

is the function of the *Übermensch* to create new values. The latter appears to be vital, but it entails an essential and problematic indeterminacy in the conception.

The doctrine of eternal recurrence was of more importance to Nietzsche. The underlying conception is of the world repeating itself endlessly in identical cycles (the idea is first introduced in Nietzsche 1882 but it is exploited more fully in the immediately following Nietzsche 1883–5). On the most plausible interpretation, the function of this notion is to graphically depict the maximally affirmative attitude to this world and oneself. The maximally affirmative attitude incorporates a love of life extending not only to its joys and good fortune, but also to its pains and misfortunes. It embraces a love of all the aspects of life to the extent of eagerly welcoming their eternal recurrence in their entirety. This is the Dionysian affirmation of life and constitutes Nietzsche's principal ideal. His popular audience has largely been drawn by such positive conceptions, whereas his academic audience has typically been more impressed with his destructive critiques.

THE NEW REALISM IN ETHICS

CHRISTIAN PILLER

In the period from 1870 to 1914 there was a shift within moral philosophy towards meta-ethical concerns. Metaethics and its guiding idea that the first task in moral philosophy is an enquiry into the semantics of moral discourse and into its ontological foundations, though by no means an invention of twentieth-century philosophy, has become its most characteristic feature.

The history of twentieth-century ethics starts in Cambridge, where in 1903 G. E. Moore published *Principia Ethica*. It rarely happens, as it did with *Principia Ethica*, that one book accounts for so many of the later developments in a field. It was Moore's declared intention to break sharply with the philosophical tradition. According to him, even the most prominent figures in the history of moral philosophy, for example, Aristotle, Kant, and Mill, have misunderstood the foundations of ethics. Too late to be of any influence on *Principia Ethica*, Moore thinks he has discovered a soul-mate. In the Preface to the first edition of *Principia Ethica* Moore writes: 'When this book had been completed, I found, in Brentano's *Origins of the Knowledge of Right and Wrong* opinions far more resembling my own, than those of any other ethical writer with whom I am acquainted' (Moore 1903 [1993a: 36]).

Brentano and Moore both try to provide a philosophical foundation of ethical knowledge that can withstand the undermining efforts of relativism and subjectivism. In this sense they are both realists. They also share the methodological conviction that only meta-ethical investigations can provide solid foundations for morality. Brentano and Moore agree in their philosophical aims; their arguments, however, lead them through quite different territories: ontology and the nature of moral properties in Moore's case, psychology and the nature of moral thinking in Brentano's case.

I. G. E. MOORE

According to Moore, moral philosophy has to answer three questions: which actions ought we to perform? Which things are good in themselves? And, what

is it to be good? The answers to these questions depend on each other. First, we can only find out what we ought to do once we know which things are good. And, secondly, our knowledge of what is good can only be secured by knowing what it is to be good. The first statement expresses Moore's commitment to a consequentialist moral theory, which holds that whether some action is morally right or wrong depends on the value of the consequences this action brings about. The second statement expresses Moore's view about the priority of meta-ethics. In order to have a philosophically sound view of what things are good, we need to know what it is to be good, or – what Moore regarded as equivalent – we need to know how 'good' is to be defined.

What then is it to be good? Moore's answer is brief. 'If I am asked "What is good?" my answer is that good is good, and that is the end of the matter. Or, if I am asked "How is good to be defined?" my answer is that it cannot be defined, and that is all I have to say about it' (1903a [1993: 58]).

In *Principia Ethica* Moore's first argumentative aim is to establish the indefinability of goodness. If 'good' is indefinable, then goodness will have to be a simple property, because, if it were complex, it could be defined by giving its constituents. Simplicity, however, is not a sufficient ontological match for indefinability. The same simple property could, in principle, be picked out by two different expressions, and Moore adds a further claim: the property of being good is unique. This idea we find already in Moore's motto for *Principia Ethica*: 'Everything is what it is and not another thing.'

With his famous open-question argument Moore tries to establish the indefinability of goodness. Considering the idea that being good is nothing but being pleasant, Moore writes: 'Whoever will attentively consider with himself what is actually before his mind when he asks the question "Is pleasure (or whatever it may be) after all good?" can easily satisfy himself that he is not merely wondering whether pleasure is pleasant' (1903a [1993: 68]). The question 'Is something that is pleasant, thereby good?' is an open question; the question 'Is something that is pleasant, thereby pleasant?' is not open, its answer is trivial. Therefore, Moore reasons, being good can neither be defined nor identified with being pleasant.

Could not someone who endorses an identification of goodness in some other way simply deny that the relevant question really is open? Although no one will deny that to some people it seems to be an open question, this fact could only establish that it is an open question if the identity of properties or notions is revealed to a thinker by simply thinking them. This assumption – an assumption which Moore thinks can rightly be made – is an important premise in the open-question argument. If Moore is right, a coherent doubt concerning the correctness of any analysis will by itself be sufficient for refuting

it. Consequently, only trivial analyses could be correct. This problem has become known as 'the paradox of analysis'.

Moore became unhappy with the way in which he developed his ideas in *Principia Ethica*. In his draft for a preface to the second edition, written in 1921/2, he says that 'the book as it stands, is full of mistakes and confusions'; nevertheless, it aims to express 'a proposition of cardinal importance' which he still regards as true (1903a [1993: 2ff.]). Moore came to realise that he had chosen the wrong starting point. His concern was always ontological. He concentrated on the indefinability of goodness to say something about the nature of what it is to be good. The indefinability thesis, however, fails to establish the intended conclusion, which is that goodness is a unique property. We can think of goodness in different ways. One can find the recognition of this point already in *Principia Ethica*: 'Whenever he thinks of "intrinsic value", or "intrinsic worth", or says that a thing "ought to exist", he has before his mind the unique object – the unique property of things – which I mean by "good"' (1903a [1993: 68]). Moore regards ethics as autonomous, a view shared by Sidgwick and Kant among others. What distinguishes Moore from Sidgwick and Kant is that Moore tries to secure the autonomy of ethics ontologically: its most fundamental object, the property of being good, is unique. 'What I think I really meant is that it [the property of being good] is very different from all natural and metaphysical properties; and this I still think is true' (1903a [1993: 15]).

All things that are good might also have other properties in common. They might, for example, be all objects of a supersensible will or, if they are experiences, they might all be pleasant. Still, it would be a mistake to identify goodness with any of these properties, a mistake Moore sees being committed by, amongst others, Aristotle, Bentham, Kant, and Mill: 'far too many philosophers have thought that when they named those other properties they were actually defining good; that these properties, in fact, were simply not 'other', but absolutely and entirely the same with goodness. This view I propose to call the "naturalistic fallacy"' (1903a [1993: 62]).

Moore's claim that there is naturalistic fallacy is not an argument for but rather an expression of his idea that goodness is unique. The problem with the uniqueness thesis – a problem Moore is well aware of in his later writings – is how to distinguish it from a tautology, like 'everything is what it is' or 'good is good and that is the end of the matter'. What Moore tells us about goodness is that it is neither a natural nor a metaphysical property, 'Non-naturalism' has become the standard label for Moore's position. A substantial account of the non-natural would give substance to Moore's uniqueness thesis.

In his writings we can distinguish four attempts to characterise the non-natural. (1) A non-natural property is not detachable. 'It is immediately obvious

that when we see a thing to be good, its goodness is not a property which we can take up in our hands, or separate from it even by the most delicate scientific instruments, and transfer to something else' (1903a [1993: 175]). The idea that, in contrast to non-natural properties, natural properties could exist in time by themselves is part of Moore's early metaphysics, which he rejected later on. (2) True ascriptions of a non-natural property do not entail any ontological commitment to that which has these properties. '... all truths of the form "This is good in itself" are logically independent of any truth about what exists' (Moore 1903b: 116.) (3) A non-natural property is a derivative or, in terms of contemporary philosophy, a supervenient property. 'It is *impossible*', Moore writes, 'that of two exactly similar things one should possess it [intrinsic value] and the other not, or that one should possess it in one degree, and the other in a different one' (Moore 1922 [1993a: 287]). This attempt to capture the non-natural is most prominent in Moore's writings (and within the framework of his rejected early metaphysics the suggestion made in (1) also points in this direction). Moore's struggle to give a clear account of supervenience is evident in the draft of the Preface (Moore 1903a [1993: 1–27]), in 'The Conception of Intrinsic Value' (1922), as well as in his 'Replies to My Critics' (1942) where he says: 'It is true, indeed, that I should have never thought of suggesting that goodness was "non-natural", unless I had supposed it was "derivative" in the sense that, whenever a thing is good (in the sense in question) its goodness (in Mr. Broad's words) "depends on the presence of certain non-ethical characteristics" possessed by the thing in question' (Moore 1942: 588). If it is indeed Moore's considered view that the mark of the evaluative is its supervenience on the natural, then his project to distinguish the evaluative from the natural domain via supervenience alone must look doubtful, because why should what supervenes on the natural be itself non-natural? (4) A non-natural property is intrinsically normative. We have seen that in *Principia Ethica* Moore treats 'ought to exist' as a synonym for 'being good', and so it has been suggested that one should analyse Moore's non-natural goodness in terms of what we ought or have reason to do. Moore, however, rejects such a proposal. Even if goodness gives us, provided that we are in the appropriate circumstances, a reason to act and even if, furthermore, all reasons for acting are grounded in goodness, the evaluative, Moore insists, cannot be reduced to the deontic: 'Is it not possible to *think* that a thing is intrinsically good without thinking that the fact that an action within our power would produce it would be a reason for supposing that we ought to do that action? It certainly seems as if we can; and this seems to me to be a *good*, even if not *conclusive*, reason for supposing that the two functions ['x is good' and 'the fact that we can produce x is a reason for doing so'], even though

logically equivalent, are *not* identical' (Moore 1942: 599). Moore's rejection of an account of goodness in terms of reasons could also be seen as an expression of his commitment to a consequentialist moral theory, a view that requires an independent notion of goodness.

Trying to explain the non-natural was Moore's way of giving substance to his thesis that goodness is unique. But the fact that a property is unique doesn't seem to require any specific ontological placement. Surely some properties that are unique and simple, yellow for example, will belong to the natural properties. Thus, goodness need not be non-natural in order to be unique and simple. Moore agrees: 'Even if it [being good] were a natural object, that would not alter the nature of the [naturalistic] fallacy nor diminish its importance a whit' (Moore 1903a [1993: 65]). If we left accounts of the non-natural behind, uniqueness would simply amount to non-reducibility.

Once we know what it is to be good, how can we find out which things are good? Moore thinks that here we need to rely on our intuitions. No commitment to any strange faculty that would infallibly put us in touch with the evaluative domain is thereby implied. By talking about intuitions, Moore says, 'I mean *merely* to assert that they are incapable of proof' (Moore 1903a [1993: 36]). The attempt to distinguish between things good in themselves on the one hand and instrumental goods on the other leads Moore to the test of absolute isolation when considering whether something is good in itself: 'In order to arrive at a correct decision on... this question [what things have intrinsic value], it is necessary to consider what things are such that, if they existed *by themselves*, in absolute isolation, we should yet judge their existence to be good (Moore 1903a [1993: 236]). This account not only excludes instrumental goods from those things good in themselves, it also falsifies any relational account of goodness, like the suggestion that something is good if it is what most agents most deeply want. Thus, it has to be seen as an account of intrinsic goodness that works under the assumption that being good is the simple property as Moore conceived it. His view that ethical egoism, the view that for everyone one's own well being is one's highest good, is inconsistent, also arises from this view about what it is to be good. For Moore, the egoist's central notion 'goodness-for-someone' has to be explained, contrary to the egoist's intentions, by Moore's notion of simple or absolute goodness.

Applying the isolation test, Moore claims that 'by far the most valuable things, which we know or can imagine, are certain states of consciousness, which may roughly be described as the pleasures of human intercourse and the enjoyment of beautiful objects' (Moore 1903a [1993: 237]). Beautiful objects are good by themselves, even if never experienced, but when they are, the unity of

experience and beauty is far more valuable than its parts, thereby illustrating Moore's doctrine of organic unities, according to which the value of a whole is not simply the sum of the value of its parts.

Our reasons for doing something are grounded in the value of what will be brought about by our actions. 'The only possible reason that can justify any action is that by it the greatest possible amount of what is good absolutely should be realized' (Moore 1903a [1993: 153]). Moore is not an intuitionist about what we ought to do. Uncertainty concerning the consequences of our actions, as well as the fact that value attaches to organic unities, makes it difficult to know what our duties are. Thus, Moore did not develop a catalogue of duties and, strictly speaking, his practical ethics cannot go beyond the simple advice to do whatever is best.

2. FRANZ BRENTANO (1838–1917)

Brentano was appointed professor of philosophy in Vienna in 1874 where he taught for twenty years. His main works in moral philosophy are *The Origin of Our Knowledge of Right and Wrong* (1889) and *The Foundation and Construction of Ethics* (1952), which is based on lecture notes Brentano used for his course on practical philosophy given at the University of Vienna between 1876 and 1879. His moral philosophy, though, is not confined to these writings because it arises from views developed in his major work *Psychology from an Empirical Standpoint* (1874).

Brentano shares Moore's view that ethics is both autonomous and objective. 'Is there such a thing as moral truth taught by nature itself and independent of ecclesiastical, political, and every kind of social authority? Is there a moral law that is natural in the sense of being universally and incontestably valid – valid for men at all places and all times – and are we capable of knowing that there is such a law? My answer is emphatically affirmative' (Brentano 1889 [1969: 6]). Whereas Moore tried to secure the autonomy and objectivity of ethics on an ontological level, Brentano's approach is psychological. But psychological in the special sense of belonging to what Brentano calls 'descriptive psychology', the aim of which is an analysis of the conceptual framework of the mental. 'To understand the true source of our ethical knowledge, we must consider the results of recent investigations in the area of descriptive psychology' (1889 [1969: 11]).

In opposition to Kant, who distinguishes between thinking, feeling, and willing as the three fundamental classes of mental phenomena, Brentano's three-fold distinction separates the intellectual phenomena into the class of presentations and the class of judgements and subsumes feeling and willing under the

phenomena of love and hate. Presentations are the fundamental category of all mental phenomena. Their characteristic feature is their *intentionality*. In every mental activity the mind is related to an object: every thinking is a thinking of something (see Brentano 1874 [1995: 88–91]). Judgements are not simply combinations of presentations. In judging we take a stand in regard to the existence of the object of our presentation. A judgement is a genuine mental act in which what we think of is either accepted as existing or rejected (and not both).

This 'polarity' of judgements allows us to introduce a notion of correctness. If one person accepts something that another rejects only one of them can be correct. Mainly for epistemological reasons, Brentano came to reject a correspondence theory of correctness. We could not find out whether a judgement is correct if, in order to do so, we had to compare our beliefs with facts in themselves and see whether they correspond to each other. But Brentano did not embrace a coherence theory of truth either. He thinks that as an empiricist he has to provide an account of correctness that is based on our experiences. In some cases, he holds, we can experience the correctness of our own judgement. If I am thinking of something, I know with certainty that I am thinking of something. In this sense, judgements of inner perception are immediately 'evident'. If I judge with evidence, Brentano argues, then I experience myself as judging correctly. On the basis of this notion of evidence, Brentano introduces the wider notion of truth. A judgement concerning some object O is true if an evident judger of O – God, for example – would accept O.

The third class of mental phenomena, the phenomena of love and hate, share with judgements the feature that in loving or hating something we take a stand in regard to something we think about. Because the phenomena of love and hate exhibit polarity, we can introduce a notion of correct and incorrect love and hate, and the notion of correctness as it applies to love and hate is introduced in an analogous way to the notion of a correct judgement. In some cases of loving or hating our love or hate is experienced as being correct. 'We know with immediate evidence that certain of our attitudes are correct. And so we are able to compare the objects of these various attitudes and thus to arrive at the general concept of a correct emotion' (Brentano 1966: 294).

Moore and Brentano share the philosophical aim of showing that morality is an objective matter. They also agree on the structure of ethics. Both are consequentialists and both think that meta-ethics is fundamental: 'How are we to go about establishing the concept of the good? This is the first and most urgent question, and everything depends on its being answered' (Brentano 1952 [1973: 122]). But on the very central issue, the issue of what it is to be good, Brentano departs from Moore. It is a general feature of Brentano's philosophy to explain apparently ontological distinctions in psychological terms. For example,

because rejecting something is a different mental act from accepting something, one will not need negative correlates to whatever is part of one's ontology. Similarly, modal notions are explained in terms of distinct kinds of judgements. When thinking of an object alone gives rise to our rejection of it, we reject it apodictically, and that explains, according to Brentano, its impossibility. To be true, for Brentano, is to be accepted by an evident judge, and a similar move explains what it is to be good. Whereas Moore would say that something is rightly loved because it is good, Brentano reverses the order of explanation. Something is good because it can be loved with a love that is correct. 'We have arrived at the source of our concepts of the good and the bad, along with that of our concepts of the true and the false. We call a thing true when the affirmation relating to it is correct. We call a thing good when the love relating to it is correct' (Brentano 1889 [1969: 18]). There is no property of being good that some things have and others do not and whose unique ontological status would give ethics its genuine subject matter. The basic subject matter of ethics is the correctness of a genuine intentional relation, the relation of loving or hating something. This account solves a problem any objectivist has to face. If Brentano is right and to be good is to be loved correctly, then the motivational aspect of being good is built into its analysis: the good moves us because what is good is loved. Whereas if goodness is a non-natural property, more needs to be said as to why we should care about it.

Which things are loved correctly? Brentano mentions the love of knowledge and insight, the preference of joy over sadness (unless it is joy in the bad), and the love of the correctness of our emotional attitudes, i.e. correctly loving something is itself an object of correct love. Like Moore, Brentano argues against classical hedonism, allowing for a multiplicity of goods. Right action is determined by the value that these actions promise to bring about. 'Thus one must consider not only oneself, but also one's family, the city, the state, every living thing upon the earth, and one must consider not only the immediate present but also the distant future. All this follows from the principle of the summation of good. To further the good throughout this great whole as far as possible – this is clearly the correct end in life, and all our actions should be centred around it' (Brentano 1889 [1969: 32]).

Brentano's moral philosophy is built on his analogy between judgements and the phenomena of love and hate. But judgements are not strictly parallel to love and hate. Whereas truth, arguably, does not admit of degrees, goodness definitely does. Brentano argues that the act of preferring is the psychological basis of the being-better-than relation. As our knowledge of what is good comes from our experience of correct love, so does our knowledge of what is better come from our experience of correct preference. But the fact that goodness comes in degrees is not the only disanalogy. The crucial step, the step from the

polarity of mental phenomena to a notion of correctness, seems to exhibit a further divergence. Polarity implies that what we accept we cannot, at the same time, reject; that what we love we cannot, at the same time, hate. This point alone is not sufficient for a notion of correctness, which requires also that if one person accepts (loves) something and another rejects (hates) it, only one of them will have judged (loved) correctly. It is generally agreed that in the case of judgements a general notion of correctness applies, though Brentano, understanding truth in psychological terms, cannot explain why it does by any appeal to a correspondence between what is judged and what is the case. In the case of love and hate a general notion of correctness seems more dubious. If our attitudes toward some food diverge, why should my love of it be correct? Brentano did indeed make room for such cases: 'So far as the feelings about sense qualities are concerned, we might say that these things are a matter of taste, and "De gustibus non est disputandum"' (Brentano 1889 [1969: 22]). But then Brentano has also to admit that the polarity of the phenomena of love and hate does not in all cases give rise to a notion of correctness. This finds no parallel in the case of judgements and thus puts some pressure on Brentano's analogy between judgements and the phenomena of love and hate.

3. FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Moore and Brentano advance different versions of an objective view of morality. The following decades see the emergence of new forms of subjectivism (Ralph Barton Perry) and relativism (Edvard Westermarck) as well as the rise of non-cognitivism (Axel Hagerström, A. J. Ayer). We also see the development of a distinctive moral philosophy within American pragmatism which is naturalistic and which sees ethics, by analogy with the natural sciences, as an on-going process of experiment and adjustment. The roots of this pragmatist position go back to William James, who starts his programmatic essay 'The Moral Philosopher and the Moral Life' (1891) with the claim 'that there is no such thing possible as an ethical philosophy dogmatically made up in advance' (p. 184). Moral concepts have their source in the interests, needs, and desires of living beings. The only reason why something ought to be the case is that someone wants it to be the case. Moral problems arise because interests and needs can come into conflict. As a solution to conflict James suggests that one 'invent some manner of realizing your own ideals which will also satisfy the alien demands' (p. 205). John Dewey, another leading pragmatist, agrees that such a harmonisation of interests is what the morally educated person will aim for. Also in agreement with James, Dewey emphasises the exclusive means-end character of all practical deliberation. There is no metaphysical justification of something as an ultimate standard; everything, even our evaluations themselves, Dewey thinks, has to be

judged empirically by the consequences it has in regard to our interests and needs. What is regarded as a final standard in one situation can be put into question in another. Dewey's instrumentalism leads to an anti-foundationalist and holistic picture of practical justification.

Returning to the legacy of Moore and Brentano, the most important development in England is the emergence of the 'intuitionist' school based in Oxford, of which Harold Prichard and Sir David Ross were the most prominent members. While broadly agreeing with Moore on meta-ethics, these philosophers differed sharply from him on ethical theory (see chapter 58 for an account of their work). Much more similar to Moore's ethical theory is the position advanced by Hastings Rashdall in *The Theory of Good and Evil* (1905). Rashdall had been a student of Sidgwick, and, like Moore, rejected Sidgwick's hedonism while preserving his consequentialist account of morality in the context of a plurality of goods. Rashdall coined the term 'ideal utilitarianism' to describe the resulting position and the term has been subsequently applied to Moore.

Among Brentano's students, Alexius Meinong and Christian von Ehrenfels made substantial contributions to value theory. Alexius Meinong's (1853–1920) views on the nature of value developed and changed substantially over his lifetime. He left the psychologistic views of *Psychologisch-Ethische Untersuchungen zur Werttheorie* (*Psychological-Ethical Investigations in the Theory of Value*, 1894) behind and emphasised the objectivity of values in his later works 'Über emotionale Präsentation' ('On Emotional Presentations', 1917) and *Zur Grundlegung der allgemeinen Werttheorie* (*The Foundation of a General Theory of Value*, 1923). His writings on value theory are unified by the same methodological approach that we have found in Brentano. In order to understand what values are we have to look at how values are manifested in our experience. The basis of value theory is an analysis of value experience which itself has to be fitted into a general conceptual framework of mental phenomena. Following Kazimir Twardowski's *Zur Lehre vom Inhalt und Gegenstand der Vorstellungen* (*On the Content and Object of Presentations*, 1894 [1977]), Meinong distinguishes between the act, content, and object of mental phenomena. The object of a thought need not be real – we can think of golden mountains without there being such things – but the content as part of our presentation is always real. The distinction between the mental act, its content, and its object is not limited to the class of presentations. We also find it in judgements, and, Meinong suggests, in feelings and desires.

Feelings are the primary location at which values manifest themselves. Suppose someone expresses a feeling by saying that the sky is especially beautiful today. This feeling presupposes the judgement that the sky with its natural qualities, like its blueness and brightness, exists. But the feeling also makes us aware of its beauty. The feeling, Meinong would say, has a content by which it refers

to an object which in this case is the sky's beauty. We need the category of content to describe mental phenomena and because content is by its nature representational, the assumption that feelings have content leads to the acceptance of values as their referential objects. 'When I say, "The sky is blue," and then say, "The sky is beautiful," a property is attributed to the sky in either case. In the second case a feeling participates in the apprehension of the property, as, in the first case, an idea does. And it is natural to let the feeling be the presentative factor in the second case, as an idea is always taken to be in the first case' (1917 [1972: 28f.]).

If we think of a golden mountain we think of something physical that is not real; the object of our thought is a physical mountain that is not real, it is not a real mental image of a golden mountain. This leads Meinong to the view, famously criticised by Russell, that there are things, like golden mountains and round squares, that do not, or even cannot, exist. The relevance of this point for moral philosophy is the following: to show that there is an object of feeling, a 'dignitative', does not establish their existence. Although Meinong has provided a place for objective values as what our feelings refer to, he recognises that he has not yet shown that these objects exist or are real. He is sceptical about Brentano's view that immediate evidence can secure the objectivity of value statements. In the end, Meinong appeals to common sense. 'For anyone who considers the facts, and is not merely making deductions from ready-made theories, cannot well deny that justice, gratitude, and benevolence carry the guarantee of their worth in themselves in a way in which their opposites not only lack such a guarantee but also carry a guarantee to the contrary' (1917 [1972: 109]).

Christian von Ehrenfels (1859–1932), who today is best remembered for inaugurating Gestalt psychology with his essay 'Über "Gestaltqualitäten"' ('On "Gestalt qualities"', 1890), was a student of both Brentano and Meinong. The relationship with Meinong was one of acknowledged mutual influence, illustrated in their extensive debate about the analysis of feelings and desires and the relations that hold between them. The underlying view that a theory of value will be based on an analysis of psychological phenomena is, as we have seen, central to all philosophers of the Brentano school. For Meinong, feelings acquaint us with values, whereas Ehrenfels thought that desires are the phenomena most closely connected with value. In contrast to Meinong's later philosophy, Ehrenfels remained sceptical of any objective account of values. Desiring, according to Ehrenfels, is not based on the recognition of some essence of things called 'value', rather we take things to be valuable because we desire them. 'Value is a relation between an object and a subject which expresses that the subject either actually desires the object or would desire it if the subject were not already convinced of its existence' (Ehrenfels 1897 [1982: 261]).

Ehrenfels rejected Brentano's idea that some of our emotional attitudes are experienced as correct. The agreement in our evaluation of knowledge, for example, can be explained, without recourse to evident emotions, simply by the general usefulness of knowledge for anyone, whatever one's aims are. The ideas of the Austrian school of economics (Menger, Böhm-Bawerk, von Wieser) were another source of inspirations for Ehrenfels. The law of marginal utility, Ehrenfels argues, applies beyond the domain of economic goods. Take for example the different attitudes to motivational dispositions like being altruistic and being mainly concerned about one's own good. Without self-interest, Ehrenfels argues, the human race could not exist. Thus, the effects of altruism and self-interest on the common good alone cannot explain why we hold the one in much higher esteem than the other. The true explanation has to focus on a comparison of the rarity of the two dispositions. Altruism is valued higher because the demand for it exceeds its supply. If values are subjective, they change with our concerns and interests. Ehrenfels's analysis of the mechanisms of these changes, from which intrinsic values, things desired for their own sake, are of course not exempted, is influenced by Darwinian ideas. He talks about the struggle for existence among values and sees the changes of values as an aspect of general evolutionary processes.

INDIVIDUALISM VS. COLLECTIVISM

PETER NICHOLSON

INTRODUCTION

In Britain, the period from 1870 to 1914 was one of a general movement, both in politics and in philosophical reflection on it, from individualism to collectivism (Collini 1979: ch. 1; Gaus 1983: ch. 1; Greenleaf 1983; Bellamy 1992: ch. 1). These are loose and disputed terms (M. Taylor 1996). Roughly, individualism meant leaving the individual as free as possible to pursue his own interests as he saw fit, society being simply a collection of individuals and a means to their ends. Collectivism was more or less the opposite, holding that individuals are not isolated atoms but social beings with shared interests, and that society may act through the state to promote them. Collectivism ranged in degree from occasional government action to effect particular social reforms, to state socialism's control of the means of production and restructuring of society.

The dominant political theory, Liberalism, adapted itself to the new political conditions. Earlier in the nineteenth century, Liberalism had sought to maximise individual freedom and assumed that this entailed minimising state action. It restricted state action to what was unavoidable because all state action was by its very nature an interference with individual liberty and therefore intrinsically bad, and also bad in its effects, especially by reducing individuals' self-reliance. But later many Liberals accepted state action. They realised that for most individuals freedom from interference was worthless because they lacked the means to utilise it. State action could secure those means, and thus was not necessarily opposed to individual liberty.

J. S. Mill was an important background figure. He had begun the shift from individualism by focusing on a rich idea of 'individuality' instead of self-interest understood in bare material and hedonist terms, though he did not sufficiently emphasise its social nature (Mill 1859). He had already allowed that there should be exceptions to the general rule of *laissez-faire*, giving the state an interventionist role on a small scale and within strict limits set by an inviolable sphere of individual liberty (Mill 1848: Bk V, ch. xi). Mill came to envisage a larger role

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