

Etične sodbe so zgolj izraz čustev

Naša naloga je dati takšno pojasnitev "vrednostnih sodb", ki bo hkrati zadovoljiva po sebi in skladna z našimi splošnimi empirističnimi načeli.¹ Pokazali bomo, da če so vrednostne trditve smiselne, so običajne "znanstvene" trditve; in če niso znanstvene, v dobresednem pomenu besede niso smiselne, temveč zgolj izraz čustev, ki ne morejo biti niti resnična niti neresnična. (...)

Najprej nas zanima, ali obstaja možnost redukcije celotnega področja etičnih izrazov na neetične. Raziskali bomo, ali lahko etične vrednostne trditve prevedemo v trditve o empiričnih dejstvih.²

Možnost njihovega prevoda zagovarjajo tisti moralni filozofi, ki jih navadno imenujemo subjektivisti, in oni, ki jih poznamo kot utilitariste. Kajti utilitarist opredeli pravilnost dejanj in dobrost namenov s pojmom ugodja, ali sreče, ali zadovoljstva, ki jih dejanja povzročijo; subjektivist pa s pojmom odobravanja, ki ga neka oseba ali skupina ljudi čuti do njih. Obe vrsti opredelitev spremenita moralne sodbe v podmnožico psiholoških ali socioloških sodb; in iz tega razloga nas zelo privlačijo. Kajti ob pravilnosti enega ali drugega bi sledilo, da etične trditve niso drugačne od dejstvenih trditvev, ki jim jih navadno postavljamo nasproti. Kljub temu ne bomo sprejeli niti subjektivistične niti utilitaristične analize etičnih izrazov. Subjektivistični pogled, po katerem pravimo, da je neko dejanje pravilno ali neka stvar dobra, kadar mislimo, da eno ali drugo večina odobrava, zavračamo, ker ni v sebi protislovno trditi, da neko pretežno odobravano dejanje ni pravilno ali pa da nekatere stvari, ki jih večina

sprejema, niso dobre. Prav tako zavračamo enačico subjektivističnega pogleda, po kateri nekdo, ki za neko dejanje trdi, da je pravilno, ali za neko stvar, da je dobra, pravzaprav pravi, da ga/jo odobrava. Razlog je v tem, da bi nekdo, ki bi priznal občasno odobravanje nečesa slabega, ne bil sam s seboj v protislovju. In podoben argument je usoden za utilitarizem. Ne moremo se strinjati, da neko dejanje označiti kot pravilno pomeni, da bi le-to izmed vseh v danih okoliščinah možnih dejanj povzročilo ali verjetno povzročilo največjo srečo ali največjo količino ugodja glede na neugodje ali največjo količino zadovoljenih želja glede na nezadovoljene, kajti po našem mnenju ni v sebi neprotislovno reči, da je včasih narobe storiti dejanje, ki bi dejansko ali verjetno povzročilo največjo srečo ali največjo količino ugodja v odnosu do bolečine ali zadovoljenih želja glede na nezadovoljene. In ker ni v sebi protislovno reči, da nekatere prijetne stvari niso dobre ali da si nekatere slabe stvari želimo, ne more biti tako, da je stavek "x je dober" ekvivalenten s stavkom "x je prijeten" ali "x je zelen". Veljavnosti etičnih sodb potemtakem srečnostne težnje dejanj ne določajo nič bolj kakor narava človekovih čustev; moramo jo³ razumeti kot "absolutno" ali "intrinzično" in empirično nedoločljivo.

Ne zanikamo, da je mogoče oblikovati jezik, v katerem bi bili vsi etični simboli opredeljeni z neetičnimi termini; zanikamo pa, da je predlagana redukcija etičnih trditvev na neetične skladna s konvencijami našega dejanskega jezika. To se pravi, utilitarizem in subjektivizem zanikamo ne kot predloga za zamenjavo naših obstoječih etičnih pojmov z nekimi novimi, temveč kot analizi naših obstoječih etičnih pojmov. Preprosto trdimo, da v našem jeziku stavki, ki vsebujejo normativne etične simbole, niso ekvivalentni s stavki, ki izražajo psihološke izjave⁴ oziroma empirične izjave kakršne koli vrste že. (...)

¹ Ayer želi ugotoviti, kakšen je pomen moralnih sodb in v katero kategorijo jezikovnih izrazov jih smemo uvrstiti. (Vse opombe so prevajalske.)

² Ayerja zanima, ali so moralne vrednostne sodbe *istopomenske* z empiričnimi sodbami (trditvami o čutno zaznavnih dejstvih). Ob pritrilnem odgovoru je področje moralnega *pomensko zvedeno* na dejstvene opise sveta in ne predstavlja posebnega področja vednosti: moralno spoznanje je običajno empirično spoznanje.

³ Veljavnost etičnih sodb.

⁴ Za mnoge empiriste so stavki materialni pojavi (navadno v pisni obliki). Pomen stavka pa je izjava.

Videti je, da priznanje nezvedljivosti normativnih etičnih pojmov na empirične pojme sprosti pot mnenju, po katerem vrednostnih sodb drugače kakor pri empiričnih izjavah ne nadzira opazovanja, temveč zgolj skrivnostno "zrenje razuma". To bi naredilo vrednostne sodbe nepreverljive. Kajti res je razvpito, da je nekaj za nekoga lahko videti intuitivno gotovo, za nekoga drugega pa dvomljivo ali celo neresnično. Potemtakem je brez pomena sklicevati se na zrenje kot merilo v preverjanju veljavnosti izjav, če ne moremo podati merila, s katerim bi lahko odločili med nasprotujočimi se zrenji razuma. Toda pri moralnih sodbah takšnega merila ne moremo dati. Nekateri moralisti trdijo, da morejo rešiti zadevo z zatrijevanjem "vednosti" glede svojih lastnih moralnih sodb kot pravih. Toda takšne trditve so zgolj psihološko zanimive in ne premorejo niti najmanjšega naznačevanja dokaza veljavnosti katere koli moralne sodbe. Kajti nasprotujoči si moralisti lahko enako dobro "vedo", da je njihovo etično stališče pravilno.

Upoštevač našo uporabo načela, po katerem so sintetične izjave⁵ smiselne le, če jih je mogoče empirično preveriti, je jasno, da bi sprejetje "absolutistične" teorije v etiki spodkopalo celoto našega osrednjega argumenta. In ker smo že zavrnili "naturalistične" teorije, ki jih imamo navadno za edini alternativni "absolutizmu" v etiki, je videti, kakor da smo se znašli v zapletenem položaju. Težavo bomo rešili tako, da bomo kot pravilno obravnavo etičnih trditve prikazali tretjo teorijo, ki je povsem skladna z našim radikalnim empirizmom.

Pričeli bomo s priznanjem, da temeljnih etičnih pojmov ni mogoče analizirati⁶, če ni merila, s katerim bi lahko preverili veljavnost sodb, v katerih nastopajo. Toliko se strinjamo z absolutisti. Toda drugače kakor absolutisti lahko damo razlago tega

dejstva glede etičnih pojmov. Po naših trditvah je razlog nemožnosti njihove analize to, da so ti pojmi zgolj navidezni pojmi. Etični simbol v izjavi ničesar ne doda k njeni dejstveni vsebini.⁷ Če potemtakem rečem nekemu: "Ravnal si napačno, ko si ukradel ta denar," ne zatrdim prav nič več, kakor če bi preprosto rekel: "Ukradel si ta denar." Z dodatkom, da je to dejanje napačno, nisem o njem trdil prav nič več. S tem zgolj jasno izrazim svoje moralno neodobravanje. Je enako, kakor če bi s svojevrstno zgroženim glasom rekel: "Ukradel si ta denar," ali pa bi to zapisal skupaj s posebej izbranim klicajem. Glas ali klicaj ničesar ne dodata k dejanski vsebini stavka. Njun namen je le pokazati, da izražanje govorca izhaja iz nekaterih čustev. (...)

Če zdaj psplošim svojo prejšnjo trditve in rečem: "Ukrasti denar ni prav", sestavim stavek brez dejstvenega pomena – to se pravi stavek, ki ne izraža izjave, ki bi bila lahko bodisi resnična bodisi neresnična. Je, kakor da bi zapisal: "Ukrasti denar!!" – pri čemer oblika in število klicajev kaže, ob ustreznem dogovoru, da je čustvo, ki je bilo izraženo, posebna vrsta moralnega neodobravanja. Nekdo drug se morda ne bi strinjal z menoj glede nepravilnosti kraje, na primer tako, da bi se sprl z menoj glede mojega moralnega čustvovanja. Toda, v pravem pomenu besede mi ne bi mogel nasprotovati. Kajti če rečem, da je neka določena vrsta dejanja prav ali narobe, ne izrečem nikakršne dejstvene trditve, celo trditve o stanju svojega lastnega duha ne. Izražam zgolj neko moralno čustvovanje. (...)

V vseh primerih, za katere bi navadno rekli, da z njimi izrekamo etične sodbe, je funkcija ustrezne etične besede povsem "čustvena". Uporabimo jo za izražanje čustev glede nekih predmetov in ne, da bi izrekli kakršno koli sodbo o njih.

⁵ To so izjave, katerih resničnosti ali neresničnosti ne ugotavljamo zgolj na podlagi pomena izrazov, ki sestavljajo izjavo (takšne izjave so logično resnične). Njihovo resničnostno vrednost ugotavljamo z opazovanjem sveta.

⁶ Za logične pozitiviste to pomeni, da jih ni mogoče prevesti v sinonimne pojme, ki so v epistemološkem in pomenskem smislu bolj temeljni in jasni.

⁷ Ne izrekajo se o dejstvih v svetu.

Prav je omeniti, da etični termini ne služijo le izražanju čustev. Uporabljamo jih tudi za vzbujanje čustev in za sprožanje dejanj. Nekatere zares uporabljamo tako, da stavki, v katerih nastopajo, pridobijo pomen zapovedi. V tem smislu lahko stavek "Tvoja dolžnost je povedati resnico" razumemo kot izraz določene vrste etičnega čustva proti resnicoljubnosti, pa tudi kot izraz zapovedi "Govori resnico." (...)

Zdaj lahko vidimo, zakaj ni mogoče najti merila, s katerim bi določili veljavnost etičnih sodb. Ne zato, ker imajo "absolutno" veljavnost, ki je skrivnostno neodvisna od običajnega čutnega izkustva, temveč ker nimajo nikakršne objektivne veljavnosti. Če neki stavek nič ne zatrjuje, očitno ni smiselno vprašati, ali je tisto, kar pravi, resnično ali neresnično. In videli smo, da stavki, ki zgolj izražajo moralne sodbe, ničesar ne izrekajo. So goli izraz čustev in kot takšni ne sodijo v kategorijo resničnosti in neresničnosti. Nепreverljivi so iz istega razloga, kakor sta nepreverljiva jok zaradi bolečine ali izrečena zapoved – kajti nobeden ne izraža pravih izjav. (...)

Obstaja znamenit argument proti subjektivističnim teorijam, ki mu naša teorija ne uide. Moore je opozoril, da ne bi mogli razpravljati o vrednostnih vprašanjih, če bi bile etične sodbe zgolj trditve o govorečevih čustvih. Vzemimo značilen primer: če bi nekdo rekel, da je varčnost vrлина, nekdo drug pa bi odvrnil, da je pregreha, bi se po tej teoriji ne pričkala drug z drugim. Prvi bi rekel, da odobrava varčnost, drugi pa, da je on ne; in ni razloga, zakaj bi obe trditvi ne mogli biti resnični. Toda Mooru se je zdelo očitno, da smo vendarle v sporu glede vrednostnih vprašanj, iz česar je sklepal, da je oblika subjektivizma, ki jo je obravnaval, neresnična.

Očitno je, da zaključek o nemožnosti razpravljanja o vrednostnih vprašanjih sledi tudi iz naše teorije. Kajti ker po našem mnenju stavki kakor "Varčnost je vrлина" in "Varčnost je pregreha" sploh ne izražajo izjav, očitno ne moremo meniti, da izražajo

jo nezdružljive izjave.⁸ Potemtakem moramo priznati, da če Moorov argument zavrne običajno subjektivistično teorijo, zavrne tudi našo. Vendar mi dejansko zanikamo, da bi zavrnil celo običajno subjektivistično teorijo. Kajti menimo, da dejansko nikdar nismo v sporu glede vrednostnih vprašanj.

To bi bila lahko na prvi pogled zelo paradokсна trditev. Kajti vsekakor smo udeleženi v razpravah, ki jih navadno razumemo kot razprave o vrednostnih vprašanjih. Toda če motrimo stvar поблиže, odkrijemo, da razprava dejansko ni o vrednostnih vprašanjih, temveč o dejstvenih. Kadar se nekdo z nami ne strinja, (...) poskušamo pokazati, da se v tem primeru moti glede dejstev. Dokazujemo, da ne razume subjektovega motiva: ali da je napačno presodil učinke dejanja, ali možne učinke s stališča subjektove vednosti; ali da ni upošteval posebnih okoliščin, v katerih se je znašel subjekt. To počnemo v upanju, da je treba našega nasprotnika zgolj pridobiti za svoje videnje narave empiričnih dejstev, da bi prevzel enako moralno naravnost proti njim kakor mi. In ker so ljudje, s katerimi razpravljamo, običajno tako moralno vzgojeni kakor mi in ker živijo v istem družbenem okolju, so naša pričakovanja navadno upravičena. Toda če se primeri, da je bil nasprotnik podvržen drugačnemu procesu moralnega "pogojevanja" kakor mi, tako da se, tudi če sprejme vsa dejstva, še zmeraj ne strinja z nami glede moralne vrednosti obravnavanih dejanj, tedaj opustimo poskuse prepričevanja z dokazovanjem. Rečemo, da je z njim nemogoče razpravljati, ker ima popačen ali nerazvit moralni čut; kar pomeni zgolj, da uporablja drugačno vrsto vrednot kakor mi. Zdi se nam, da naš sistem vrednot prekaša njegovega, in zato govorimo o njegovem tako poniževalno. Toda ne moremo navesti nikakršnega argumenta, s katerim bi pokazali premoč našega sistema. Kajti naša sodba, da je to tako, je sama vrednostna sodba in potem-takem zunaj območja dokazovanja. Ker dokazovanje odpove, kadar se pričnemo ukvarjati z vrednostnimi vprašanji, drugače kakor je to pri dejstvenih vprašanjih, se

haposled zatečemu h golemu zmerjanju.

⁸ Logično protislovne, torej logično izključujoče se izjave.

intrinsic property is a property such that, if one thing possesses it and another does not, the intrinsic nature of the two things *must* be different. For this is the very thing which we are maintaining to be true of predicates of intrinsic value, while at that same time we say that they are *not* intrinsic properties. Such a definition of 'intrinsic property' would therefore only be possible if, we could say that the necessity there is that, if *x* and *y* possess different intrinsic properties, their nature must be different, is a necessity of a *different kind* from the necessity there is that, if *x* and *y* are of different intrinsic values, their nature must be different, although both necessities are unconditional. And it seems to me possible that this is the true explanation. But, if so, it obviously adds to the difficulty of explaining the meaning of the unconditional 'must', since, in this case, there would be two different meanings of 'must', both unconditional, and yet neither, apparently, identical with the logical 'must'.

III

THE NATURE OF ETHICAL DISAGREEMENT

CHARLES L. STEVENSON

1

When people disagree about the value of something—one saying that it is good or right and another that it is bad or wrong—by what methods of argument or inquiry can their disagreement be resolved? Can it be resolved by the methods of science, or does it require methods of some other kind, or is it open to no rational solution at all?

The question must be clarified before it can be answered. And the word that is particularly in need of clarification, as we shall see, is the word 'disagreement'.

Let us begin by noting that 'disagreement' has two broad senses: In the first sense it refers to what I shall call 'disagreement in belief'. This occurs when Mr A believes *p*, when Mr B believes *not-p*, or something incompatible with *p*, and when neither is content to let the belief of the other remain unchallenged. Thus doctors may disagree in belief about the causes of an illness; and friends may disagree in belief about the exact date on which they last met.

In the second sense the word refers to what I shall call 'disagreement in attitude'. This occurs when Mr A has a favourable attitude to something, when Mr B has an unfavourable or less favourable attitude to it, and when neither is content to let the other's attitude remain unchanged. The term 'attitude' is here used in much the same sense that R. B. Perry uses 'interest'; it designates any psychological disposition of being *for* or *against* something. Hence love and hate are relatively specific kinds of attitudes, as are approval and disapproval, and so on.

This second sense can be illustrated in this way: Two men are planning to have dinner together. One wants to eat at a restaurant that the other

doesn't like. Temporarily, then, the men cannot 'agree' on where to dine. Their argument may be trivial, and perhaps only half serious; but in any case it represents a disagreement *in attitude*. The men have divergent preferences and each is trying to redirect the preference of the other—though normally, of course, each is willing to revise his own preference in the light of what the other may say.

Further examples are readily found. Mrs Smith wishes to cultivate only the 400; Mr Smith is loyal to his old poker-playing friends. They accordingly disagree, in attitude, about whom to invite to their party. The progressive mayor wants modern school buildings and large parks; the older citizens are against these 'newfangled' ways; so they disagree on civic policy. These cases differ from the one about the restaurant only in that the clash of attitudes is more serious and may lead to more vigorous argument.

The difference between the two senses of 'disagreement' is essentially this: the first involves an opposition of beliefs, both of which cannot be true, and the second involves an opposition of attitudes, both of which cannot be satisfied.

Let us apply this distinction to a case that will sharpen it. Mr A believes that most voters will favour a proposed tax and Mr B disagrees with him. The disagreement concerns attitudes—those of the voters—but note that A and B are *not* disagreeing in attitude. Their disagreement is *in belief about* attitudes. It is simply a special kind of disagreement in belief, differing from disagreement in belief about head colds only with regard to subject-matter. It implies not an opposition of the actual attitudes of the speakers but only of their beliefs about certain attitudes. Disagreement *in attitude*, on the other hand, implies that the very attitudes of the speakers are opposed. A and B may have opposed beliefs about attitudes without having opposed attitudes, just as they may have opposed beliefs about head colds without having opposed head colds. Hence we must not, from the fact that an argument is concerned with attitudes, infer that it necessarily involves disagreement *in attitude*.

2

We may now turn more directly to disagreement about values, with particular reference to normative ethics. When people argue about what is good, do they disagree in belief, or do they disagree in attitude? A long tradition of ethical theorists strongly suggest, whether they always intend to or not, that the disagreement is one *in belief*. Naturalistic theorists, for instance, identify an ethical judgement with some sort of scientific state-

ment, and so make normative ethics a branch of science. Now a scientific argument typically exemplifies disagreement in belief, and if an ethical argument is simply a scientific one, then it too exemplifies disagreement in belief. The usual naturalistic theories of ethics that stress attitudes—such as those of Hume, Westermarck, Perry, Richards, and so many others—stress disagreement in belief no less than the rest. They imply, of course, that disagreement about what is good is disagreement *in belief* about attitudes; but we have seen that that is simply one sort of disagreement in belief, and by no means the same as disagreement *in attitude*. Analyses that stress disagreement *in attitude* are extremely rare.

If ethical arguments, as we encounter them in everyday life, involved disagreement in belief exclusively—whether the beliefs were about attitudes or about something else—then I should have no quarrel with the ordinary sort of naturalistic analysis. Normative judgements could be taken as scientific statements and amenable to the usual scientific proof. But a moment's attention will readily show that disagreement in belief has not the exclusive role that theory has so repeatedly ascribed to it. It must be readily granted that ethical arguments usually involve disagreement in belief; but they *also* involve disagreement in attitude. And the conspicuous role of disagreement in attitude is what we usually take, whether we realize it or not, as the distinguishing feature of ethical arguments. For example:

Suppose that the representative of a union urges that the wage level in a given company ought to be higher—that it is only right that the workers receive more pay. The company representative urges in reply that the workers ought to receive no more than they get. Such an argument clearly represents a disagreement in attitude. The union is *for* higher wages; the company is *against* them, and neither is content to let the other's attitude remain unchanged. *In addition* to this disagreement in attitude, of course, the argument may represent no little disagreement in belief. Perhaps the parties disagree about how much the cost of living has risen and how much the workers are suffering under the present wage scale. Or perhaps they disagree about the company's earnings and the extent to which the company could raise wages and still operate at a profit. Like any typical ethical argument, then, this argument involves both disagreement in attitude and disagreement in belief.

It is easy to see, however, that the disagreement in attitude plays a unifying and predominating role in the argument. This is so in two ways:

In the first place, disagreement in attitude determines what beliefs are *relevant* to the argument. Suppose that the company affirms that the wage scale of fifty years ago was far lower than it is now. The union will

immediately urge that this contention, even though true, is irrelevant. And it is irrelevant simply because information about the wage level of fifty years ago, maintained under totally different circumstances, is not likely to affect the present attitudes of either party. To be relevant, any belief that is introduced into the argument must be one that is likely to lead one side or the other to have a different attitude, and so reconcile disagreement in attitude. Attitudes are often functions of beliefs. We often change our attitudes to something when we change our beliefs about it; just as a child ceases to *want* to touch a live coal when he comes to *believe* that it will burn him. Thus in the present argument any beliefs that are at all likely to alter attitudes, such as those about the increasing cost of living or the financial state of the company, will be considered by both sides to be relevant to the argument. Agreement in belief on these matters may lead to agreement in attitude toward the wage scale. But beliefs that are likely to alter the attitudes of neither side will be declared irrelevant. They will have no bearing on the disagreement in attitude, with which both parties are primarily concerned.

In the second place, ethical argument usually terminates when disagreement in attitude terminates, even though a certain amount of disagreement in belief remains. Suppose, for instance, that the company and the union continue to disagree in belief about the increasing cost of living, but that the company, even so, ends by favouring the higher wage scale. The union will then be content to end the argument and will cease to press its point about living costs. It may bring up that point again, in some future argument of the same sort, or in urging the righteousness of its victory to the newspaper columnists; but for the moment the fact that the company has agreed in attitude is sufficient to terminate the argument. On the other hand: suppose that both parties agreed on all beliefs that were introduced into the argument, but even so continued to disagree in attitude. In that case neither party would feel that their dispute had been successfully terminated. They might look for other beliefs that could be introduced into the argument. They might use words to play on each other's emotions. They might agree (in attitude) to submit the case to arbitration, both feeling that a decision, even if strongly adverse to one party or the other, would be preferable to a continued impasse. Or, perhaps, they might abandon hope of settling their dispute by any peaceable means.

In many other cases, of course, men discuss ethical topics without having the strong, uncompromising attitudes that the present example has illustrated. They are often as much concerned with redirecting their own attitudes, in the light of greater knowledge, as with redirecting the attitudes of others. And the attitudes involved are often altruistic rather than

elfish. Yet the above example will serve, so long as that is understood, to suggest the nature of ethical disagreement. Both disagreement in attitude and disagreement in belief are involved, but the former predominates in that (1) it determines what sort of disagreement in belief is relevantly disputed in a given ethical argument, and (2) it determines by its continued presence or its resolution whether or not the argument has been settled. We may see further how intimately the two sorts of disagreement are related: since attitudes are often functions of beliefs, an agreement in belief may lead people, as a matter of psychological fact, to agree in attitude.

3

Having discussed disagreement, we may turn to the broad question that was first mentioned, namely: By what methods of argument or inquiry may disagreement about matters of value be resolved?

It will be obvious that to whatever extent an argument involves disagreement in belief, it is open to the usual methods of the sciences. If these methods are the *only* rational methods for supporting beliefs—as I believe to be so, but cannot now take time to discuss—then scientific methods are the only rational methods for resolving the disagreement in *belief* that arguments about values may include.

But if science is granted an undisputed sway in reconciling beliefs, it does not thereby acquire, without qualification, an undisputed sway in reconciling attitudes. We have seen that arguments about values include disagreement in attitude, no less than disagreement in belief, and that in certain ways the disagreement in attitude predominates. By what methods shall the latter sort of disagreement be resolved?

The methods of science are still available for that purpose, but only in an indirect way. Initially, these methods have only to do with establishing agreement in belief. If they serve further to establish agreement in attitude, that will be due simply to the psychological fact that altered beliefs may cause altered attitudes. Hence scientific methods are conclusive in ending arguments about values only to the extent that their success in obtaining agreement in belief will in turn lead to agreement in attitude.

In other words: the extent to which scientific methods can bring about agreement on values depends on the extent to which a commonly accepted body of scientific beliefs would cause us to have a commonly accepted set of attitudes.

How much is the development of science likely to achieve, then, with regard to values? To what extent *would* common beliefs lead to common attitudes? It is, perhaps, a pardonable enthusiasm to *hope* that science will do everything—to hope that in some rosy future, when all men know the consequences of their acts, they will all have common aspirations and live peaceably in complete moral accord. But if we speak not from our enthusiastic hopes but from our present knowledge, the answer must be far less exciting. We usually *do not know*, at the beginning of any argument about values, whether an agreement in belief, scientifically established, will lead to an agreement in attitude or not. It is logically possible, at least, that two men should continue to disagree in attitude even though they had all their beliefs in common, and even though neither had made any logical or inductive error, or omitted any relevant evidence. Differences in temperament, or in early training, or in social status, might make the men retain different attitudes even though both were possessed of the complete scientific truth. Whether this logical possibility is an empirical likelihood I shall not presume to say; but it is unquestionably a possibility that must not be left out of account.

To say that science can always settle arguments about value, we have seen, is to make this assumption: Agreement in attitude will always be consequent upon complete agreement in belief, and science can always bring about the latter. Taken as purely heuristic, this assumption has its usefulness. It leads people to discover the discrepancies in their beliefs and to prolong enlightening argument that *may* lead, as a matter of fact, from commonly accepted beliefs to commonly accepted attitudes. It leads people to reconcile their attitudes in a rational, permanent way, rather than by rhapsody or exhortation. But the assumption is *nothing more*, for present knowledge, than a heuristic maxim. It is wholly without any proper foundation of probability. I conclude, therefore, that scientific methods cannot be guaranteed the definite role in the so-called normative sciences that they may have in the natural sciences. Apart from a heuristic assumption to the contrary, it is possible that the growth of scientific knowledge may leave many disputes about values permanently unsolved. Should these disputes persist, there are non-rational methods for dealing with them, of course, such as impassioned, moving oratory. But the purely intellectual methods of science, and, indeed, *all* methods of reasoning, may be insufficient to settle disputes about values even though they may greatly help to do so.

For the same reasons I conclude that normative ethics is not a branch of any science. It deliberately deals with a type of disagreement that science deliberately avoids. Ethics is not psychology, for instance; for although

psychologists may, of course, agree or disagree in belief about attitudes, they need not, as psychologists, be concerned with whether they agree or disagree with one another *in* attitude. In so far as normative ethics draws from the sciences, in order to change attitudes via changing people's beliefs, it *draws* from *all* the sciences; but a moralist's peculiar aim—that of *redirecting* attitudes—is a type of activity, rather than knowledge, and falls within no science. Science may study that activity and may help indirectly to forward it; but is not *identical* with that activity.

4

I can take only a brief space to explain why the ethical terms, such as 'good', 'wrong', 'ought', and so on, are so habitually used to deal with disagreement in attitude. On account of their repeated occurrence in emotional situations they have acquired a strong emotive meaning. This emotive meaning makes them serviceable in initiating changes in a hearer's attitudes. Sheer emotive impact is not likely, under many circumstances, to change attitudes in any permanent way; but it *begins* a process that can then be supported by other means.

There is no occasion for saying that the meaning of ethical terms is *purely* emotive, like that of 'alas' or 'hurrah'. We have seen that ethical *arguments* include many expressions of *belief*, and the rough rules of ordinary language permit us to say that some of these beliefs are expressed by an ethical judgement itself. But the beliefs so expressed are by no means always the same. Ethical terms are notable for their ambiguity, and opponents in an argument may use them in different senses. Sometimes this leads to artificial issues, but it usually does not. So long as one person says 'this is good' with emotive praise, and another says 'no, it is bad', with emotive condemnation, a disagreement in attitude is manifest. Whether or not the beliefs that these statements express are logically incompatible may not be discovered until later in the argument; but even if they are actually compatible, disagreement in attitude will be preserved by emotive meaning; and this disagreement, so central to ethics, may lead to an argument that is certainly not artificial in its issues so long as it is taken for what it is.

The many theorists who have refused to identify ethical statements with scientific ones have much to be said in their favour. They have seen that ethical judgements mould or alter attitudes, rather than describe them, and they have seen that ethical judgements can be guaranteed no definitive scientific support. But one need not on that account provide ethics with

any extramundane, *sui generis subject-matter*. The distinguishing features of an ethical judgement can be preserved by a recognition of emotive meaning and disagreement in attitude, rather than by some non-natural quality—and with far greater intelligibility. If a unique subject-matter is *postulated*, as it usually is, to preserve the important distinction between normative ethics and science, it serves no purpose that is not served by the very simple analysis I have here suggested. Unless non-natural qualities can be defended by positive arguments, rather than as an ‘only resort’ from the acknowledged weakness of ordinary forms of naturalism, they would seem nothing more than the invisible shadows cast by emotive meaning.

IV

A MORAL ARGUMENT

R. M. HARE

Ethical theory, which determines the meanings and functions of the moral words, and thus the ‘rules’ of the moral ‘game’, provides only a clarification of the conceptual framework within which moral reasoning takes place; it is therefore, in the required sense, neutral as between different moral opinions. But it is highly relevant to moral reasoning because, as with the rules of a game, there could be no such thing as moral reasoning without this framework, and the framework dictates the form of the reasoning. It follows that naturalism is not the only way of providing for the possibility of moral reasoning; and this may, perhaps, induce those who have espoused naturalism as a way of making moral thought a rational activity to consider other possibilities.

The rules of moral reasoning are, basically, two, corresponding to the two features of moral judgements which I argued for in the first half of this book, prescriptivity and universalizability. When we are trying, in a concrete case, to decide what we ought to do, what we are looking for (as I have already said) is an action to which we can commit ourselves (prescriptivity) but which we are at the same time prepared to accept as exemplifying a principle of action to be prescribed for others in like circumstances (universalizability). If, when we consider some proposed action, we find that, when universalized, it yields prescriptions which we cannot accept, we reject this action as a solution to our moral problem—if we cannot universalize the prescription, it cannot become an ‘ought’.

It is to be noticed that, troublesome as was the problem of moral weakness when we were dealing theoretically with the logical character of the moral concepts, it cannot trouble us here. For if a person is going to reason seriously at all about a moral question, he has to presuppose that the moral concepts are going, in his reasoning, to be used prescriptively. One cannot start a moral argument about a certain proposal on the basis that, whatever