environmental changes, and because our own personal views change too, as a consequence of a corresponding change in our own perceptions. This finds expression in fine shades of human behaviour; politeness, respect, consideration, etc. manifest in language and conduct, in posture and gestures, and it is by attention to these responses that we uncover value, by noticing aspects.(This is a somewhat broader notion of `aspect' than is involved in Wittgenstein's discussion of `aspect' perception. I shall justify this later).

242

Because of the above account given of moral concepts as requiring 'thick truth' moral concepts have to be understood objectively. In order to successfully demonstrate their grasp upon thick moral concepts, someone must be able to say of a chaste person that such a person is virtuous in moral outlook, and therefore acts with restraint and would not be likely to commit adultery, or that an inconsiderate person is someone selfish, thoughtless or superficial in his views and actions toward his fellows, etc.[24] Precisely because they are designed to pick out moral phenomena of indefinite complexity-typically of what is meant by 'cruel', 'cynical,' 'chaste,' 'inconsiderate', 'honesty', courage, etc.- this process of investigation through moral experience of values that contribute to a life-story, can, and should, proceed without end, and may well develop in ways that are hard to predict.

Realism along these lines cannot be vulnerable to Mackie's argument from relativity. Recognition of such variation in moral opinion between peoples of different cultures and eras is a central part of the realist position. Different linguistic communities find different responses appropriate to the circumstances resulting in this variation. Truth cannot be assessed from outside the community, only from within the community. Within each community, those moral judgements are true and that is the only kind of truth there is. This is not to say that argument is not possible. On the contrary, argument is possible due to the inevitability that different forms of life will share some common concepts. We do have a common language in which to discuss morality. Very often different forms of life do have different forms of moral experience and see the world in ways that we cannot, or which we find abhorrent. The fact that different cultures may see moral reality differently is a fact of life; sometimes mutual understanding may arise through a partial sharing of moral experience, sometimes it may not; all this means is that not all forms of human misunderstanding can be solved by dialogue. Any attempt at resolving this irreducible fact about the human condition is a matter for normative theory and not to be discussed here, since I am not aiming to solve moral problems, but to show how it is possible to account for the assertoric nature of moral discourse. Later I shall

explain how adopting a somewhat broader notion of aspect seeing (see 5.5) further illuminates our understanding of moral experience.[25]

What then of the argument from queerness? Obviously realism of the kind just explained does not claim the existence of strange values of the kind Mackie criticized realism for having to employ. It is true that something is good (if it is good) because to judge so is an appropriate response to the circumstances.

Ethical decision-making assumes moral realism. For values to have any status whatsoever, we must be able to have reasons for approving or not accepting a value, and for evaluating this approval process itself. While without belief in moral facts

> it is not rationally approvable to adhere to any moral system whatever.[26]

Neither an individual nor a society could develop a moral system, much less evaluate its functionality in the first place, without the notion of a moral fact:

> The very concept of morality itself or the very notions of sound moral reasoning or of justified moral practices are best understood simply as further items of distinctive culture patterns.[27]

This is why appealing to a community-established authority is a way to verify whether or not our moral code is true.

I do not think of Wittgenstein as a realist. It is a question for Wittgensteinian scholars if he was or not. If not, it is nevertheless erroneous to accuse him of a form of linguistic idealism. Just as it would be wrong to attribute to him some form of Empirical realism. According to G.E.M. Anscombe, Wittgenstein tries to

steer in the narrow channel...to avoid the falsehoods of idealism and the stupidities of empiricist realism.[28]

Wittgenstein writes, "essence is expressed by grammar," so that we cannot get at anything except through grammar. But this is different from saying, `essence is <u>created</u> by grammar,' saying that, for example,

nothing would have been red if there had not been human language.[29]

Similarly, moral facts, which I shall go on to argue are best understood in terms of aspects, (see 5.3) are concept-dependent, they appear only in institutional or social settings.

It makes a great deal of difference if moral realism is true in that we can say that moral facts obtain: they serve as the necessary condition for there being moral judgements. Moral facts also have a second function; as the ideal or goal of moral decision-making. Moral judgements function both to evaluate the adherence to a particular moral code or system, and also to set a standard of what should be adhered to. Values are not created by our choices. Some things really are better than others and a person is capable of getting it wrong.

I have argued that the assumptions of `Absolute' realism are untenable. Moral facts, are, I shall now argue, best understood in terms of aspects, and have a crucial connection with our moral experience. I shall now discuss the phenomenon of aspect perception. This will further illuminate how our perspectives are grounded in ways of life, due to our perception of reality being aspect-relative, largely determined by the form of life in which we have been brought up.

5.3. Aspect-Perception.

When you see a figure this way, then another way, it is tempting to say that you interpret it differently each time. There can be interpretation involved, but Wittgenstein argues that in most cases what you are actually doing is seeing something different each time. This is because interpreting is an action, and what we are doing in this instance is seeing. As Wittgenstein says, "To interpret is to think, to do something; seeing is a state." [30] Interpretation involves the forming of hypotheses[31]-for example, I'm walking home at night, I see a dark shape that I take to be a man, I say "Nice evening" then on closer inspection I recognize it is only a tree. My hypothesis has been disproved (I may also have been right). In the case of the Duck-Rabbit, no such process is possible-if I am seeing the duck aspect, then that's that: "I am seeing this figure as a..." can be verified as little as (or in the same sense as) "I am seeing bright red" [32] can be verified. There is a similarity in the use of `seeing' in the two contexts i.e. `seeing colours' and `seeing aspects'. A cube may be taken as an open box, or a wire frame, or a solid cube. It is as if the figure had different clothes, each aspect being in the picture, not existing merely as our interpretation of it. The multiple aspects of the picture can be seen in one way then another, and this is involuntary, not an act of will, although the will can come into it when we say "Now I am trying to see it as". The switching from one aspect to another occurs when a person has noticed a fresh aspect, making a possible redescription available, as the aspect forces itself upon them, as they contemplate it. The physiological/causal processes which are operative when we perceive play no part in our characterization of our visual impression, and form no part of our visual experience.

> Seeing is an experience. A retinal reaction is only a physical state... people, not their eyes, see. Cameras and eyeballs are blind.[33]

Such scientific processes are, we might say, `below bedrock' here, in that such processes form no part of our visual experience, whereas the immediate product of perception exhausts the content of our visual experience: in the case of veridical experience, `visual perception' and `visual experience' are one and the same. The representation of `what is seen' is a representation of what is immediately experienced in perception. As I noted in chapter 2, our perception of the world does seem to be singular. This consideration can be used as an argument against sense-data. If I am to interpret my visual sensations, or make an inference from them, then those sensations must form a part of my visual experience, I must be aware of them, since one cannot interpret evidence which one does not possess, and when asked about my visual experience, I should be able to make reference to them. But of course, this I cannot do-my description of my visual experience makes reference not to `colour patches' but to `a square drawn on paper', a public object. I suppose it could be objected that it is wrong to say that I couldn't under any circumstances do this; I could train myself to see sense-data if they existed. However, the danger here is that by putting sensa between the object and ourselves, we step away from the direct realist's feeling that in perception we are presented with and exposed to the world as it is before us. Therefore, some of the way the world presents itself to us is abstracted from it by becoming more of an aspect of our response than an aspect of that to which perception is a response.

The realization that the criterion of visual experience is the representation of `What is seen' by someone entails that the production of such representations allows us to know what they have seen. If I want to know what sense impressions someone is having, then I have to give her utterances a special status. The natural way to find out what someone seems to see or hear, or what she is imagining or saying to herself, is to ask her to tell us. As to what form such representations may take, we can list pictorial representation; verbal description, the use of models, etc. anything which serves to express the character of the experience in question. Anyone who provides such a

representation is describing verbally or pictorially their visual impression, a direct description of their visual experience; They

are asked "What do you see?" and they may tell us, or draw a diagram, or point to pictures, or models-"I see this."

5.4. Noticing An Aspect.

The phenomenon of 'noticing an aspect' is a complex one, taking a variety of forms. Malcolm Budd for example lists these varieties of 'aspect-dawning' transitions, in which the observer may move from:

(1)   Seeing something which is meaningless, to seeing the item pictorially,

(2)   Seeing something as a non-pictorial sign to seeing it as a picture. (or vice-versa)

(3)   Seeing something as a picture of one kind of thing to seeing it as a picture of another kind of thing.

(4)   Seeing one part of an area as figure, and the other as ground, to seeing the second part as figure and the first as ground.

(5)   Seeing something without seeing a likeness between it and another object to seeing a likeness between the two.

(6)   Seeing something as if it were meant to be one linguistic sign to seeing it as if it were meant to be another linguistic sign.

(7)   Seeing a collection of items as grouped one way to seeing the collection as grouped another way.[34]

I am sure there are many more examples, but I wish to concentrate on number three on Budd's list, the most familiar being the Duck-Rabbit. By an analysis of Wittgenstein's comments on this phenomenon, I shall hope to demonstrate the relationship between

Wittgenstein's views on the linguistic/conceptual nature of our relationship to pictures, and my views on the link this has with our discernment of a moral reality.

It is possible for two observers of the same picture to be noticing different aspects, as in the case of the `Duck-Rabbit', one the aspect of a duck, the other that of a rabbit. Of course, it is not possible for both aspects to be seen simultaneously by the same person. The person sees what is to be seen in the picture in accord with one aspect, then another, and we can try to see one aspect rather than another, although it is difficult to shut out the other aspect, like the white cross on a black background, and chose to see only the black cross on the white background, because the other aspect will force itself upon you, despite your efforts.

> The operation of the senses is shot through with the conceptualizations of the intellect...we can choose whether to open (our eyes) or shut them and in which direction to look...the operation of the intellect itself is not in the same way under voluntary control. Looking up at the flashing lights of Piccadilly Circus, one cannot prevent oneself from understanding their message.[35]

It would be quite different in this case of course, if one did not know the meaning of the words, or could not read. (G.K. Chesterton once remarked, that the advertisements would be made much more beautiful if only one could not read!).[36] Or in the case of the black cross on a white background if one were aspect blind. (I shall say more about this when I go on to discuss moral aspect-blindness at 5.7.)

If I am asked by someone for whom both aspects of the Duck-Rabbit figure have dawned, "What do you see?" I shall reply, when I have not noticed two aspects, for example, "I see a rabbit." Now the difference between the everyday use of seeing-as and uses of `seeing-as' when we are involved in philosophical discussion may manifest, and

249

cause confusion. I am seeing only the rabbit aspect, therefore I am not seeing-as, merely seeing. But, when we are doing philosophy, we may well say, "So you are seeing the ambiguous figure as a rabbit." Now, because I have now been told the figure is

ambiguous, I may reply "Yes, I'm seeing the figure as a rabbit." There is nothing wrong in using 'seeing-as' in this sense, although I am seeing the rabbit aspect only,(seeing it as something) not seeing the rabbit aspect after the dawning of the duck aspect. Should both aspects dawn on me, my report "I'm seeing a rabbit" or "I'm seeing the ambiguous figure as a rabbit" is a report of 'seeing-as' in the sense of noticing a new/fresh aspect, ("It can also be a..."). Before both aspects have dawned, however, i.e. when I have only noticed the rabbit aspect, my report "I am seeing a rabbit" is a descriptive report, and should not be taken as a report of aspect dawning experiences but a report of constant aspect-perception. This is a 1st/ 3rd person contrast (see 5.5). My experience in this case could be reported as simply as "I am seeing a rabbit" or as "He sees it as a rabbit" and illustrates how I must have been seeing something in one particular way, in order to be able to notice the fresh aspect that gives the possibility of redescription, when I might say "Now it can be a rabbit", which is the dawning of an aspect.

5.4.i. Concept Dependence.

A lot of human perception is concept-dependent, including moral perception, relying as it does on discriminations that can only be made through the use of language, and hence through shared forms of life. For human beings, possession of a concept depends upon human ability to use language. Correspondingly, I shall argue, moral aspects are properties, the discernment of which depends on our ability to use language.

What can be seen has a necessary link with the observers' possession of the right concepts: we need to recognize the connection between what one can see (or understand) and the battery of concepts one possesses (our 'cognitive stock'). To adapt an example from Stephen Mulhall, whilst we may attribute 'expectancy' to a pre-verbal child, or

perhaps even to a family pet, simply because they are waiting at the door, looking attentively, etc. at the time father usually comes home, we cannot attribute the more sophisticated experiential state of 'expecting father home at 5.30' to the child until she has mastered the use of the term 'Father' and mastered the technique of telling the time (and we could never ascribe such experiences to the dog!). We can, however, attribute a more simple expectancy to the child, i.e. that of 'Expecting Father'. Wittgenstein says that "The flashing of an aspect on us seems half visual experience, half thought"[37] We are told it is like "The echo of a thought in sight" and crucially "The substratum of this experience is mastery of a technique."[38] The point is that it is not possible for the child to undergo these experiences until she or he has mastered the necessary conceptual/linguistic techniques. The same is true of perceptual ascriptions/experiences- someone who is unfamiliar with rabbits, someone who has never seen such creatures, or pictures of them, or heard them described, will simply be unable to undergo the perceptual experience of seeing the rabbit aspect. The lesson here is that our perception of reality tends to be aspect-relative, reflecting our conceptual structure which is in turn generated by a form of life. This is especially manifest in our *practical involvement* with the world, which connects with the discussion of rule-following, in that our perception of moral aspects depends on our possession of the right conceptual framework, which is largely determined by the form of life in which we have been brought up. This is important to the discussion of aspect-blindness at 5.7.

5.4.ii. Refutation Of The 'Gestalten'.

Before discussing moral aspect perception, it is important to dispel certain confusions about two possible interpretations of aspect-seeing. Firstly I shall discuss the idea of 'organization' as an object of sight. This will lead into discussion of the perspectival outlook that lies behind an aspect-seeing account of moral perception. Then, finally, I shall criticize the idea that aesthetic perception is aspectual.

One way of interpreting the claim that `seeing colours' and `seeing aspects' are comparable is to claim that before and after the moment of transition we see the same shapes and colours, but see them organized in different ways. Such a view is very tempting in pictorial cases, but could also be applied to most of the cases on Budd's list, though perhaps (5) and (6) would be problematic. This temptation to equate aspects with the organization of shape and colour would place organization on a level with shape and colour as a species of `sensory fact', an immediate object of perception. In the case of the duck-rabbit figure, for example, this would involve the claim that one sees or perceives these colours and shapes, and also sees (perceives) that they `fit' in this way when the rabbit aspect is manifest, and in that way to create the duck aspect. The organization of the shapes and colours is thus seen as part of the `given' and a physiological explanation ("move your eyes this way") might be offered to explain ambiguity. This is, in fact, essentially the move put forward by the `Gestalt' school of psychologists, notably Wolfgang Kohler. Kohler offers us a picture where

> In most visual fields the contents of particular areas `belong together' as circumscribed units from which their surroundings are excluded.[39]

However, identifying aspects with `organization' or `fitting together' and conceiving of them as a species of `sensory fact', placing aspects, as it were, on the same epistemic level as colour and shape, should have the consequence that colour, shape and `organization' could all be represented in a similar fashion. As Wittgenstein points out, this is not the case; take, for example, someone who sees only the duck-aspect of the ambiguous figure of the duck-rabbit. If we ask such a person what it is that she sees, she might well provide us with a copy (say a tracing) of the figure. This certainly shows us what she sees in terms of colour and shape, but leaves us none the wiser as to which aspect she is aware of; in order to discover that, we would have to have some further specification-say, a model, or have her point to pictures of ducks (or most probably, simply say "It's a (picture) duck"). The temptation to try to explain the change that

occurs when an aspect switches, by appeal to some quasi-objective alteration in what is seen, is a strong one.[40] For example, suppose I am looking at a puzzle picture and trying to find the human face that is `hidden' in a pattern of branches. Suddenly I see the face. Whereas before I saw only a disorganized tangle of branches, I now recognize the characteristic outline and features that depict a human face. This is where explaining the change that takes place in terms of an alteration in the `organization' of the picture is tempting. Thus, when I see the face in the puzzle-picture, I see not merely a collection of particular shapes and colours, but also a particular organization of them. In this way, we try to make organization a quasi-objective property of what I see, on a par with colour and shape. But when I am asked to draw what I see before and after I have seen the solution to the picture, if my drawing is accurate, then surely I shall have to draw the same thing twice. The idea of a particular organization, which we are tempted to appeal to in order to explain the difference in my visual experience, does not actually help us here, for I do not know how to make the organization an objective property of what I see. It is not that the concept of a change in organization doesn't, in some sense, describe the experience I have when I suddenly see the face in the picture-puzzle, but rather that this concept cannot be applied in the way we now want to apply it: as a description of an objective property of the picture on a par with colour and shape. Different modes of representation are needed to represent, on the one hand, colour and shape, and on the other, the way that these colours and shapes are seen as being organized, and this wrecks the comparison with colour and shape in visual impressions: there is a need for some specification additional to a copy provided by the person seeing the aspect.[41] The very idea of seeing-as undermines the two theses of `Gestalten'.

The refutation of `Gestalten' is important to my thesis that moral perception is aspectual on two counts. One, that trying to explain the change that occurs when an aspect switches by appeal to some quasi-objective alteration in what is seen means positing a `property' of an object; the `Gestalten', that in some way causes the dawning of an aspect. Two, and most importantly, the specific nature of moral aspect-seeing differs from cases such as the duck-rabbit because of the way moral recognition relates to our

253

practical engagement with the world, itself connected with noticing narrative structures (see below), and hence with aspects.

5.5.The Perspectival outlook that lies behind an aspect-seeing account of moral perception.

Moral engagement with the world is practical, it is to do with pursuit of the good and with human flourishing as conceived in a certain way. This practical engagement gives rise to the permanent-aspect side of our moral perception. We have seen (5.4) how what we take to be valuable, and thus what we take to be a moral fact, changes because of cultural, historical, and environmental changes, and because our own personal views change too, as a consequence of a corresponding change in our own perceptions. In our moral upbringing, we are initially trained to see the world in a certain way within our form of life. Continuous aspect-seeing consists of our ability to recognize moral situations as part of an on-going series of events which determine well-being or contribute to a life-story. Thus, perspectives are grounded in ways of life, and this ties in with permanent aspect-seeing; in continuous aspect-perception we are reporting viewing objects/(moral) situations in a particular way, i.e. in the way we have always regarded them, due to our ʿcognitive stockʾ provided in upbringing and moral education, which is bound up with training in language and perception and reactions, determined by the form of life in which we have been brought up. This ʿcognitive stockʾ can be gained and nurtured only within particular forms of social life, including families. MacIntyre, for instance, supports the view that

> I need those around me to re-inforce my moral strengths and assist in remedying my moral weaknesses. It is in general only within a community that individuals become capable of morality and are sustained in their morality.[42]

And not just in terms of strengths of will. Only by living within a complex form of communal life can we acquire our moral concepts and the ability to apply our general moral principles to the world. MacIntyre claims that without our communities we would not know what our principles bid of us in the particular contexts of social life in which we operate

> The moralities of different societies may agree in having a precept enjoining that a child should honour his or her parents, but what it is to honour...will vary greatly between different social orders.[43]

Only by living within a complex form of life can we learn these particularities, not only cognitively as someone can learn the rules of another culture from reading a book, but also in the lived ways that require forms of perception and consciousness, morally relevant situation-descriptions, habits of action, salience of certain considerations, and the like. This is training to see the world in a certain way within a form of life. This training to see moral aspects within a complex community is referred to by Lawrence Blum as 'content-conferring'.[44] We should also recognize from 5.2. that the content provided may not be 'set in stone'; objectivity is compatible with a perspective because from within our moral concepts we can distinguish between truth which is based on a common life and is grounded in conceptions of the good and of what constitutes human flourishing, inter-subjective agreement and individual opinion. The community's morality may involve internal variation and conflict, and can leave room as well for individual interpretation. For example, in chapter 2 I recounted how the ancient Inuit used to leave their old folk on the ice-floe to die. One way of accounting for this action would be to note that it was the practice within the Inuit community for the old person to go on one last seal-hunt with younger members of his family. This was a way of honouring parents and grandparents. Today, as Inuit society has undergone change, this custom is no longer practiced.

Consequently the specific nature of <u>moral</u> aspect-seeing differs from cases like the duck-rabbit because of the essentially <u>narrative</u> structure of moral situations, which I shall now discuss.

In Chapter 3 I noted how Jonathan Dancy has emphasised the way that moral value is essentially <u>for us</u>.[45] Human life involves practical activity, and the objects of sight relate in different ways to the context and goals of human purposeful activity: in continuous aspect-perception (see 5.4 and especially 5.6) objects are placed within this context in a smooth, unhesitating way; we do not have to continuously stop and hesitate and ask ourselves what kinds of object they may be, we see <u>through</u> the object, we regard entities as particular kinds of objects. To continuously view an object/situation as being that kind of thing that it is, is manifest in the way aspects are woven into the perceiver's practical activities: to see a moral situation <u>as</u> is to relate it to human purposes in some way. Perceiving aspects therefore involves noticing the essentially narrative structure of moral situations, itself dependent upon a conceptual framework, and the ability to mobilize a set of concepts (see 5.4.i). In conveying one particular way in which objects/situations can vary, can differ from and resemble one another, such a set of concepts provides a dimension of variation. The nature of moral values, therefore, is that they are are essentially *for us*. Aspects are intricately connected with what an agent finds compelling in a situation, they are what 'catches' our attention. When we notice the salient features of a situation we say how we see it, and this report is one of constant aspect-perception. If people do not agree with your report, the best way to win them over is to show them in detail what your view is and rely on its persuasiveness to attract them, i.e. by pointing out aspects. The persuasiveness here is the persuasiveness of <u>narrative</u>: to justify one's choice of action is to give the reasons one sees for making it, and to give those reasons is just to lay out how one sees the situation. This can involve the use of 'thick' moral concepts, such as when we might say "Can't you see how unjust that is?" Or "I see it as inconsiderate" Or "He sees it as cruel". Unlike animals, we notice narrative structures in the world, we recognize patterns, shape and salience, we make sense of the world by

finding a meaning in our experience, which is to orient ourselves practically in the world. Our relationship to moral situations thus involves constant aspect-perception; noticing the pertinent features of moral situations is a matter of seeing the relevant aspects of it. To do this involves training to see the world in a certain way within a form of life. Noticing the pertinent features of an object- noticing that aspect of it that is petitioning a response- is only possible by someone who is in the possession of the right concepts, someone whose experience has given them their `eye for the fittingness of things' to use Aristotle's phrase.[46] Those who do not possess such moral vision, such as the very young, can be helped with training, by parents or by attending school. The right teaching can equip children with the beginnings of an eye for the fittingness of things. But of course such training can fail, hence the phenomenon of aspect-blindness, to be discussed at 5.7. Our being trained to see the world in a certain way within a form of life will involve example. For instance, a morally immature infant may be caught pulling the tail of her cat, and be admonished by her parents; "Don't do that, it hurts him, and that's cruel". As the child matures, she will experience similar episodes from personal experience, or be told about something by friends or by teachers at school, or see television news items or programmes, etc. and may come to regard causing suffering to animals for pleasure as cruel, and therefore wrong. As a cross-cultural example, we can suppose that a Spanish child, from a different socialisation, though initially sharing moral concepts with the child in the first example, and also seeing certain cruel acts toward animals as wrong, may, nevertheless, see different aspects in the case of bullfighting, due to being trained from an early age to see such an event as having certain heroic aspects, with the participants viewed in the same way that youngsters and adults in our first example view, say, professional footballers. Should the two meet, argument may develop, with both seeing the same event differently.

The above example illustrates the way that constant aspect-perception relates to our everyday perception of the world and captures the basic nature of our relation to that world. I shall now distinguish between this continuous aspect-seeing and the phenomenon of seeing-as which describes the noticing of an aspect, such as when we notice a change in what we are contemplating.

My treatment of the phenomenon of aspect seeing has shown Wittgenstein's intention to stop us from reifying visual impressions as inner objects by showing how inapplicable interpretational analyses are to our visual experiences, showing such processing as 'below bedrock'. The representations of what is seen have been shown to be concept-dependent. I have argued that in straightforward cases of perception, a description or representation of our visual impression gives an exhaustive characterization of our visual experience. There is no retreat to sense datum, no interpretation, nor 'thinner' description (i.e. recognizing a retreat to an alternative description) available. I have argued that seeing, i.e. perception, and seeing aspects are co-extensive, that there is no difference in kind between the experience of seeing a tree and that of seeing a picture rabbit, since what is got immediately in perception (and thus the whole of our visual experience in such cases) is, in both cases, a concept-mediated visual impression, the experience of which is dependent on mastering the relevant linguistical/conceptual background, and that this is true of most sophisticated perceptual experience. Then I have maintained a distinction between constant aspect perception and the dawning of an aspect. In the latter, the representation of what is seen takes the form of a report of two perceptions; the expression of a new perception and at the same time the perception being unchanged. Aspect-dawning consists in becoming aware of the relationship between the two, of realizing that a new description or representation of what is seen is applicable. As such, aspect dawning is intimately connected to experiencing a change of aspects-in order to see an X as a Y it is necessary that we see an X as well as a Y. 'Seeing-as' used to describe aspect dawning experiences consists in becoming aware of a new aspect which allows the possibility of redescription, of an internal relation

between the X and the other objects, and this requires that we be thinking of what we see. I should like to say that aspect-dawning consists in a very thin notion indeed, namely that of seeing a new aspect which makes possible the availability of redescription("Now it can be a...").

Then there is constant aspect-perception, pointed out most notably by Stephen Mulhall, where the use of seeing-as is being used in a constant seeing-as sense, (permanent aspect perception) as the inevitable form that expressions of the fundamentally practically involved nature of our perceptual experience must take. Stephen Mulhall claims that the notion of continuous aspect perception captures the basic nature of our relation to the world and that this is also what Heidegger was getting at in his conception of human existence as Being-in-the-world. Mulhall borrows from Heidegger the idea that our primary relation to objects is in regard to their use. His basic argument is that the fact that we can see an object as something else shows we must already see it in one particular way. Therefore in a sense, all seeing is seeing-as, because of this continuous aspect-perception.

However, Paul Johnston in Wittgenstein: Re-thinking The Inner objects to description of everyday vision as involving concepts.(pp 240-245) His objection revolves around the intelligibility or otherwise of constantly regarding a table as a table; we are not interpreting, not formulating hypotheses, nor thinking, but simply seeing in ordinary everyday visual experience: you do not take cutlery at a meal for cutlery, or constantly regard a table as a table. It is argued by Johnston that the contrary is something Wittgenstein is careful to repudiate-

One doesn't take what one knows as the cutlery at a meal for cutlery; any more than one tries to move one's mouth as one eats, or aims at moving it. (Wittgenstein Investigations 11xi 195e)

Johnston's claim is, of course, that our everyday mode of perception/visual experience is not `seeing-as' at all, but simply seeing, i.e. seeing from a 1st person perspective. However, I maintain that constant-aspect perception arises not in a 1st person context but nearly always in a 1st/3rd person contrast. This 1st/3rd person contrast has been missed by Johnston. Here are some examples:

Imagine someone looking towards a yellow flowering bush against a stone wall, but they see it as yellow chalk marks scrawled on the wall. Imagine that the subject has never been in this particular place before, has never seen the bush, and does not know that there is a bush at that location. On my analysis, his visual impression is (as) of yellow chalk marks on a wall. He sees `yellow chalk marks' no `dual' perception experience is involved, he need not be thinking consciously about chalk marks (He gives the wall only an idle glance) and no dual description is available to him such as "It can also be..." and yet, we still want to say of him "He is seeing that bush as yellow chalk marks". Why? Wittgenstein shows an awareness of this phenomenon when he notes, of someone who sees only the rabbit aspect of the ambiguous figure and who answers the question "What do you see there?" with "A picture rabbit" that the subject

> Should simply have described (his) perception just as if (he) had said "I see a red circle over there"-but nevertheless someone else could have said of (him) "He is seeing the figure as a picture rabbit".(Investigations.p195.)

In such cases, I believe we find a second case of `seeing-as', namely that of constant aspect perception. So we need to distinguish between two uses of `seeing-as' namely `seeing-as' in noticing a new/fresh aspect which allows the possibility of re-description (aspect-dawning) and `seeing-as' in constant-aspect perception. The `dual' perception of noticing the possibility of redescription ascribes "The echo of a thought in sight" (Investigations 212e) which is "The flashing of an aspect on us" Which seems

"...half visual experience, half thought." (<u>Investigations</u> 197e) The case of constant aspect perception however, ascribes no such experience: rather it is the inevitable expression of the aspectual/concept dependent nature of our normal mode of visual experience, seeing, when viewed from a 3rd person perspective.

As a further clarificatory example, consider the following: The picture on a television screen is composed out of many thousands of tiny dots, but such dots form no part of our visual experience when watching television-we do not see a collection of dots but a contentful representation, say, of a person, or an object. In giving an answer to the question "What do you see there?" We say things like "Trevor McDonald" or "The Starship Enterprise" and such answers are criterial for our visual experience. We are not tempted to describe our experience, that to which we have access, as 'seeing-as'-we have no reason to do so, there is no question of 'seeing that it has not changed, yet seeing it differently' here. Nonetheless, if someone asks a more searching question, asks us, say, to describe the process which occurs when someone watches television, then we may well say "The screen is covered in thousands of tiny dots, and we see these dots as a picture" in which case we are not <u>ascribing</u> an experience to the viewer, but are <u>describing</u> the situation from the privileged position of one who knows a little at least of the physical states of the world and the pre-conscious processes which underlie our conscious experience of seeing television pictures.

Take another example: as I look at the top of my desk, I see a mug of coffee, a visual display unit and two books. Now, whilst it makes no sense for me to say, for example, that I see the mug as a mug-"this expression would not be understood-anymore than: "Now it's a (mug)" or "It can be a (mug) too." Nonetheless, it does make sense for someone else describing my perceptual experience to say that I see the mug as <u>something</u> (as a mug) since this is the only way available for them to express the fact that I experience a world of objects rather than Locke's "planes variously coloured"[47]. There is a subtle shift of emphasis here, from 'seeing something <u>as</u> something' (i.e. 'something

261

else') to seeing something as <u>something</u> (i.e. having a visual experience, rather than a blank one). Constant aspect-seeing involves seeing something as <u>something</u>: i.e. as an instance of that thing which it is, which is a concept-dependent visual experience, described in a Ist person context as "I am seeing a..." or in a 3rd person context as "He sees it as a...". These considerations make it clear that, <u>contra</u> Johnston, constant seeing-as can be involved in everyday visual experience, as when we describe what we are seeing, "I see it as..." or when we are being taught to see in a certain way "Can you see it as..?".

Our practical engagement with the world gives rise to the permanent-aspect side of our <u>moral</u> perception. We are initially trained to see the world in a certain way. This also explains one form of aspect-blindness (where someone has not been trained in the same way). However, permanent aspect perception by itself fails to account for the *complexity* of moral phenomena: the fact that some moral situations can be seen one way and not another, for example (moral dilemmas). (See 5.7). I have emphasized how our perception is aspect relative, in that our engagement with situations relates primarily to their practical nature, and that aspect-seeing is to do with our purposes, to do with recognizing values that contribute to a life-story, the perception of which depends on our possession of the right conceptual framework, which is largely determined by the form of life into which we have been brought up. Sometimes our moral vision may be altered by coming into contact with other ways of life. Such a change in moral perception can involve an improvement in your ability to see the aspect properly and to form correct beliefs about its nature. For example, a Spaniard may have always seen bull-fighting as good, until travelling abroad and experiencing other form of life which give rise to other perspectives. This may cause a change in his moral vision, namely coming to see bull-fighting as wrong or cruel. Alternatively, someone's perception may change in a degenerative way: I had a workmate in the 70s who had some black friends for whom he was willing to get into a fight when racism arose. Then he left our colliery for a South African diamond mine. On his return, some years later, he made racist jokes and admitted being sympathetic to Apartheid.

I have emphasised how the objects of sight relate in different ways to the context and goals of human purposeful activity: in continuous aspect-perception objects are placed within this context in a smooth, unhesitating way. I will explore further at 5.7 and 5.8 how the aspect-blind lack this unhesitating involvement with aspects; their ability to grasp `thick' moral concepts is hesitant and clumsy, whereas continuous aspect-perception exhibits an unhesitating capacity to weave `seamless webs' (see chapter 2.5.v) of pictures, words, concepts, people, situations, into the fluid stream of people's purposes and projects.

5.6. Difficulties: Confusing Seeing-As With Seeing-In: Moral Values And Aesthetic Values.

There may be a temptation to attempt an analogy between moral aspects and aesthetic properties, should all perception of value be seen as aspectual. However, this thesis (that aesthetic properties are aspectual), is not one I would subscribe to.

The experience of aspect-dawning can sometimes be described as `coming to see something in a certain light'. `Seeing the situation in a certain light' seems to entail that when two observers see the same thing, they see that a,b,c, with respect to that object, but if only one observer sees that d,e,f, as well, that person in some sense sees differently; he or she sees more than the other. Seeing more is concerned with the employment of our `cognitive stock', of having a "richer conceptual pattern with respect to an object"[48]

The above can be illustrated by a comparison with a problem facing someone who comes for the first time to look at X-ray photographs (say, of the chest).[49] One is confronted by claims of radiologists to be distinguishing the condition of the internal organs, when one is barely able to make out the ribs. This reflects the concept-dependent nature of some perception: we are able to mobilize some concepts in our perception of the same patterns of light and shade in the X-ray plate.[50] The difference is (at least in part) what we know, reflecting a difference in cognitive stock between the radiologists and the beginner. But one can come to see the X-ray plates in that way for oneself: and the process closely parallels that mentioned in my discussion of aspect perception qua ambiguous figures-one is encouraged to view the characteristics of the X-ray plate in a certain fashion. In this way, one learns to see X-ray photographs appropriately: one learns to 'read' them or to understand them, although this is just a matter of looking at them-it is perceptual rather than (though not always) inferential. Making aesthetic perception a case of aspect perception may seem tempting here, because seeing in both cases involves the employment of our 'cognitive stock'. But seeing an aspect should not be forced into a mould that it conforms to only in some respects.[51]

Wittgenstein is not saying that there is ever present the possibility of aspect-dawning. I would draw attention to Part Two of Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations when, in mentioning the arts, he is circumspect in not claiming that these are cases of aspect seeing. The example for instance of someone exclaiming "Now at last it's a dance" where he comments:

The same tone of voice (as the person might use) expresses the dawning of an aspect. (Philosophical Investigations.p.206(i))

So here we have a property <u>like</u> that of aspect-perception, rather than an example of it. Very similarly, he also remarks that aspect blindness is only "...akin to the lack of a `musical ear'."(p214) rather than treating the lack of a musical ear in terms of aspect blindness. The above case is is more like `seeing-in' or `reading-in', which is essentially interpretive. For example, in the aesthetic case, critical judgements may involve or suggest perceiving certain things *in* a particular work; for example, finding the motivation for the tragedy within King Lear in

> the attempt to avoid recognition, the shame of exposure, the threat of self-revelation.[52]

The focus here is on finding certain things *in* the play; certain insights of detail. Critics may both talk about how the play as a whole is to be `seen' (`seen' in this context is not perceptual, but metaphorical, meaning `read', i.e. about how to construe the details of the play.)[53] There is nothing here in this inferential process about aspects. The process of seeing in' or `reading in' is more like that of noticing what is going on, of `putting a reading' onto some artwork/situation, or of construing some situation in some way, or seeing the possibility of something in an artwork or situation as in the King Lear example. Reading-in is thus an essentially *interpretive* process, involving imaginative conceptualising, rather than aspect perception.

`Reading in' does have a part to play in moral judgement, such as when I bring my knowledge of the world to bear on a particular situation, such as knowing what racism is, before I can infer that someone's motive for action was racist on later reflection. Seeing/reading-in and seeing-as probe moral situations differently, their focus is a contrasting one. `Reading-in' involves imaginative conceptualising, while `seeing-as' in the dawning of an aspect involves knowing it can be seen differently, and `seeing as' in constant aspect-perception relates to the purpose-directedness of moral perception, and its primary involvement with narrative structures (see 5.5).

A striking example of how the process of 'reading in' can go awry and involve the over-use of imagination can be found in the effect on Martin Heidegger of Van Gogh's painting of a peasant woman's shoes. It serves to illustrate how going beyond the natural and obvious reading, where successful seeing (in cases where we see correctly) ends, and imaginative conceptualizing begins, may involve finding oneself in 'Pseud's Corner'. In Heidegger's lectures: "The Origin of the Work of Art"[54] he says of this painting of a worn pair of boots that a 'strong' reading of the work is justified because the Being of the particular thing depicted in the art-work (the peasant woman's shoes) is conceived of as present in the art-work itself, as being available for discovery 'in' the painting in a way which does not apply to an encounter with the shoes themselves;

> The equipmental quality of equipment was discovered. But how? Not by a description and explanation of a pair of shoes actually present; not by a report about the process of making shoes; and also not by the observation of the actual use of shoes occurring here and there; but only by bringing ourselves before Van Gogh's painting. This painting spoke.[55]

The process Heidegger describes involves <u>seeing in</u> the shoes the possibility of the peasant woman's life. However, it does stretch credibility to assume that the manifestation of the peasant woman "trembling before the impending childbed"[56] (that Heidegger insists he can see) can be said to somehow be in the picture awaiting the perception of someone possessing a sufficiently cultured aesthetic capacity for the correct 'reading' of it. This is a striking example of what can go wrong in attempting to see correctly that which is really in the picture. As a corrective to the over-use of imagination in the process of 'seeing-in', we must admit that only something plausible can show itself. 'Seeing-in' is a matter of seeing appropriately. For example, imagine standing before a picture of a ruined temple-can we see the ruin? Yes. Ruined by Barbarians? Yes. In hairy robes? No. However, if someone says we can-if they offer it long enough-it becomes tempting. We may find ourselves willing to say something like

"Well yes, close up, we might notice, under a microscope, some hair caught on a pillar." This would be an appeal for particular evidence. This evidence should be available to be pointed out to us. But in this case we rule it out. But whilst the experience of putting a reading on a painting, a play, or a situation, can be seen sometimes as perceptual, this is best conceived of as a matter of 'reading-in', of 'seeing-in' rather than seeing-as; it is an essentially interpretive account involving the use (or over use) of imagination.

An example of 'seeing-in' occurs in George Orwell's essay 'A Hanging', where he describes his reaction to seeing a condemned man, walking to the scaffold, stepping aside to avoid walking through a puddle:

> It is curious, but till that moment I had never realized what it means to destroy a healthy, conscious man. When I saw the prisoner step aside to avoid the puddle I saw the mystery, the unspeakable wrongness, of cutting a life short when it is in full tide...He and we were a party of men walking together, seeing, hearing, feeling, understanding the same world; in two minutes, with a sudden snap, one of us would be gone-one mind less, one world less.

Most moral perception is a case of seeing-as. But Orwell's example is one of seeing-in, or reading-in, which shows the role of imagination in coming to see things differently: such a change in point of view may lead to such things being later seen not as an impartial act of justice, but as cruel.

5.7.Continuous Aspect Seeing and Aspect-blindness.

An aspect, moral or otherwise, is an aspect not if it looks like that for me, but if it looks like that to all people whose sensory capacities are of the right sort. Our mode of perception does not therefore create the aspect we are contemplating, but makes us able to see it. Taken over to the moral case, moral properties can only be experienced by beings who share a whole network of emotional responses with us, as well as possessing the necessary moral concepts. Similarly, an alien who did not posses our nervous system, and had no concept of pain, presumably would not share our concern for the injured.

I have drawn attention to the way that our practical engagement with the world gives rise to the permanent-aspect side of our moral perception. We are initially trained to see the world in a certain way. This also explains one form of aspect blindness; where someone has not been trained in the same way. Therefore, it is possible for two people from different forms of life, i.e. different societies or backgrounds, and who therefore experience two differing socializations, to view the same moral event and obtain differing moral aspects from it. Aspect-blindness can sometimes be due to different moral development. One observer, who has a certain socialization, will possess the necessary linguistic/conceptual framework to see the act as wrong. The other observer, from a different background, possesses different concepts and lacks the `cognitive stock', the conceptual framework to `latch on' and react to that moral aspect seen by the more developed, morally sensitive, person. The moral aspect does not `engage' that observer, and the aspect fails to dawn, due to a lack of receptivity, a lack of `technique' by the less morally sensitive observer. On the other hand, aspect blindness needn't be due to differing socializations. Aspect-blindness needn't be due to anything. It may simply be the case that the person is blind to certain aspects and that is just the way they are.

Permanent aspect perception by itself fails to account for the *complexity* of moral phenomena: the fact that some moral situations can be seen one way and not another when one is faced with a moral dilemma. This is where aspect switching comes in, explaining how it is possible for two people to see multiple aspects of moral situations. In a moral dilemma, there is the recognition of a fresh aspect which allows the availability of redescription, where we might say "It could also be..." where multiple aspects are having an effect (though not necessarily an equal effect, it would depend on the dilemmatic situation), both moral aspects are present, like the rabbit and the duck, and we feel pulled both ways, due to the moral situation being present to the will, and we feel concerned, because whatever we do, we may fail to act correctly. In a moral dilemma, the situation may present the agent with switching aspects and action will depend on which aspect he finds the most compelling. For example, does one defend family members or friends at all costs? Surely some actions are indefensible, but in borderline cases we may be unsure.

Where reality presents us with multiple aspects we can notice a change in perception, a switch of aspects ("now it can also be.."). In the case of moral dilemmas, there may be a plurality of compelling aspects forcing their presence upon us, which is why we feel pulled one way then another, with each compelling aspect having a (not necessarily equal) validity. The problem here is like that of ambiguous figures: one cannot see all aspects simultaneously. These sorts of examples concerning noticing more than one aspect of a situation are to do with moral dilemmas and different perspectives, an example of which can be found in Peter Winch's examination of Melville's Billy Budd.[57]

Winch considers the thought that in a `hard case' I may judge that it would have been wrong for me to have done an action which it was not wrong of the agent to do. Captain Vere decides to have Billy Budd executed for mutiny on what he knows to be a trumped-up charge. Winch suggests that I may judge that it would have been wrong for me to have done such a thing, but that it was not wrong for Vere to do it. Often we have

to make a practical choice that another rational agent might understand through and through, not fault or disagree with, but, Winch stresses, make differently himself. We can be tempted to explain this by considering relevant differences between oneself and Vere, i.e. his life, position and character contrasted with our own. However, Jonathan Dancy points out that such differences do not play the role which the explanation envisages, because they are not 'deliberatively admissible' for the agent though they are for the non-agent judging from outside. The agent (Vere) does not deliberate from his life, position and character. In making one decision rather than another he becomes one sort of person/character rather than another. So the question for him is not just whether he should punish Budd, but also just what sort of life, position and character he is willing to have.[58] In asking whether he made the right decision, we might say, from our (dispassionate) perspective that for a naval officer in a fleet that is particularly vulnerable to mutiny, the choice that Vere made is the right one. But for Vere the question involved "should I be the naval officer for whom this would be the right choice?" So such matters are deliberatively admissible for us in assessing Vere's choice in a way that they were not for Vere. This makes room for us to judge that Vere made the right choice, even though we think that we would have been wrong to make that choice. This is a contrast between the perspective of the agent (Vere) and that of an impartial observer. Dancy comments that in a way the question we ask as potential agents is not the same question as the one we ask as outside judges of the choices of others. Different things are held fixed. [59] This generates a sense in which the agent's perspective is primary, for the agent faces a question which nobody else faces and the agent's answer is unimpugned by the fact that others judge correctly that they would have been wrong to give that answer. The same is true for the different perspectives of Vere, who is practically involved in considerations about mutiny, etc. and, say, another captain who is not so practically engaged. Two agents, from two different perspectives, can see different moral aspects: there may be no one right answer for an individual, but there may, from his perspective, as different

aspects may become salient for different individuals; one may see one aspect but not another, others may see both but find one more compelling, and the reaction may vary from individual to individual, without necessarily compromising moral integrity. The same is also true from the perspective of a judge on dry land, for example.

I have outlined in Chapter 4 and above the way that moral judgements are assertoric and require a 'thick' conception of truth whilst aesthetic judgement is not under the same sort of normative constraints, so requires only a 'thin' notion of truth. This difference ties together my discussion of 'thin' truth with 'seeing in'. We saw in Chapter 4 how the truth of an aesthetic (seeing in) judgement is valid if judged on thin criteria, whereas seeing-as requires thick criteria. Thus we can't say that Heidegger is objectively wrong about his claim concerning seeing the possibility of the peasant woman's life in Van Gogh's painting. The Billy Budd example, however, is one which requires thick criteria. We can say that from the community's point of view Vere is wrong to see the Budd case as primarily one of discouraging mutiny (i.e. objectively wrong). On the other hand, from Vere's perspective the aspect of mutiny is compelling. There is here a genuine irresolvable clash of points of view, rather than differences about what can be genuinely imagined about a situation.

A moral sensitivity may be improved to enable someone to see the moral aspect as a more sensitive person does. It should also be noted that the perception of moral value can readily be extended to hearing, as when we are told about something. We do not have to posit something mysterious like moral intuition to notice moral value, it is part of our responses to situations that we use our everyday faculties to apprehend. What is important is the perception of salience and narrative structure which is not necessarily dependent on visual perception; there are other kinds of perception, we can be told about something, or read about it. This is why I have invoked a somewhat broader conception of 'aspect' than is involved in Wittgenstein's discussion of aspect-perception. This can have a metaphorical extension, an example of which can be something like this

271

"There is an aspect of this case you haven't seen-the student was ill for 3 months in the winter term, so her late submission of her essay isn't really a case of idleness or negligence"in which aspect seeing has become a suggestive metaphor. This extension is justified, because of the way aspect-seeing works non-metaphorically. I also said in chapter 1 that I was going to give a perceptual account of moral recognition by using perception in the latin sense of *percipiere*, meaning 'to grasp' or 'become aware of'.

A change in moral perception can involve an improvement in your ability to see the aspect properly and to form correct beliefs about its nature. A change in someone's moral views may come about due to someone getting him to see things in a new light, either by enabling him to appreciate more fully some feature of the situation whose significance he had previously overlooked, or by revealing an aspect which was hidden to him. It is still possible for a person not to see the moral aspect despite someone else's efforts, or refuse to acknowledge it and perhaps suffer a guilty conscience as a result. The recognition of moral properties is central to moral thought. Moral thought involves description of moral reality; the later Wittgenstein allows that we can see a person's grief or joy (and may not need to infer it from behaviour). We can see the seducer's desire in his face.

> His (the seducer's) desire is not reduced to a nothing by rejection of the thought that it is a mere something whose presence and nature is only inferentially accessible to others: it can be *that thing* which others *see*.[60]

So, by analogy, I would argue that we see moral properties of a situation, see, that is, with our eyes (and other senses, such as when being told about something). Techniques for achieving the goal of getting someone to see moral aspects may involve pointing to certain features and showing how they relate to others; starting with examples where the person you are trying to persuade can see what is at issue more clearly and then returning to the disputed case in the hope that what he has grasped in the other cases will illuminate

this one. A good example of such a procedure is suggested by David McNaughton in Moral Vision (P.59) referring to the Old Testament story of King David and Uriah the Hittite. The King lusts after Uriah's beautiful wife Bathsheba, and arranges for Uriah to be sent to the front line of battle. Here we find that David has given instructions that Uriah is to be abandoned by his fellow soldiers to face certain death. Once David hears of Uriah's death he duly marries Bathsheba. The prophet Nathan goes to David and tells him of the story of two men, one rich and one poor(2 Samuel, ch. 12, vv.2-7):

> "The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds. But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drink of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him." And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan... "The man that hath done this thing shall surely die...because he had no pity." And Nathan said to David, "Thou art the man."

The point of Nathan's story is to make David see his own behaviour for what it really is- not a smart bit of one-upmanship, but an act of mean injustice by a powerful and wealthy man against someone powerless to defend himself against royal authority. David's feelings about himself are indeed changed, but that change is a result of a cognitive change, a change in how he understands his action.[61]

Someone being aspect-blind should not entail, to take an example from Paul Johnston [62] that someone bumping into a table has momentarily forgotten what tables are, as might be suggested if aspect blindness was taken to mean having a blank experience. This, I hope to have shown, is a misinterpretation; aspect-blindness does not involve having a blank experience. Rather it is the case that aspect-blindness involves one person not being able to see an aspect seen by another. Stephen Mulhall says the aspect-blind person interprets what the picture might be intended to represent from a direct perception of its arrangement of colours and shapes, i.e. from its properties as a material object. Such a person's responses characterize such blindness as a general sort of attitude towards pictures-a mode of treating them which reveals an orientation towards them as material objects rather than as representative symbols or meaningful objects. Wittgenstein remarks that the aspect blind regard pictures as we do blueprints-they cannot immediately see the pictured scene or object in the picture (this could also be due to a lack of imagination by the aspect-blind). The phenomenon of aspect blindness has been illustrated in literature; the central character of Nabokov's Lolita for example, or in this stanza from W. H. Auden's "The Shield Of Achilles" which could be seen to be expressing this

A ragged urchin aimless and alone,
loitered about that vacancy, a bird
flew up to safety from his well-aimed stone.
That girls are raped, that two boys knife a third,
were axioms to him, who'd never heard
of any world where promises were kept,
or one could weep because another wept.[63]

This is not to apply the notion of aspect-blindness to Auden himself, or to suggest that Auden is bringing to our attention that moral perception involves aspects. Rather, it is a gloss on Auden. Auden's poem can be used to illustrate how a moral aspect can fail to dawn because of the way the aspect blind cannot see the moral situation in a certain light, the aspect blind thus manifest an orientation towards human behaviour in which it is treated as behaviour rather than as _human_ behaviour- w_e_ say, from our 3rd-person perspective, that the aspect-blind fail to see human behaviour as human-one would like to say that it is not seen as behaviour expressive of mind. (Although this would be going too far; a fairer treatment would be to say that their perception of human behaviour becomes _impoverished_.)

This tendency of the aspect blind to see human behaviour in an impoverished way is in part to lack the capacity to distinguish the individuality of the person they are dealing with. I could not bring myself to go as far as saying that the aspect-blind fail to discern human behaviour as expressive of mind because I do not mean that the aspect-blind are incapable of viewing the other as a person; it is not the case that they lack the capacity to apply the relevant aspect-concepts altogether: just as an aspect blind person could see that a schematic drawing was meant to represent a cube, so the person blind to psychological aspects is not incapable of drawing some inferences about the state of mind expressed in the behaviour he directly perceives. The defect of aspect-blindness is not so much an inability or unwillingness to draw the right conclusion but rather the existence of a need to draw conclusions at all. The defect is thus not on the same level as the aspects to which one is blind: it is not a complete inability to view the other as a person, but rather an inability directly to perceive the other as a person. We, from our 3rd-person perspective of continuous aspect-perception, accuse the aspect-blind of not being able to apply thick moral concepts, or in this case psychological concepts, which involves seeing a friendly glance in another's eye rather than perceiving shapes, colours, movements which are then interpreted to mean that the glance is a friendly one. Someone who spontaneously and unhesitatingly describes the behaviour of others in terms of psychological concepts, who would find it unnatural and difficult to describe what he sees

in terms of purely behavioural concepts, who does not regard his description in terms of psychological concepts as one option among many-such a person thereby manifests the fact that he regards the behaviour of others as human behaviour, as precisely the sort of behaviour it is. Just as the person who is blind to pictorial aspects may regard paintings as we do blueprints, so the person who is blind to psychological aspects regards human behaviour as behaviour rather than as the field of expression of a heart and mind: he has to infer from the physical properties of a face the inner state which is thereby revealed. To elucidate his own sense of these consequences, Wittgenstein hints at an analogy which might be used here in place of the reference to blueprints and pictures: the aspect-blind regard a human being's behaviour as we would the behaviour of a robot, of a construction.[64] In this sense, the aspect-blind would be blind to an aspect of the humanity of human behaviour, to part of what makes it behaviour expressive of mind, and therefore not impoverished.[65]

The above discussion concerns an inability to see the humanity in a person. More common is the seeing of different aspects. For example, the paradigm case of moral blindness in the 20th Century, to my mind, is the figure of the committed Nazi, prepared to exterminate millions of people-Jews, gypsies, homosexuals, physically and mentally handicapped-in the name of racial purity. Evil though the Nazis were, they did not see their aims as evil; what makes them truly horrifying is that they regarded themselves as good. They too did not recognise the humanity in certain groups. They thought of the people whom they exterminated as dangerous vermin, unworthy of moral consideration. We may, of course, suspect that there is a strong element of self-deception and hypocrisy in their attempts to persuade themselves and others that their motives were pure. But even if these professions were merely a cloak for greed and the lust for power we still do not have a case of people pursuing evil for its own sake, totally without moral concerns. Top Nazis appear to have been genuinely worried that, in carrying out this necessary but distasteful task, decent Germans might become brutalised. Eichmann said after witnessing extermination by gas van:

It is horrible...Young men are being made into sadists [66]

While Himmler told his SS generals:

> Most of *you* know what it means when 100 corpses are lying side by side, or 500 or 1000. To have stuck it out and at the same time...to have remained decent fellows, that is what has made us hard.[67]

The Nazis who carried out the exterminations were sensitive to a degree, sensitive, for example, to the moral concerns quoted above. But they were *insufficiently* sensitive, and could only share a more virtuous person's perception of the situation to a limited degree. The Nazis could see *some* moral aspects, they could see for example that there were moral considerations which weighed against what they proposed to do, but not sufficiently to make those considerations prove decisive. This is not to say that such a person as the Nazi may not often come to the right moral conclusions. There may be occasions on which he agrees with the more sensitive person that there is a moral requirement to act in a certain way. For example, the committed Nazi as well as the Liberal, may show genuine courage under fire, perhaps rescuing injured comrades, at risk to his own life. The above considerations may seem strange, for how can a not wholly good person share the morally sensitive person's way of seeing things in one case but not in another? And how is it also possible for both the Nazi and the good person to see one moral aspect of a situation (say, the sadism) but the Nazi be blind to another moral aspect of the same situation? How can someone's (the Nazi's) moral perception be patchy?

The solution is implicit in my discussion of aspect-perception. I have outlined the phenomenon of constant aspect-seeing and how it is tied into community based rules within form of life. I have also discussed Wittgenstein's concern with aspect-changing. We find the solution in the relationship between these two phenomena. A permanent aspect can shift, a shifting sense of aspect can settle into a permanent one.

The Nazis were trained to see the world in a certain way within their form of life. This resulted in their perspectival outlook, the Nazis saw the people whom they exterminated as *untermenschen,* and people labeled as such were considered unworthy of moral consideration. A person from a different socialisation who has not been trained in the same way, will have a different permanent aspect-perception. The moral upbringing of the Nazis however, did not make them blind to other moral aspects. They could see that there were moral considerations, which weighed against what they proposed to do, (Eichman recognising the danger that some death-camp guards may start to enjoy what they were doing, for example) but not sufficiently to make those considerations prove decisive. They also could have been capable of seeing some other situations correctly, such as acting in what we would regard as an appropriate way toward *other* peoples and situations (the courage example).

However, permanent aspect perception by itself fails to account for the *complexity* of moral phenomena: the fact that some moral situations can be seen one way and not another, for example. The quotation from Eichmann serves to illustrate how he was presented with switching aspects, but his lack of moral vision entailed an impoverished recognition: he found the aspect of the possibility of moral degeneration of young Germans compelling, but could not recognise the other aspect; namely the morally abhorrent nature of what they were engaged in. In some cases it is easy to see what morality requires; in others a great deal more sensitivity is required, so the morally unsophisticated may do well with clear-cut cases while failing to see what is important in the more difficult ones, or, alternatively, they may be so aspect-blind as to not see the aspect most obviously picked out by someone else. Maturing morally means acquiring

the ability to notice more than one aspect of a situation, and finding the right aspect the most compelling, resulting in the right action. Therefore moral aspect-perception is a matter of learning to see correctly. (I shall discuss learning to see and its role in moral motivation at 5.8). We, from our 3rd-person perspective, can ask someone how he or she sees a situation. They will reply "I am seeing it as..." Then we can try to persuade them, saying "Can't you see it as...?"(The nature of such persuasion is discussed at 5.8 below). If we are successful, a permanent aspect may shift, and they will see the aspect pointed out to them that they did not see before. A shifting sense of aspect may also settle into a permanent one, resulting in them seeing the situation in one particular way from then on. Ultimately, we can only point out aspects as much as is possible. The aspect-blind lack the unhesitating involvement with aspects of the virtuous person; their ability to grasp 'thick' moral concepts is hesitant and clumsy. Should they manifest their blindness in systematically refusing to see the moral aspects pointed out to them, due to their inability/refusal to see a situation as we do, then we can only say "You just aren't seeing it". (See 5.8).

5.8. Conclusion: An Appraisal Of Aspect-Seeing In Moral Perception.

An ethical theory which starts by justifying a decision to act, begins, as Nancy Sherman says "too far down the road".[68] Preliminary to deciding how to act, an agent must acknowledge that the situation requires action, and therefore a decision depends upon a reaction to the circumstances. This reaction is informed by a person's character, her ability to see correctly. For example, at chapter 4.2.iii, to know what to do about the taxi driver's presumed racism, John must know that racism is a morally significant feature of the situation that he must take into account in figuring out how best to act. Knowing that racism is a morally significant feature of the situation, however, does not guarantee that John perceives the racism in the driver's behaviour in the first place. Such perception involves a different kind of, or part of, moral sensibility or understanding. It means, as we saw at 4.2.iii, that John must see the situation in terms other than personal relief at finding a cab. He must see the driver as having passed over the black woman and her child. It is moral perception that constructs what an agent is faced with as 'a moral situation' in the first place. The idea of moral judgement as bridging general rule and particular situation depends on a prior discrimination of 'the situation'.[69] It is moral perception which does that individuating or construing of the situation, thus providing a setting in which moral judgement carries out its task A person is responsible for how the situation appears to her, as well as for mis-perceptions, distortions and omissions. Because an agent can learn how to construe the case, how to describe, discriminate and classify, what they are confronted with, it is natural to suggest that it is possible to learn to see and learn to value. Learning to see and learning to value are integrally connected. An important part of moral training involves the development of character in such a way that moral aspects are recognized. (It is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss how moral realism based on aspect perception eventually 'cashes out' in the philosophy of education).

For the correct 'moral vision' there exists the desire to take account also of (and hence be tolerant of) the views of others. There is tension here: how can any such judgements be true, given such diversity of judgements? And if they are not true, why should we pay any attention to them? So one issue concerns the place of truth where there is diversity: or, at least, where there is no clear

> convergence on an answer where the best explanation of the convergence involves the idea that the answer represents how things are.[70]

The non-realist could easily assume from this that both aesthetic and moral judgement is subjective:

> The core theme of values clarification is that there are no right and wrong values. Values education does not seek to identify and to transmit 'right' values but to help children to discover the values that best suit them personally.[71]

Here it is important to realize that if this were right, it would render impossible the teaching of values. There are two very important points here, that I mentioned first in chapter 2 when dealing with Mackie's argument from relativity, namely to compare like with like, and to see the situatedness of judgements. Value claims about abortion or artistic value do not seem as straightforward as factual claims, such as about the boiling point of water. But accounts of this 'diversity' regularly fail to compare like with like. As I pointed out in Chapter 2, the massive moral consensus around, say, the wrongness of inflicting pain upon the innocent with no foreseeable gain (torturing children, say) might equally be contrasted with seemingly irreducible disputes in the realm of quantum physics, say, controversy about the number of elementary particles. If the moral sceptic

reminds us that there are those who reject the moral claim: "...we can offer him in exchange the Flat Earth Society"[72] That is, we can point out the divergence within claims for the so-called factual. The assumption that where there is diversity there is the subjective (or relativism) I have shown to be false in discussion of the ambiguous figures: it was shown there that some designs can be seen in at least two ways, but without the threatening `anything goes' of subjectivism ensuing. For the features of the design constrain how it may legitimately be seen: one can be wrong here.

Unacceptable ways of seeing something (let's use the ambiguous figure that I have the greatest trouble in seeing correctly: the old woman/young woman) are very difficult to specify-anything plausible enough to suggest itself can then be looked for, and argued for. Yet odd readings themselves occur during the procedure of `looking and seeing': I can perhaps be helped to see the design your way (say, by pointing out that this is the line of the cheek, this is the velvet choker, etc.) but in the last analysis, I will either see it or I won't. This is a crucial characteristic of aesthetic judgement-you can bring someone to the artwork, but you cannot get them to drink it in. It is also true of moral judgement-you can point out salient features, by saying "Can't you see the distress caused by such cruelty?" Or say things like "How can you be so inconsiderate?" Or "Surely it must look wrong" But in the end all that might be said is "You just aren't seeing it". Bringing someone to see something may involve a great deal of discussion, and much else besides, but all I can eventually do is ask my interlocutor to see it as I do. If she sees it, fine. If not, there is nothing else to be said: I have gone as far as I can go in pointing out aspects.

I emphasized in Chapter 3 the involvement with the intellect in moral perception, absent in the `raw' nature of colour perception. This is a central reason why my analogy with aspects works better than the analogy with secondary properties in explaining the way in which moral perception involves judgement. This is illustrated in the way one comes to see the moral worth of a situation, by possession of the right concepts and moral vision necessary for understanding the situation's characteristics-noticing `shape' and

'salience' which suggests making sense of our experience, which is to recognise what is right and wrong about it, (which goes hand in hand with recognising what is to be done) and certain ways are appropriate to doing so (not only one, but not 'anything goes'). So we come back to my thesis that moral perception is aspect perception. To this thesis I should now like to add two more that follow from the above discussion: A. Moral education is partly about learning to see. And B. Moral education is learning to value. Thesis A. identifies the perceptual base of moral understanding, recognizing the possibility of misperception. It highlights the fact that, try as I might, I may be unable to see the young woman depicted in the multiple-figure or unable to see such-and-such in the moral fact of the matter. I shall be misperceiving also if I take for a moral situation something that is not. For example, while studying at college, I stared to see if a woman in a queue was someone I knew. This got me a rebuke from another woman who accused me of 'optical rape'. She had taken a situation to be morally significant when it in fact was nothing of the kind. This leads us into thesis B. Learning to value, is learning to be a competent judge.

If I have learned to see a situation in a certain light, (via thesis A) I will not be inclined to revise my judgement in light of later information, I will treat the information either as irrelevant or as confirmatory-in neither case will my judgement be altered. This is because of my clear view of the situation, and also involves a notion of seeing it through, which refers centrally to my explaining my judgement typically after the fact, in the face of a questioner. But, as with answering any question, the reply is complete when it deals with that precise question, in that context-it does not have to deal with all possible questions-at that time, with all the moral facts gathered in, all the possible ways of seeing it wrongly 'dropped out' for me, I saw it correctly and I did what I knew to be right. Thesis B emphasizes judging as an activity, which is one reason why I said in chapter 3 that my account of moral perception was going to be broadly rationalistic-since what I learn in moral education is not so much to think something but to do something, namely

how to judge something competently-based on a clear view of the situation and the ability to explain my judgement of it, where both of these are ways my judging might go wrong. There is no gap here between seeing the moral situation in a certain way (understanding it a certain way) and judging it that way-for learning to see (thesis A) and learning to value (thesis B) come together in learning to judge.

Moral Motivation

I conceive of moral judgements as something distinct both from Humean beliefs and Humean desires, though incorporating aspects of both and having both a cognitive and a motivational dimension. I shall now elaborate upon this.

It is a striking feature of our moral experience that situations in which we find ourselves make moral demands on us; we recognize that we are morally required to act in an appropriate way. Once we are aware of such a requirement our choice of action seems to be constrained by that recognition. Our response is seen as something demanded by the circumstances in which we are making our choice. In particular, the claims that morality makes on us appear to be quite independent of our desires – they may even conflict with what we want. A realist such as Foot holds that a moral belief can exist without any desire to act in accordance with it. Such externalist realism (see chapter 4) allows that the question of what courses of action are morally desirable does not depend on what desires the agent may have. Although the non-cognitivist and externalist realist disagree about where in this picture of moral motivation to put moral convictions, they do agree about the picture, they accept the sharp divide between beliefs as passive states and desires as states that are capable of motivating, However, I shall argue that cognitive states <u>can</u> motivate, because it is moral beliefs which motivate action. I can therefore allow that the belief that he is morally required to act is sufficient to move the agent to act, without assistance from a quite different kind of state, namely a desire. Since I reject a picture of the mind in which there is drawn a distinction between passive, cognitive states and

active, motivating desires, I can simply bypass the dispute between non – cognitivists and externalist realists as to the side of that fence on which moral commitments are to fall.

I maintain that the agent who was motivated by his moral belief did act in that way because his moral belief was here sufficient to motivate him. The model provided by the belief/desire thesis is quite different. On that account we are to picture beliefs as giving rise to desires (or not) the desire in question is a psychologically *distinct* and *separable* element which has to be added to the beliefs if the agent is to be motivated. The desire is thought of as a distinct necessary condition of action; in its absence no action would occur, even if the agent's beliefs were to remain unchanged. It is this conception of moral motivation that I shall reject. Rather, I maintain that the agent's conception of the situation is such that it is sufficient to motivate him to act *by itself*. For is it true that the motivating power of all reasons derives from their including desires? Consider the explaining of a person's performance of a certain action by crediting him with awareness of some fact, which, in his view, makes acting in that way conductive to his interest. It may be that his view of the facts is sufficient to show us the favourable 'light' in which his actions appeared to him. Now it is likely that we will credit him with some appropriate desire (e.g. for his own future happiness), but the commitment to ascribe such a desire is simply consequential on our taking him to act as he does for the reasons we cite. That is, the desire does not function as an independent extra component in a full specification of his reason: the belief motivates the agent on its own.

I agreed in chapter 2 with the claim made by Bernard Williams that beliefs should 'track the truth' as he puts it, in that they should accurately reflect the way things are. It is sufficient reason for abandoning a belief that it does not fit the way things are. Beliefs, it may be said, are states that 'fit' the world. Desires, on the other hand, are said by the non-cognitivist to have a different direction of 'fit' in that they seek to change the world, i.e. make the world fit them. This consideration of different directions of 'fit' has influenced the non – cognitivist demand that we disentangle the cognitive and the

affective elements in our moral experience. However, we have already noted in chapter 2 how such a 'disentangling' maneuver in the 'fact–value' debate cannot always be carried out without distorting our moral experience. The realist should insist that here we face a similar difficulty; we cannot separate out, as non–cognitivism requires, the way the agent conceives the situation to be, from his taking it that he is required to act in a certain way.

It is a sufficient condition of a state being a belief that it has the direction of fit: this state must fit the way the world is. And, importantly, it does not lose the status of a belief if it happens to incorporate motivation as a merited response. For example, suppose someone sees a person being raped. As soon as he sees the act as rape, he will have seen the situation in a certain light, and noticed the relevant aspects. He will have recognized its salient features, its meaning, and its requiring a merited response. In giving an explanation of why he acted upon his belief, (intervening, seeking help, phoning the police etc.) his belief, on its own, explains his actions. We need to know what change in the world would constitute a satisfactory outcome to his action. In this case stopping the rape. Therefore the realist can happily concede that an agent who was motivated to act by a purely cognitive state may properly be said to have wanted to do what he did. To ascribe such a state to him is merely to acknowledge that he was motivated to act by his conception of the situation, i.e. he saw the act as rape. It is this careful belief that is motivationally loaded. This is an account of moral perception as the literal perception of aspects and as guiding to action: once the moral aspect has dawned we are already there- seeing the situation as is to recognise it as requiring a merited response.

In this chapter I have emphasized how coming to see a person's action in a certain light, or, more specifically, coming to see a situation as they see it, can help us understand their actions. I have claimed that understanding a person's action comes from noticing the same aspects that he has noticed, and that such perception is guided and limited by the fact of the matter and that if we shared their conception we would be motivated in the same way. This can be realized from appreciating, though not necessarily sharing, the experience

of the person whose action he is trying to explain from the inside. The role of that person's conception of the world, of how things are, is not limited in the way that Hume supposed it was, to providing information enabling the agent to channel any desire he might have in the right direction. The agent's conception of the situation has the more important role of making his desire intelligible. The radical upshot of this is that, in the moral case, desire drops out altogether. Once we have seen the aspects that the other sees, once we have recognised and understood the situation in the same way, we already are able to understand why he was motivated to act in the way he did. Nothing needs to be added to his conception to complete the explanation. Moral attitudes, it was argued by the non-cognitivist, are not solely cognitive states because they are motivating states and thus contain a desire as an element – and a desire is a non–cognitive state. If, however, the presence of a desire is not needed to explain an agent's actions, then the whole basis for the distinction between attitudes and beliefs has been undermined.

This is a telling blow to Mackie's assumption that the realist cannot give an account of moral values as providing reasons to act. Finding a meaning in one's experience is a cognitive task, but there is not a <u>further</u> task which is considering how to act. As Aristotle said, once I see the object clearly, avoidance or pursuit follows.[73]

> When the person (the soul) says or denies good or bad, it pursues or avoids.[74]

This is an appropriate corrective to the idea that McDowell has described as the world as motivationally inert.[75]

I have argued for a more generous theory of perception. I have stressed that moral perception involves recognizing what we are confronted with. Such recognition is dependent on possession of the right concepts that can be applied not just to cases of constant aspect perception, but to cases of noticing an aspect, and that these are both cases of seeing-as. The competent moral vision is possessed by one who has cultivated the right fabric of character. Such a person will have undergone the right training of feelings as well as intellect. In the study of the phenomenon of constant aspect perception and seeing-as, aspects have been shown to avoid the objections that non-realists make against traditional realisms, for they are neither a type of queer entity, like Platonic entities, nor are they non-natural properties. We can be trained to see moral aspects, but we can never be <u>completely</u> trained: a realistic account of our common experience of morality is one which represents morality as difficult, both in the sense of being difficult to live up to, and, also, in the sense of being necessarily complex, and difficult to comprehend. This is, at least, partly explained by the fact that,

> the area of morals, and ergo of moral philosophy, can now be seen... as covering the whole of our mode of living and the quality of our relations with the world.[76]

An analogy with aspect perception is an account which makes it plausible to suppose that, in moral experience, we can genuinely be sensitive to what is there independently of us, but also explains how moral disagreement is possible. An aspect can be overlooked, and we can have it brought to our attention, or we can see an aspect, moral or non moral, and yet pay no attention to it. Adopting a model of moral values as aspects also allows us a relation between moral value and the will. We can have this relation because seeing an aspect can be subject to, or dependent on, the will. (But not in all cases. If I can't see the duck (in the duck/rabbit) I can't 'make' myself do so by exercising my will). Anthony Kenny among others has remarked that the mind includes the will as well

as the intellect,[77] and he draws attention to the idea that the operation of the senses is shot through with the conceptualizations of the intellect, so the will is, to a greater or lesser degree, in control of our mental life. The will can be thought of as the locus of autonomy. We cannot of course, as Kenny points out, choose what we want to see when we open our eyes (but we can choose to concentrate on one aspect of an ambiguous figure and try to sustain its image). But the operation of the intellect itself is not in the same way under voluntary control. We can have this relation between moral value and the will because seeing an aspect is sometimes subject to, or dependent on, the will

> One wants to ask of seeing an aspect: `is it seeing? Is it thinking? The aspect is subject to the will: this itself relates it to thinking.[78]

but not always <u>responsive</u> to the will.[79] Because when we are seeing one aspect of an object and try to see it as something else, we may fail, and when trying to see an aspect permanently, it may change against our will. We can also change the aspect without being aware of any other act of volition which causes the change.[80] And most importantly for noticing moral aspects, an object can possess a number of aspects, and if we are only seeing one of them, we can try to see another, and have an aspect brought to our attention. Concepts are needed for human beings to understand and cope with the world in which they live, including our shared world of everyday moral experience. This, I would suggest, is one of the ways of accounting for Mackie's challenge (see chapter 3.3) for the realist to account for moral value as being both a feature of the external world, and also having a necessary link with the will. Moreover, aspect perception has a second, more important way of accounting for Mackie's challenge, in that aspect perception can show a belief to be <u>motivational</u>. (See 5.8 above.)

We have seen (5.4.ii) how aspect-dawning experiences cannot be accounted for in terms of two distinct objects of sight, by pointing to two different things, or by drawing two different pictures. Here we have a case in which there is a difference between visual experiences that cannot be recorded in a straightforward perceptual report, or in a picture of what is seen. We have a second category of an 'object' of sight. What Wittgenstein wants us to see is that we can only begin to understand this second use of the word 'see'- and thereby the distinction between visual experiences that the duck-rabbit brings to our attention-if we stop thinking about the concept of 'perception' in terms of something that is given or that is caused to occur in us by objective features of the material world. Giving an aspectual account of moral values solves McDowell's worry about giving a *causal* account of moral value perception (see chapter 3.4). McDowell claims that a 'causal gloss' is inappropriate to the perceptual awareness of moral properties. This is so because McDowell takes value apprehension to be an intellectual rather than a mere sensory matter.[81] Perception which is intellectual, according to McDowell, is only perception in a metaphorical sense.[82] Giving an aspectual account of moral values also casts doubt on the non-realist picture of moral value perception being explained in terms of non-moral features. We should stop thinking about the concept of 'perception' in terms of something that is given or that is caused to occur in us by non-moral features, and connect it with the subject's way of responding to what she sees. Thus:

> If I saw the duck-rabbit as a rabbit, then I saw: these shapes and colours (I give them in detail)-and I saw besides something like this: and here I point to a number of different pictures of rabbits (PI.PP.196-7)

290

The difference in the two visual experiences does not arise from an objective alteration in the object itself, but from a difference in how the subject places the picture in two different contexts: "I see something like this" (pointing to other pictures of rabbits) or "I see something like that" (pointing to other pictures of ducks). The difference between the two experiences cannot be recorded by pointing to two different objects, but only by reference to the subject's way of responding to the picture, by putting it now in relation to these objects, now in relation to those:

> what I perceive in the dawning of an aspect is not a property of the object, but an internal relation between it and other objects (PI.p212)

which connects with my earlier comments on `narrative structures': moral aspects `dawn' because of making an internal relation with other things via the `bedding' in that structure.

Wittgenstein believes that this difference in how we are to understand the distinction between the two visual experiences reveals that `seeing' and `seeing-as' are two different, though related, concepts: both are concepts of visual experience, but they are importantly different. The difference, moreover, provides a corrective to our temptation to think of visual perception purely introspectively, and prompts us to recognize the internal link that exists between what is seen and the subject's way of responding. In this way, the case of seeing-as works against our inclination to think of perception in terms of the influence of objects on a receptive faculty, and draws our attention to the role of an active, responding subject in determining the nature of visual experience, or in fixing what is seen. The point is that perception would not excite the will by itself. This explains the need for a critical stance toward our moral judgements and beliefs and shows that the realist is not committed, as Blackburn insists that the realist is, to the picture of someone engaged in moral perception as

a pure passive, receptive witness, who has no responsibility in the matter[83]

This is nothing but a caricature of what the realist means by the making of moral judgements. Our concept of visual experience does not function in the way many philosophers have imagined; the concept is much more closely tied to distinctive ways of responding than the picture of *visual* experience as the passive reception of `visual data' suggests. Human possession of a concept depends upon human ability to use language and to make discursive judgements in which the concepts are employed.[84] Our moral value experience is a case of aspect perception-this is a property the discernment of which is language dependent-values are exclusively discernible by beings who possess the necessary discriminatory powers as well as the proper conceptual framework [85]

A model of moral values as aspects also avoids the problems of instantiating substantive, yet `ghostly' qualities (see Chapter 3 `The Analogy With Secondary Properties'). A conception of moral values as aspects suggests that moral features of situations are to be found in pattern, shape and structure rather than in gross properties on the analogy with colour. Instead, what we should recognize is that human response and behaviour is what uncovers value. This realization should make us concentrate not on the existence of features within the sensory field, but on response to features of morally relevant situations; it is not so much a question of what is to be seen, as if there were an extra feature in one's sensory field that comes to be noticed, but the kind of response that one makes to situations, that indicates that one has noticed an aspect or that one sees something in a situation that one had failed to notice before. The criteria for having the visual experience that is expressed in the exclamation "A rabbit!" reveal a grammatical link between this particular experience and *behaving* in a particular way. Our grasp of the distinction between the visual experience expressed by the report and the one expressed by the exclamation is rooted in the difference in how they are expressed in behaviour, and not in an objective difference in the objects experienced. We can notice fine shades

of human behaviour; politeness, respect, consideration, etc. manifest in posture and gestures. Constructing a model for moral value as existing in the world as aspects, gives us room for saying that some moral aspects can be picked out by some people and missed by others, in that two observers can see a situation differently. Moral concepts involve the use of language and the training in morality involves training in language and perception, which involves having the right sort of responses to moral situations. We cannot be completely trained of course, because morality is essentially complex in nature, and our perceptions can also be inadequate due to our lack of concepts, or failings in character, hence the phenomenon of aspect-blindness.

Summary.

I began this thesis by saying why I think moral realism *matters*, claiming that non-realism threatens things which I believe to be important, while realism safeguards them. For instance, moral realism matters to what we count as a case of moral argument, it matters to the moral judgements we can accept, it matters for our moral psychology, what we take to be valuable, and it matters to the appropriateness of certain sorts of attitudes to our own moral beliefs and those of others. It was noted how modern non-realists have claimed that their theories pose no threat to the above concerns because of their claim to be fully able to account for the assertoric nature of moral discourse. This leads them to claim that it will make no practical difference in regard to which theory we support. I went on to show in chapter 4 that quasi-realism, the main non-realist system to claim to be most able to do this, ultimately fails in its attempt. Even if the 'no difference thesis' had been successful, it was argued to *not* constitute an argument *against* moral realism. Moral realism was defended against other arguments put forward by non-realists, such as the argument that moral realism underwrites intolerance.[86] It was also shown to be untrue that a moral realist must be a dogmatist; rather she can and should keep an open mind about moral issues and engage the opposition in dialogue, for, as a realist, she can also be

a fallibilist. It was shown that it is also a mistake to think that tolerance comes out of non-realism in such a straightforward way.

In beginning my defence of moral realism, I agreed with McDowell's claim that it was virtually impossible to resist giving a perceptual model of moral value awareness. I took as a central problem for both realist and non-realist positions that of explaining and justifing both the phenomenology and the metaphysics of ordinary moral experience. Recent attempts to explain the phenomenology by both realist and non-realist were discussed in detail in chapter 3 (3.2) on the analogy with colour, and would help to bring into focus the main issues, before discussion and criticism of both the phenomenology and metaphysics of quasi-realism (chapter 4, 4.4-4.7) and of my own model of moral realism based on an analogy with aspect perception in Chapter 5.

I briefly introduced the projectivist theory of David Hume, and looked at Dancy's argument that Humean projectivism is an abuse of resultance. I then showed how resultance differs from the theory of supervenience, which was important to the discussion of quasi-realism in chapter 4. I then outlined a brief 'map' of the forthcoming chapters, before exploring the systems I chose to call 'neo-realisms'. What I took issue with about the neo-realist systems was not so much their lack of a specific realist ontology, but rather their explanation of moral objectivity as coherence of objective preference. I maintained that realism needs to affirm that moral statements can be true or false, for objectivity consists for the realist in the fact of the matter- not just in expressions of preference or dislike. I showed how this could be acheived in Chapter 5.

In chapter 2 I outlined the theory of moral non-realism, and dealt with the philosophical theory of projectivism. I discussed the Humean sundering of values from facts, later expanded upon by J. L. Mackie, showing how this modern dichotomy has led into the analogy with secondary properties, which was the subject of chapter 3. Since Hume's non-realist `projectivism' concerns all perception of value, I outlined and criticised his projective explanation of aesthetic experience, showing that it was possible for a projective account of aesthetic values to be disputed. I followed this with exposition of Hume's projective explanation of moral awareness, which I criticised as being a two-stage process, which did not square well with what I maintained was the immediate, singular experience of everday perception. I indicated here that because of the significant differences between aesthetic and moral values that would emerge in chapters 4 and 5, I would not attempt any analogy between them. I examined and criticised an early formulation of a projective theory found in Hume's account of causation. The `mechanism' Hume uses to account for causation, namely his `association of ideas', seemed the only apparatus available for explaining Humean projection. I therefore offered an explanation and critique of how Hume *might have tried to account for the `mechanics' of his* projective *account of value.* I also examined a modern theory of projectivism offered by Thomas Baldwin, to try and make projectivism as intelligible as possible by attempting to square it with everyday perception. This proved vulnerable to my objections obtained from 20th Century studies of war casualties who had lost their egocentric spacial reference (needed for projection to take place according to this theory), because they could still see both colour and value. These arguments questioning both the explanatory terminology of projectivism and the projective process itself, showed the theory to have serious difficulty in satisfactorily explaining our common experience of value. This difficulty constituted an argument *against* projectivism, namely that projectivism is hopeless as an account of the metaphysics and phenomenology of morality, it is at variance with the way we actually think and talk morally. So if we accept it, we must regard moral thought and talk as embodying a mistake.

The first premise of the realist's argument then, is that projectivism cannot do justice to the moral phenomenology, it fails to do justice to the way we think or talk in some area; it must embrace an `error theory'. We must add a second premise, that an error theory is not acceptable. Given these two premises, we have a very good argument for realism. It was shown in Chapter 4 how Quasi-realism tries to bring projectivism back into line with the way we actually think. As Blackburn says:

> ...quasi-realism at least removes the most important range of objections to projectivism-namely, that it cannot account for the phenomena of ordinary moral thinking.[87]

I would later argue that the project of quasi-realism ultimately fails, leaving realism as the theory most able to account for our moral experience.

The arguments that cluster around R.M.Hare's contention that if moral values were anihilated, no-one would notice, were criticised. The possibility of sundering fact and value was questioned by showing that the `disentangling manouevre' it involved could not always be carried out. It was also suggested, *contra* Hare, that both facts and value were unproblematically integrated in the majority of peoples' unhesitating capacity to weave `seamless webs' (see chapter 2.5.v and chapter 5.5) of pictures, words, concepts, people, situations, into the fluid stream of people's purposes and projects.

Finally in Chapter 2, I examined and criticised the non-realist projectivist position which results in the `error theory' of J. L. Mackie in his book Ethics: Inventing Right And Wrong. The non-realist arguments presented by Mackie include the argument from the relativity of moral values, the argument from economy, the argument from `queerness', and the `no difference' argument. The `no difference' argument is the argument that, despite the obvious differences in ontology, non-cognitivism takes away nothing we should object to having taken away in ethics. I argued there and in chapter 3 that this thesis is mistaken. The argument from economy can be stated simply as the Occam's

Razor argument, that one should not multiply entities unnecessarily. To put it another way, entities should not be postulated that explanations do not need. In chapter 3 I went on to show this to be a false economy. The argument from `queerness', put simply, is that moral values, should we give them a real existence, would have to be very metaphysically `queer' entities indeed; unlike anything else in the universe. Mackie cites Plato's world of Forms as a stark example of this.[88] I went on in chapter 3 and in chapter 5 to show that Mackie was mistaken in thinking that a naive consciousness must view moral values as primary qualities, and that his position corresponds to what has come to be called the Absolute conception of reality. This position, where values imprint themselves on a pure, passive witness, who has no say in the matter, I argued to be simply wrong. In chapters 3 and 5 I showed Mackie's conception of realism to be not merely false, but unintelligible. I also showed later (Chapter 5) how the moral realist can provide a satisfactory explanation of how we can have moral knowledge of values, without a mysterious faculty of `moral intuition'.

In chapter 3 I did three things: I firstly examined John McDowell's paper "Values and Secondary Qualities", which is a direct response to the arguments of Mackie in the first chapter of Ethics: Inventing Right And Wrong. In it, McDowell argues for two main points: that Mackie is incorrect in his assessment of secondary qualities as `subjective' (or that his idea of `subjectivity' is confused); and that his notion of what is or can be `real' is too `thin', i.e. impoverished. McDowell does not specifically offer an actual model of how moral values can be based on an analogy with secondary properties. He simply argues that such a model is possible. Therefore, I built upon his ideas in order to `flesh out' such a model by offering a dispositional thesis, based upon his arguments, using materials taken from Colin McGinn's book The Subjective View. Thirdly, I examined how well the analogy with secondary properties coped with criticisms by Jonathan Dancy in his paper "Two Conceptions Of Moral Realism" and his recently published book Moral Reasons. I then offered my own criticisms. Although ultimately rejecting the analogy with secondary qualities, the examination proved useful in showing that

Mackie's idea of what moral realism must entail is simply wrong. This helped to move the debate along and set up the arguments in chapter 5 which would show conclusively that my analogy with aspect-perception made me not the sort of realist that Mackie was attacking.

I began chapter 4 by discussing Blackburn's three motives for preferring a projective theory of value. Since his first argument, the argument from economy, was dealt with in chapter 3, I moved straight on to his second argument, the metaphysical motive for projectivism-supervenience. It was shown how realism can explain the ban on a mixed world that B*/A supervenience involves, by accepting B*/A necessity, and arguing that cases of wanton cruelty are wrong De-dicto.

Blackburn's third argument, that of the explanation of behaviour, was countered by offering an equally plausible realist explanation of behaviour.

The challenge presented by Quasi-realism was then argued as best understood as an argument against the claim that projectivism cannot explain the phenomenology and metaphysics of moral thought and talk. It was shown how Quasi-realism attempts to account for the phenomenology of moral discourse without the need for any realist ontology of values. Blackburn's attempt to show why we need to put attitudes into conditionals, in order to work out their implications, was examined, and I argued that a 'thin' notion of truth was adequate for putting attitudes into conditionals, and could be used to deal with Geach's use of the Frege point about unasserted contexts.

I then turned to what I called a 'thick' notion of truth, that the Quasi-realist is trying to earn by capturing the 'F-features' of *objectivity, mind-independence,* and *necessity* for projectivism. After outlining these F-features, it was shown how Quasi-realism tries to capture the features of moral thought and talk by a notion of (quasi) truth which depended on attitudes being improved up to an ideal limit, which we could have confidence in projecting. After a realist explanation of the F-features, the Quasi-realist technique of the 'step-back' was examined, whereby attitudes can be the object of other attitudes. It was argued that patterns or combinations of attitudes were of limited interest, and I concluded that particular and simple attitudes were of central importance to the technique. These attitudes were shown to be vulnerable to both an 'ascent' and a 'regress' objection, and I concluded that the 'step-back' could not capture the features of ordinary moral thought and talk, leaving the 'internal reading technique, which was shown to fail, due to Blackburn's attempt to construe first-order claims as second-order ones. I concluded that the failure of Quasi-realism gave us good reason to believe that realism was the best theory most able to account for the phenomenology and metaphysics of moral experience. This led into the final chapter which outlined a realist theory capable of retaining a thick notion of moral truth, and which is fully able to account for our common moral experience.

The final chapter argued that a significant part of our moral experience can be explained by an analogy with the phenomenon of aspect perception discussed by Wittgenstein in his Philosophical Investigations.

The discernment of moral values was argued to be a case of aspect perception, and the ability to perceive moral values was shown to be tied in with the concept-dependency of moral perception, relying on discriminations that can only be made through the use of language, and hence through a shared form of life. This realist account was shown to be fully capable of giving an account of our common moral experience, and proved not to be susceptible to Mackie's arguments from relativity or queerness, and also provided an

answer to his challenge to the realist to provide a theory that can account for moral values as being both part of the external world and at the same time

intrinsically such as to elicit some `attitude' or state of will from someone who becomes aware of them. [89]

I revealed how Wittgenstein's examination of seeing aspects sometimes shows aspect perception to be a matter of noticing alternatives, and that this is manifested in ways of responding to what one sees, exemplified in peoples' gestures, mannerisms, postures, etc. I argued, analagously, that we *uncover* moral aspects not by attention to `ghostly' properties, but rather by attention to these "fine shades of behaviour".[90]

Chapter 4 had already shown how aesthetic judgements differered from moral judgements in an examination of their relationship to `thick' and `thin' truth. I further showed how there are enough significant differences between a perceptual account of aesthetic values and a perceptual account of moral values for me to reject an analogy between them. There are some similarities between moral and aesthetic perception (both cases sometimes require the employment of our `cognitive stock' for example) but rather than being a case of seeing-as, I claimed that in most cases the perception of aesthetic qualities is better understood as a case of `seeing-in', which is essentially interpretive,(`reading in') and as such differs significantly from explanations of cases of aspect-perception.

300

I examined an anti-projectivist argument against the 'view from nowhere' position entailed by 'Absolute' realism (see chapter 3.3). This showed the untenable assumptions of such realism, and revealed the perspectival outlook that lies behind an aspect-seeing account of moral perception, and also illuminated why the key issue for moral realism is the question of whether we can establish moral objectivity. I then went on to show how such objectivity is possible. I then showed how a Wittgensteinian analogy between moral values and aspects helps to explain our common moral experience. I differentiated between constant aspect perception, which involved in most cases a 1st/ 3rd person contrast (see 5.5), and illustrates how I must have been seeing something in one particular way, in order to be able to notice the fresh aspect that gives the possibility of redescription, when I might say "Now it can be a rabbit", which is the dawning of an aspect.

I showed how a lot of human perception is concept-dependent, including moral perception, relying as it does on discriminations that can only be made through the use of language, and hence through shared forms of life. For human beings, possession of a concept depends upon human ability to use language. Correspondingly, I argued, moral aspects are properties, the discernment of which depends on our ability to use language. Before discussing moral aspect perception, I dispelled certain confusions about two possible interpretations of aspect-seeing. Firstly I discussed the idea of 'organization' as an object of sight. This led into discussion of the perspectival outlook that lies behind an aspect-seeing account of moral perception. I then criticized the idea that aesthetic perception is aspectual, using the distinctions already mentioned.

301

I illustrated the way that continuous aspect-seeing consists of our ability to recognize moral situations as part of an on-going series of events which determine well-being or contribute to a life-story. Thus, perspectives are grounded in ways of life, and this ties in with permanent aspect-seeing; namely that in continuous aspect-perception we are reporting viewing objects/(moral) situations in a particular way, i.e. in the way we have always regarded them, due to our 'cognitive stock' provided in upbringing and moral education, which is bound up with training in language and perception and reactions, determined by the form of life in which we have been brought up. This 'cognitive stock' was argued to be gained and nurtured only within particular forms of social life, including families.

I outlined the phenomenon of constant aspect-seeing and how it is tied into community based rules within a form of life. I also discussed Wittgenstein's concern with aspect-changing, and suggested we could find the answer to the question of how someone's moral perception could be 'patchy' in the relationship between these two phenomena. Namely in the way that a permanent aspect can shift, and a shifting sense of aspect can settle into a permanent one.

I noted the way in which permanent aspect perception by itself fails to account for the *complexity* of moral phenomena: the fact that some moral situations can be seen one way and not another, for example. Someone can be presented with switching aspects, but their lack of moral vision may entail an impoverished recognition: in some cases it is easy to see what morality requires; in others a great deal more sensitivity is required. Therefore the morally unsophisticated may do well with clear-cut cases while failing to see what is important in the more difficult ones, or, alternatively, they may be so aspect-blind as to not see the aspect most obviously picked out by someone else. Therefore moral aspect-perception is a matter of learning to see correctly. I went on to discuss learning to see and its role in moral motivation at 5.8. A permanent aspect may shift, and they will see the aspect pointed out to them that they did not see before. A shifting sense of aspect may

302

also settle into a permanent one, resulting in them seeing the situation in one particular way from then on. Ultimately, we can only point out aspects as much as is possible. I maintained that the aspect-blind lack the unhesitating involvement with aspects of the virtuous person; their ability to grasp 'thick' moral concepts is hesitant and clumsy. Should they manifest their blindness in systematically refusing to see the moral aspects pointed out to them, due to their inability/refusal to see a situation as we do, then we can only say "You just aren't seeing it". (See 5.8).

Finally I gave an appraisal of aspect-seeing in moral perception, arguing that it is moral perception that constructs what an agent is faced with as 'a moral situation' in the first place.[91] Considerations such as those oulined above identify the perceptual base of moral understanding. A person is responsible for how the situation appears to her, as well as for mis-perceptions, distortions and omissions. Because an agent can learn how to construe the case, how to describe, discriminate and classify what they are confronted with, it is natural to suggest that it is possible to learn to see and learn to value.

I emphasized in chapter 3 the involvement with the intellect in moral perception that is absent in the 'raw' nature of colour perception. This is a central reason why my analogy with aspects works better than the analogy with secondary properties in explaining the way in which moral perception involves judgement. This is illustrated in the way one comes to see the moral worth of a situation, by possession of the right concepts and moral vision necessary for understanding the situation's characteristics-noticing 'shape' and 'salience' which suggests making sense of our experience, which is to recognise what is right and wrong about it, (which goes hand in hand with recognising what is to be done) and certain ways are appropriate to doing so (not only one, but not 'anything goes'). I showed how A. Moral education is partly about learning to see. And B. Moral education is learning to value. Thesis A. identifies the perceptual base of moral understanding, recognizing the possibility of misperception. It highlights the fact that, try as I might, I may be unable to see the young woman depicted in the multiple-figure or

unable to see such-and-such in the moral fact of the matter. I shall be misperceiving also if I take for a moral situation something that is not. This leads us into thesis B. Learning to value is learning to be a competent judge.

I then discussed the way that aspect-perception shows moral values to be *motivational*. If I have learned to see a situation in a certain light, (via thesis A.) I will have recognized its salient features, its meaning , its requiring a merited response. If I see a situation correctly I will do what I know to be right. Thesis B emphasizes judging as an activity, which is one reason why I said in chapter 1 that my account of moral perception was going to be broadly rationalistic-since what I learn in moral education is not so much to think something but to do something, namely how to judge something competently-based on a clear view of the situation and the ability to explain my judgement of it, where both of these are ways my judging might go wrong. There is no gap here between seeing the moral situation in a certain way (understanding it a certain way) and judging it that way-for learning to see (thesis A) and learning to value (thesis B) come together in learning to judge.

The account I gave in Chapter 5 does not easily fit what Blackburn calls the `standard' model of the belief/desire account of motivation. On the standard model of Hume's `hydraulic metaphor' discussed at some length in chapter 4, beliefs are motivationally inert, hence the appeal to the presence of a desire as a motivating attitude. Then we could explain why one person thought an act immoral and another not, although both knew the same things about it, (had the same beliefs about it) by saying that the first additionally had, while the second lacked, the motivating desire. But this does not tally with the account in Chapter 5 of moral perception as the literal perception of aspects and as guiding to action: once the moral aspect has dawned we are already there-seeing the situation as that way is judging it that way (see my discussion of a cognitive account of motivation at 5.8). This is a telling blow to Mackie's assumption that the realist cannot give an account of moral values as providing reasons to act. Finding a meaning in one's

experience is a cognitive task, but there is not a further task which is considering how to act. So beliefs can be motivational. This is an appropriate corrective to the idea that McDowell has described as

the world as motivationally inert.[92]

Concepts are needed for human beings to understand and cope with the world in which they live, including our shared world of everyday moral experience. This, I suggested, is one of the ways of accounting for Mackie's challenge (see chapter 3.3) for the realist to account for moral value as being both a feature of the external world, and also having a necessary link with the will. Moreover, aspect perception has a second, more important way of accounting for Mackie's challenge, in that aspect perception can show a belief to be motivational. (See 5.8).

I have argued throughout this thesis for a more generous theory of perception. I have stressed that moral perception involves recognizing what we are confronted with. Such recognition is dependent on possession of the right concepts that can be applied not just to cases of constant aspect perception, but to cases of noticing an aspect, and that these are both cases of seeing-as. The competent moral vision is possessed by one who has cultivated the right fabric of character. Such a person will have undergone the right training of feelings as well as intellect. In the study of the phenomenon of constant aspect perception and seeing-as, aspects have been shown to avoid the objections that non-realists make against traditional realisms, for they are neither a type of queer entity, like Platonic entities, nor are they non-natural properties. We can be trained to see moral aspects, but we can never be completely trained: a realistic account of our common experience of morality is one which represents morality as difficult, both in the sense of being difficult to live up to, and, also, in the sense of being necessarily *complex*, and *difficult to comprehend.*

305

An analogy with aspect perception is an account which makes it plausible to suppose that, in moral experience, we can genuinely be sensitive to what is there independently of us, but also explains how moral disagreement is possible. An aspect can be overlooked, and we can have it brought to our attention, or we can see an aspect, moral or non moral, and yet pay no attention to it. Adopting a model of moral values as aspects also allows us a relation between moral value and the will. We can have this relation because seeing an aspect can be subject to, or dependent on, the will. (But not in all cases. If I can't see the duck (in the duck/rabbit) I can't `make' myself do so by exercising my will). We can have this relation between moral value and the will because seeing an aspect is sometimes subject to, or dependent on, the will but not always <u>responsive</u> to the will.[93] Because when we are seeing one aspect of an object and try to see it as something else, we may fail, and when trying to see an aspect permanently, it may change against our will. We can also change the aspect without being aware of any other act of volition which causes the change.[94] And most importantly for noticing moral aspects, an object can possess a number of aspects, and if we are only seeing one of them, we can try to see another, and have an aspect brought to our attention.

I suggested that what Wittgenstein wants us to see is that we can only begin to understand the distinction between visual experiences that the duck-rabbit brings to our attention if we stop thinking about the concept of `perception' in terms of something that is <u>given</u> or that is <u>caused</u> to occur in us by objective features of the material world. Giving an aspectual account of moral values solves McDowell's worry about giving a *causal* account of moral value perception (see chapter 3.4). McDowell claims that a `causal gloss' is inappropriate to the perceptual awareness of moral properties. This is so because McDowell takes value apprehension to be an intellectual rather than a mere sensory matter.[95] Perception which is intellectual, according to McDowell, is only perception in a metaphorical sense.[96] Giving an aspectual account of moral values also casts doubt on the non-realist picture of moral value perception being explained in terms of non-moral features: we should stop thinking about the concept of `perception' in

terms of something that is given or that is caused to occur in us by non-moral features, and connect it with the subject's way of <u>responding</u> to what she sees. Thus:

> If I saw the duck-rabbit as a rabbit, then I saw: these shapes and colours (I give them in detail)-and I saw besides something like this: and here I point to a number of different pictures of rabbits (PI.PP.196-7)

I insisted also that moral aspect-perception shows that the realist is not committed, as Blackburn insists that the realist is, to the picture of someone engaged in moral perception as

> a pure passive, receptive witness, who has no responsibility in the matter[97]

which is nothing but a <u>caricature</u> of what the realist means by the making of moral judgements.

A model of moral values as aspects also avoids the problems of instantiating substantive, yet `ghostly' qualities (see chapter 3). A conception of moral values as aspects suggests that moral features of situations are to be found in pattern, shape and structure rather than in gross properties on the analogy with colour. Instead, what we should recognize is that human response and behaviour is what <u>uncovers</u> value. This realization should make us concentrate not on the existence of features within the sensory field, but on response to features of morally relevant situations; it is not so much a question of what is to be seen, as if there were an extra feature in one's sensory field that comes to be noticed, but the kind of response that one makes to situations, that indicates that one has noticed an aspect or that one sees something in a situation that one had failed to notice before. We can notice fine shades of human behaviour; politeness, respect,

consideration, etc. manifest in posture and gestures. Constructing a model for moral value as existing in

the world as aspects, gives us room for saying that some moral aspects can be picked out by some people and missed by others, in that two observers can see a situation differently. Moral concepts involve the use of language and the training in morality involves training in language and perception, which involves having the right sort of responses to moral situations. We cannot be <u>completely</u> trained of course, because morality is essentially complex in nature, and our perceptions can also be inadequate due to our lack of concepts, or clouded by emotions and failings in character, hence the phenomenon of aspect-blindness.

Even more than this, there is an added difficulty, consequent upon the fact that morality is essentially *complex* in nature. This difficulty, however, is to be understood more as a limitation on our theoretical understanding of morality than as a limitation on our ordinary understanding. People do not, unless unduly influenced by philosophy, believe values are created by their choices. They think that some things really are better than others and that a person is capable of getting it wrong. Despite all the efforts of various non-realisms to account for the `mysterious' complexity of morality, at present in increasingly pseudo-scientific terms, we are not usually in doubt about the direction in which good lies. Equally we recognise the real existence of evil: cynicism, cruelty, and indifference to suffering. In spite, then, of the real difficulties and the sense of mysteriousness which attaches to morality at the level of practice, it is through theory that moral philosophy is likely to distort, by venturing explanations which are incompatible with morality as we experience it. One way in which this can happen is by explaining away the mysteriousness of morality, for, in removing the mystery, we will be removing the understanding as well.

[1] Mackie, J.L. Quoted from Ethics in McDowell, John "Values And Secondary Qualities" Page 111.

[2] Wittgenstein, Ludwig. Philosophical Investigations Page 207.

[3] McDowell, John."Non-cognitivism and Rule-following" in Wittgenstein: To Follow A Rule. Also, see Lovibond, Sabina. Realism and Imagination in Ethics. (Oxford, Basil Blackwell) 1983.

[4] Ibid. Blackburn, Simon. "Reply: Rule Following and Moral Realism" Page 173.

[5] ibid. pp. 141-162.

[6] Op. Cit. Lovibond. Realism and Imagination in Ethics page 40.

[7] It is tempting to see Sabina Lovibond as offering a complete account of a `McDowellian' theory, though she takes a rather different approach to reach McDowell's conclusions

[8] McDowell "Non-cognitivism and Rule-Following" Page 145.

[9] Ibid. Page 116.

[10] Ibid. Page 149.

[11] Ibid. Page 150.

[12] Ibid. Page 153.

[13] Ibid. Page 153

[14] Ibid. Page 153

[15] The picture I go on to defend is similar in its essentials to Lovibond's in Realism And Imagination In Ethics

[16] There could be no form of life in which 2+2 #4: we couldn't interpret it as containing the concepts of 2, addition etc. if this result were denied.

[17] Op.Cit Lovibond. Page 36.

[18] Ibid. Page 54.

[19] R. M. Hare. As cited in Lovibond Ibid. Pp 1-2.

[20] Op. Cit. Lovibond. Page 26. Wittgenstein Philosophical Investigations. (Blackwell) section 402.

[21] Ibid. Page 52.

[22] Ibid. Page 55.

[23] This is largely taken from Sherman, Nancy. The Fabric of Character (Clarendon) Oxford 1989. pp. 92-93.

[24] `Thick' moral concepts are so-called because they have more empirical content than the `thin' ones like `good' or `bad' For example, `generous' is a `thick' concept; if you know that an action is generous, you know more about what it is like than if you merely know that it is good.

[25] My concern is to explain such relativism within my metaethical account, not to solve any normative problems that may arise from it. David Carr is optimistic about the efficacy of discussion of `first-order' matters:

For it is true that certain fundamental human qualities or dispositions of compassion, courage, self-control, honesty, justice, tolerance and so on are celebrated almost universally in the best moral traditions and narratives of an otherwise bewildering diversity of human cultures. Also true is that familiar and dreary human shortcomings as malice, envy, lust, greed and so on are equally regarded as vices. The terminology of virtues and vices is arguably the common cross-cultural currency of our cultural capital by which men of good will from diverse cultures are able to recognize their moral kinship precisely in view of their mutual access to this conceptual apparatus of ethical evaluation. (Carr, David. "The Primacy Of The Virtues In Ethical Theory" Cogito 1996). However, I think this is too glib an answer. I echo the view of Mark Platts (Moral Realities preface viii) When he comments on the possibility of resolving moral arguments by normative theory, that, where human beings are concerned, "My natural tendency is to assume that the light at the end of the tunnel is an oncoming train." i.e. not all forms of human misunderstanding can be solved by dialogue.

[26] Op. Cit. Nielson "On Locating the Challenge. Page 44.

[27] Ibid. Nielson "On Locating the Challenge" Page 22.

[28] Op. Cit. Anscombe, "Linguistic Idealism" Page 115.

[29] Ibid. Page 113.

[30] Philosophical Investigations 11xi 212e

[31] ibid. 11xi 212e

[32] ibid. 11xi 212e

[33] Norman Hanson "Patterns of Discovery" quoted in Soltis, J.F. "Seeing, Knowing, and Believing" (George Allen & Unwin) 1966 page 38.

[34] Budd, Malcolm. Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Psychology. Page 79.

[35] Kenny, Anthony. The Metaphysics of Mind. (Oxford) 1992 page 22.

[36] ibid. Page 22.

[37] Wittgenstein Philosophical Investigations 11xi 195e

[38] Ibid. 212e.

39

[39] Kohler, Wolfgang. Gestalt Psychology (Liveright, New York) 1947 Chapter v.

[40] Christopher Peacocke tries to explain aspect switches by appeal to some quasi-objective alteration in what is seen by claiming that the representational properties of an object under contemplation undergoes a change, while the sensational properties remain the same. This is an interpretationist model of aspect perception, the sensational properties being interpreted as representations. See "Representational and Sensational Properties" in his A Study of Concepts

[41] Op Cit.Wittgenstein Philosophical Investigations 196e

[42] MacIntyre, Alasdair. "Is Patriotism A Virtue?" (The Lindley Lecture 1984), Page 10. Quoted in Blum, Lawrence, A. Moral Perception and Particularity Page 146.

[43] Ibid. "Patriotism" P.9. Blum, Page 146.

[44] Op. Cit Blum, Lawrence, A. Moral Perception and Particularity Page 146.

[45] Dancy, Jonathan. Moral Reasons PP.112-113.

[46] Heinaman, Robert. (Ed) Aristotle and Moral Realism (UCL PRESS 1995) page9.

47 Op. Cit Mulhall page 73

[47] Lock, John. An Essay Concerning Human Understanding Vol.1. (Dent and Sons 1961.) Book II section viii.(first published 1690)

[48] Wittgenstein, Ludwig. Remarks On The Philosophy Of Psychology 1, 1102.

[49] See Polanyi, Michael Personal Knowledge. (Routledge) 1973 page 101.

[50] I am indebted to Professor Graham McFee for this analogy in our discussions of the similarities with seeing X -rays and aspect perception.

[51] For an argument against construing aesthetic perception as the perception of aspects, see Mcfee, Graham. "Wittgenstein On Art And Aspects" Philosophical Investigations 1998.

[52] Cavell, Stanley. "The Avoidance of Love" in his Must We Mean What We Say?" (Scibners) 1969 p 317.

[53] For an examination of "Reading in" see McFee, Graham. "Criticism And Perception" British Journal Of Aesthetics Vol. 26, No.1, winter 1986.

[54] Collected in Krell, D. F. (ED) Martin Heidegger: Basic Writings, (Routledge) 1977. For a sympathetic account of Heidegger's reaction see Mulhall, Stephen. On Being in the World: Wittgenstein and Heidegger on Seeing Aspects. (Routledge) 1993.

[55] Ibid. Page 165.

[56] Ibid. Page 164.

[57] Winch, Peter. Ethics and Action (Blackwell) 1972. "The Universalisability of Moral Judgement" Originally published in The Monist. Vol 49, 1965.

[58] Dancy, Jonathan Moral Reasons Page 86.

[59] Ibid. Page 87.

[60] Philosophical Investigations. section 304

[61] McNaughton, Moral Vision P.59.

[62] Op. Cit. Page. 245

63 Soltis, J. F. "Seeing, Knowing & believing" (George Allen & Unwin) 1966 page 46.

[63] Auden, W. H. Collected Shorter Poems. (Faber) 1966. Page 294.

[64] Wittgenstein, Ludwig. Remarks on the philosophy of psychology 1, 324.

[65] There have been in history, as there are still today, ways in which such aspect-blindness manifests. We can make intelligible the suppositions that a group of people (and here one can fill in with the name of

whatever racial or ethnic group one wishes) have no 'souls', no 'inner' and are really only physiological automatons, not by denying that they have thoughts, feelings, intentions or concerns, but by denying that a person's mental life is equal to our own, or at least deficient in one way or another. This blindness is one in which one is simply not aware that one's attitude or actions toward people is causing any significant distress. Wittgenstein comments

> My attitude towards him is an attitude towards a soul. I am not of the opinion that he has a soul

When we fail to discern the humanity in a man in actual situations in life it is never in doubt that it is a person, a human being, that we are dealing with despite our sometimes relegating him to the lower ranks of that condition.

[66] This is the claim by Jane Caplan in an article in The Guardian 15th May 1987. Quoted from by McNaughton in Moral Vision pp.142-43.

[67] Ibid. Page 143.

[68] Sherman, Nancy. The Fabric of Character. Aristotle's theory of virtue. (Clarendon) 1989. Page 29.

[69] This is Barbara Herman's point. In "The Practice Of Moral Judgement" Journal Of Philosophy Vol. 87, no 8 August 1985. She claims that principle-based traditions have generally failed to note the specific moral character of either knowing what counts as best exemplifying, and knowing how to apply, rules or principles, and before this, recognising given features of a situation as morally significant.

[70] Williams, Bernard. Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy (Fontana) 1985 page 136.

[71] Palmer, Frank. Literature and Moral Understanding (Oxford: Clarendon) 1992 page 232.

[72] Bambrough, Redford. Moral Scepticism and Moral Knowledge. (Routledge) 1979. Page 18.

[73] Aristotle De Anima: 111 431a8-16

[74] Charlton, William. Weakness of the Will (Blackwell) 1988 page. 54.

[75] Richard Norman "Making Sense of Moral Realism" at "Internalism and Reasons for Actions".

[76] ibid. Page 97.

[77] See Kenny, Anthony. The Metaphysics Of Mind (Oxford) 1992

[78] Remarks On The Philosophy of Psychology Vol. 2 page 544

[79] Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology. page 612

[80] Last writings 451 &488

[81] McDowell, John. "Values And Secondary Qualities" Page 202.Although he does not state the connection explicitly his reason for claiming that a 'causal gloss' is inappropriate to the perceptual awareness of moral properties seems to be due to the disanalogy he notes between moral perception and secondary quality perception, where the appearances in the secondary property case are elicited while in the case of moral properties they are merited. This leads him to claim that moral perception is intellectual perception rather than sensory perception. We may elucidate the difference by noting that whereas colour can be described as intrinsically phenomenal, moral value is intrinsically motivational.

[82] McDowell does not specifically state these connections.

[83] Spreading the word. P 198.

[84] See Winch, Christopher. "Learning And Concept Formation" in The Philosophy Of Human Learning. (Routledge) 1998.

[85] This necessary conceptual framework is referred to as our 'Cognitive stock' in McFee, Graham. "Criticism And Perception" British Journal Of Aesthetics Vol. 26, No.1, winter 1986. Page 27.

[86] See for example McNaughton, David. Moral Vision. (Blackwell) Page 11.

[87] Blackburn, Simon. Spreading the Word Page 180.

[88] Mackie.J.L. Ethics, Inventing Right and Wrong. (Penguin.) 1977. P38.

[89] Mackie, J.L. Quoted from Ethics in McDowell, John "Values And Secondary Qualities" Page 111.

[90] Wittgenstein, Ludwig. Philosophical Investigations Page 207.

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[92] Richard Norman "Making Sense of Moral Realism" at "Internalism and Reasons for Actions".

[93] Last Writings on the Philosophy of Psychology. page 612

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[95] McDowell, John. "Values And Secondary Qualities" Page 202.Although he does not state the connection explicitly his reason for claiming that a 'causal gloss' is inappropriate to the perceptual awareness of moral properties seems to be due to the disanalogy he notes between moral perception and secondary quality perception, where the appearances in the secondary property case are elicited while in the case of moral properties they are *merited*. This leads him to claim that moral perception is intellectual perception rather than sensory perception. We may elucidate the difference by noting that whereas colour can be described as intrinsically phenomenal, moral value is intrinsically *motivational*.

[96] These connections are not specifically stated by McDowell.

[97] Spreading the word. P 198.

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