

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

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Since Socrates equated virtue with knowledge and since Plato conceived of the highest reality as the Idea of the Good, speculation on morals has continuously been an occupation of European philosophy. As a matter of fact most of the European moral philosophers are, consciously or unconsciously, Platonists. To borrow a conception of from sociology European "Pattern of culture" is Platonic. Thus positively or negatively Platonism colours all European thought.

But what is Platonism in European moral philosophy? It is the theory that moral predicates refer to objects which are (i) non-sensuous, (ii) non-temporal, therefore, changeless, (iii) non-subjective, i.e., independent of the subject who knows them, (iv) reals which adumbrate in the particular matters of sense and as such determine the character and being of these particulars as particular of their respective classes. Besides these reals are beheld or apprehended by a supersensuous intuition. This theory is also known as "Ethical Realism".

In the literature on European ethical philosophy of the recent past two great European philosophers of Twentieth Century, viz., Prof. G.E. Moor of Great Britain and Prof. N.Hartmann of Germany propounded two different theories of Ethical Realism both of which subscribe to Platonism. Nevertheless their differences are no less striking than their unanimity and this clearly points to the danger that a critical study which inadvertently omits to take into account significant differences will get the

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dead wood and miss the tree⁹. Every genius starts with the common pattern but introduces some novelty of his ~~w~~ own¹⁰. Hence he does not give us the same thing that he received; ~~and~~ and the existence of the living and appreciative mind of the critic is authenticated by his capacity to discern the novel and the uncommon which almost imperceptibly shade off into the common in the work of a genius¹¹. No critic is worth the name if he fails to achieve this¹².

In this work the author has undertaken a critical and comparative study of the two varieties of Ethical Realism as propounded by Prof. G.E. Moore and Prof. N. Hartmann respectively. The author's treatment of the theme throughout the work is analytical and not historical¹³. However, ~~s~~ as complete avoidance of historical treatment is not possible no pain is spared to keep such treatment within its legitimate bounds. The dangers that constantly accompany a critical and comparative study are, firstly, the tendency to read, consciously or unconsciously, the predominant ideas of one writer into the other and, secondly, the tendency to slur over or underestimate the differences and distinctions of the thoughts of the writers compared¹⁴. The author has endeavoured to take as much care as possible to guard against such illicit impositions and unjustifiable pass-overs with what success it is upto the readers to judge¹⁵.

Two criticisms which may be levelled against this work are (i) too much use of quotations and (ii) exclusion of some ethical theories which apparently subscribe to Ethical Realism¹⁶. As regards the first charge the author like to point out that it is safe to speak in the writers lest the charge of misinterpretation or distortion be made. To the second charge the humble reply of the author is that the works which, in the opinion of the author,

are not landmarks as enunciating new points of view in the literature on Ethical Realism of Twentieth Century have naturally been left out.

The scheme of pattern of the present work is as follows :- The first chapter is devoted to a faithful exposition, in intelligible terms, of the theory of moral value as propounded by Prof. N. Hartmann particularly bringing into limelight, amongst others, such key contentions as 'the ideal Ought-to-be belongs to the essence of value', 'the impossibility of being realized does in no way militate against the Ideal Ought-to-be', 'though indissolubly linked together, yet value and Ideal Ought-to-be are not identical', 'every value has a certain existence for itself, a superiority over the relativeness of the whole sphere'. In the second chapter an attempt has been made to evaluate critically Hartmann's theory of moral value. The third chapter is devoted to a critical and comparative appraisal of Hartmann's theory of human freedom - a topic which, in the humble opinion of the author, deserves a separate chapter for a thorough treatment. In the fourth chapter an exposition of the moral theory of Prof. G.E. Moore has been made bringing to the focus particularly such key concepts as 'Good' is indefinable, no part can be cause of whole because it cannot be the cause of itself, etc. The fifth chapter is devoted entirely to a critical appraisal of Moor's theory. In the sixth chapter an attempt has been made to institute a comparison and a contrast of the moral theories of Moor and Hartmann in order to depict in bold relief the points of agreement and divergence of these two great philosophers of Twentieth Century. In the last chapter the author humbly endeavours to enunciate his own views regarding the significance of moral life.

The author does not subscribe to Ethical Realism and his reasons for not subscribing to Ethical Realism will be found in second, fifth and seventh chapters. Whether these reasons are convincingly adequate or not is upto the reader to judge. In the last chapter the author tried to show that the problems of moral value ought to be tackled for solution from four different points of view, viz., the logical; the Epistemological; the Empirical or Factual, and the Metaphysical standpoints. Whether the conclusions reached by the author are logically cogent and acceptable is a question which the reader is the best judge to answer.