GPH S3 02 (M)

Ethics

SEMESTER- III

PHILOSOPHY

BLOCK- 2

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BACHELOR OF ARTS
ETHICS
BLOCK-2
DETAILED SYLLABUS

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What is emotivist analysis of moral language or emotivism, Ayer's emotivism, Ayer and the principle of verification, Evaluating Ayer's emotivism, Stevenson's emotivism, Emotivism and moral disagreement?

BLOCK INTRODUCTION :

This course consists of two blocks.

The previous block, i.e. the first block consists of eight units. This is the second block. The second block consists of seven units. The ninth unit is "Freedom and Determination". After going through this unit, you will be able to know the meaning of freedom and determinism. You will be able to explain freedom and determinism in relation to each other.

The tenth unit is 'Deontological Ethics and Teleological Ethics'. After going through this unit you will be able to know about four main areas in ethical study and will be able to distinguish between deontological and teleological ethics.

The eleventh unit is 'Purusartha'. This unit consists of the definition of Purusartha and detail analysis of artha, kama, dharma and Moksa.

The twelfth unit is 'Theories of Punishment'. After going through this unit you will be able to describe the concept of crime and punishment and will be able to elaborate the deterrent, reformative and retributive theory of punishment

The thirteenth unit is Meta-Ethics: Its Nature and Distinction from Normative Ethics'. This unit deals with the answer to the question like what is meta-ethics and how is it different from normative ethics.

The fourteenth unit is 'Moore: Indefinability of Good'. This unit will discuss the Moore criticisms of 'ethical naturalism 'and will explain 'naturalistic fallacy' and why good is indefinable.

The fifteenth unit of this block is 'Emotivist Analysis of Moral Language'. After going through this unit one will know the concept of emotivist analysis of moral language and what emotivism is.

While going through this course you will come across some boxes which are put on the left side or right side of the text. These boxes will give us the meanings of some words and concepts within the text. Apart from this, there will be some broad and short questions included under Activity and Check Your Progress in every unit. Activities will increase our thinking capacity because questions put in Activity are not directly derived from the text. But answers to the short questions are put in the section Answers to Check Your Progress. Besides, there are some text-related questions which are put in Model Questions. These questions will help you in selecting and mastering probable topics for the examination so that you can prepare for the examination with confidence.

UNIT 9 : FREEDOM AND DETERMINISM

UNIT STRUCTURE

9.1 Learning Objectives
9.2 Introduction
9.3 Determinism: Its Meaning
9.4 Arguments in Support of Determinism
9.5 What is Freedom or Free Will
9.6 Arguments In Support of Free Will
9.7 Brief Note On Predestination, Fatalism and Scientific Determinis
9.8 The Case Of Freedom and Determinism
9.9 Let Us Sum Up
9.10 Further Reading
9.11 Answers to Check Your Progress
9.12 Model Questions

9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- Learn about the meaning of Determinism
- Explain the arguments supporting Determinism
- Define Freedom
- Discuss Indeterminism or Self-determinism
- Explain Freedom and Determinism in relation to each other

9.2 INTRODUCTION

The problem of free will, which is whether human beings are free to act on their own or whether their will is determined, is one among the oldest of moral questions. The moralists and the guardians of law support free will, whereas the behavioural scientists argue that free will is impossible due to scientific reasons. The interest in the problem is generated by the fact that one group insists that the exercise of free will is inconsistent with scientific principles, while the other group holds that morality becomes meaningless if free will is denied. In this unit we will discuss the different aspects of the problem of free will with emphasis on the attendant issues such as Determinism, Predeterminism, fatalism and Scientific Determinism.

9.3 DETERMINISM: ITS MEANING

Determinism as a scientific theory is of the view that the entire range of nature including man participates in an unbroken chain of events between cause and events. All events in the world are explained by antecedent or prior factors. The determinists accept the orderliness of the universe, the universal commands of natural laws and the advancement of science in explaining that all events are causally related. All human behaviour, like the physical happenings in the world, is determined by natural laws and is the result of antecedent events. In other words, determinism denies any freedom of will. There is only an 'unbending' necessity between facts of the world. The theory of Determinism is also known as Necessitarianism. The determinists advocate certain arguments in support of their view. They are:-

9.4 ARGUMENTS IN SUPPRT OF DETERMINISM

1. Psychological Argument:- The psychology of voluntary actions by human beings implies Determinism. The antecedent forces that determine a person's volitions are his motives, desires or impulses. The strength of the motive determines volitions which, again, are determined by physical and social environment. An individual's character is partly determined by heredity and partly by the structure of the individual's nervous system. These facts prove that our volitions are strongly determined. The determinists argue that the fact that human conduct can be predicted, if prior knowledge can be had, implies Determinism. In this way, they deny freedom of will.

2. Metaphysical Argument:- Rigorous Determinism is a necessary outcome of metaphysical theories of universal mechanism and abstract monism. The law of causation states that every event, physical or mental, is caused by antecedent event. This fact contradicts the concept of free will. In other words, nothing is uncaused. Every thing is determined and caused by the laws of nature. Abstract monism states that God alone is real. Like the world and the mind, which are unreal and illusory appearances of God, freedom of will is also illusory. Volitions appear to be real and free because we are conscious of them without being aware of the causes that determine them.

3. Theological Argument:- Generally, we regard God as omnipotent and omniscient. Thus, there cannot be any freedom of will. God foresees all activities of the future of man and nature. This prior or foreknowledge of nature and man by God implies determinism. God determines the continuity of the world and man's actions. Thus, this argument proves that man has no freedom of will.

4. Moral Argument:- Freedom of will is regarded as the necessary postulate and ground of moral life. From the views given by the advocates of freedom of will, we can understand that our choices are free and arbitrary; our conduct does not follow from nature. If this be the case as an effect, then we cannot be held responsible for our actions. Indeterminism or the theory of freedom of will thus make moral life impossible. Determinism in this sense is indispensable.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: State whether the following statements are True or False

a) The theory of determinism is known as 'necessitarianism'. (True/False)

b) Determinism denies freedom of will. (True/False)

c) Psychological determinism holds that the antecedent factors or causes which explains a person's volitions are his motives or desires or impulses. (True/ False)

d) Abstract monism holds that God alone is real and the world are illusory appearences of God(True/ False)

e) Theological argument states that God determines the events of the World.

f) Self determinism views that the self determines or explains human volitions without being determined by any factors or causes. (True/ False)

Q 2: What do you mean by determinism? (Answer in about 50 words)

……

Q 3: Which are the arguments determinists advocate in favour of determinism?

……..



ACTIVITY : 9.1

- What is Determinism? Answer in brief.

Ans……..……..

……..

- State any two reasons in support of Determinism.

Ans……..……..

9.5 WHAT IS FREEDOM OF WILL



Volition: To choose something freely or make your own decisions.

The doctrine of Free Will is essentially a moral postulate about the universe. Our sense or feeling of freedom is an integral part of human existence and life. This, in turn, points to another important fact that man's actions cannot be bounded; they cannot be pre-determined by antecedent factors or causes, but that they are decided by human choice.

The theory of Free Will, Autonomy, Liberty or Self-determinism is a view that states that it is the self that determines human volitions from within itself, without being determined by anything else. In other words, if we are to say that if human actions are determined, then it is the self that is to be regarded as the cause, and not any external factors.

We contradict and raise doubts about freedom when we try to deviate from the ordinary level and analyse the problem of freedom in the higher intellectual level, and complicate it with scientific principles and psychological compulsions. We are very much aware that in our daily experience, we act voluntarily and make choices between actions. By volition, we understand that there is a great part of human actions where free choice is made.

9.6 ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF FREE WILL

1. When we examine the facts of our inner life, we find that the strength of motives and desires depend upon the mind itself and not on any antecedent circumstances. The mind is no doubt influenced by external conditions, like impressions and exciting feelings and emotions, but it is the mind which is the centre of energy that reacts upon these external influences from within. Mind is active, rational principle, giving out energy of its own to guide external forces and determines the directions of its own activities. Freedom of will is

revealed in exercising free choice between alternate courses of actions and regulated by realistic principles of agent and directing the energy upon the chosen action.

2. The freedom of will does not imply that volition is an event without a cause. The cause of human volition is the self. But this cause is not determined by anything external to it. The self determines volitions by reason which is within its nature.
3. The concept of fore-knowledge advocated by the Determinists is misplaced. Different persons under same circumstances will, generally have similar wants and desires. Their choices and action will be similar, but this is not against free will. Men will act freely in spite of being in similar circumstances and having similar wants and desires. We can foresee and predict the actions of free persons, if we know the motives and circumstances. The fact that different persons act in the same way, having same reason to do so, is not inconsistent with actions coming out of the exercise of free will. Theologians argue that Divine fore-knowledge does not contradict human freedom.
4. The most rational metaphysical theory of the world, and man's relation to it, is Panentheism, which supports the doctrine of Free will. The metaphysical theories of Pantheism, Concrete Monism, or Objective Idealism assert that the human self is finite reproduction of the Absolute Mind from which the great world of nature is evolved. The self is not a passive product of nature, but is above nature. The self is within the Absolute; it participates in the self-regulative power of the Absolute, the self-determining power which produces and determines the facts and things of the world, but it is not determined by them, but is beyond them.
5. Determinism or Necessitarianism is not consistent with our moral consciousness. Every voluntary action implies the following:- (i) We are free to act in a certain way and not to act in that way. (ii) Every performance of a voluntary action implies that we are responsible for it. (iii) If the action is good, we earn merit for it, and if bad, we incur guilt, sometimes leading to punishment. (iv) If the action is an evil one, we may even be tormented by remorse. These facts imply that man is free to act on his own. This is what we mean by freedom of will.



Panen theism: Is a belief or system which posits that God personally exists, interpenetrates every part of nature and timelessly extends beyond it.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: What is self-determinism? (Answer in about 20 words)

……..

……..

Q 5: State whether the following statements are True or False

a) The freedom of will implies that self determines volition without any cause. (True /False)

b) Panentheism advocates the doctrine of freedom of will. (True/False)

c) The doctrine of free will is concerned with moral consciousness. (True/ False)

d) Self-determinism holds that we are responsible for our actions. (True/False)



ACTIVITY : 9.2

State any three reasons in support of Freedom of Will.

Ans……

……

……

9.7 BRIEF NOTE ON PREDESTINATION, FATALISM AND SCIENTIFIC DETERMINISM

(i) **Predestination:-** Predestination is regarded as the most thoroughgoing form of the doctrine of Determinism. This theory states that God has willed/ decreed that every event of the world should take place. Man's destiny is fixed by Divine decree. God is omnipotent and omniscient and therefore events in nature and human conduct, including man's will, are determined by the sovereign will of God. This view is supernatural and theological in its outlook and emphasis. This doctrine takes the extreme form which states that every event and every man's destiny is fixed; it also takes a flexible view that calls for some freedom of choice for the individual. Some contemporary theologians use the term predestination to mean that 'God calls/seeks us to him even before we are aware of Him,' or "man's decision to act

in a particular way is nothing but a response to God's initiative and will. The doctrine is found in Judaic Christianism and Islamic religious thought.



Judaic: From Judaism, the religion of the Jewis people based mainly on the old Testament Bible and the Talmud

(ii) **Fatalism:-** This theory believes that all events are irreversibly fixed and no human effort can alter them. All events and happenings in the world of nature and man's life are predetermined since the beginning of time: human will has no part in formulating and shaping the course of actions of the world. Fatalism states that invariably a particular event will occur at a specific time. It advocates a definite theory of causation; but actually it seems to consider causation as a fact of inexplicable mystery.

(iii) **Scientific Determinism:-** The theory of Scientific Determinism is the specific name for the view that states that the Universe is governed by natural laws. The study of nature by man has revealed that in nature there are orderly causal sequences. From the orbits of heavenly bodies to flowing stream and rivers, natural laws govern. All the sciences- Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Psychology, Astronomy etc. are governed and regulated by cause and effect. This theory outlines the view that there is dependable order in nature and this is the guiding principle that is responsible for the outstanding progress that science has made.

9.8 THE CASE OF FREEDOM AND DETERMINISM

While dealing with the problem of freedom versus determinism or necessity, many people have made extreme claims and unreasonable conclusions. Some say that evidence for determinism makes freedom in the sense of personal initiative and choice an illusion. While others claim that evidence for freedom of choice makes the doctrine of determinism false. But both the standpoints are extreme standpoints and are, therefore, unacceptable. A third alternative may be accepted which states that determinism in the sense of general causation and freedom as choice between alternatives is not only compatible but also necessarily complementary.

For the scientist, determinism is a scientific assumption. Everything is determined and caused. Even human actions are determined by certain conditions. Though determinism has been a scientific postulate, the modern

trend shows that science is not totally for the acceptance of only mechanistic or physical determinism. Science no doubt recognises determinism and causality, but it insists that modern science need not banish freedom from the universe and certainly not from human affairs.

Therefore, what we propose to do is to establish a link between freedom and determinism and emphasise upon causal effectiveness of man's participation in the events of the universe. We reject the 'extremes' of both the standpoints mentioned above. We may consider a position of 'universal causality', with the self as a causal agent. This may be described as 'Self-determinism' or what we may refer to as 'Soft-determinism'.

Man is a self-conscious being. He is capable of personal initiative and responsibility. He is the centre of creativity. Within limits, man has the capacity to reshape himself, and also influence the behaviour of his fellow beings. Man can redirect the processes of the outer world, to a certain extent.

A man's action is free when his action is under his own control. But he acts under compulsion when his actions are externally controlled or are pre-determined. When conduct is controlled by free will, it is determined by one's own choices, desires, motives and intentions. Hence, the moralists need not fear that determination of will is incompatible with its freedom. We should only consider and see whether our actions are self-determined or externally determined. Man is morally responsible for his volition and this implies freedom. And the exercise of this freedom implies self-freedom.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 6: Which argument of Determinism proves that God foresees all activities of the future of men and nature?

Q 7: Fill in the blanks

a) The determinists say that all events in the world are determined by……..... factors.

b) The theory of Determinism is also known as ……. .

c) Rigorous Determinism is an outcome of the metaphysical theories of ……..and ……... .

d) Freedom of will is revealed in ……..……between alternate courses of actions available to man.

e) Theologians argue that ……..…… is not inconsistent with human freedom.

f) A man's action is free when his conduct is under his own …….

g) Man being morally responsible for his actions implies …….

Q 8: Name the third alternative which is preferred in order to settle the issue between determinism and freedom.

.....

Q 9: What is pre-destination? (Answer in about 30 words)

.....

Q 10: What is fatalism? (Answer in about 30 words)

.....

Q 11: What do you mean by scientific determinism? (Answer in about 10 words)

.....



9.9 LET US SUM UP

- The problem of Free will and Determinism is one among the oldest of moral questions.
- Determinism is a scientific theory. This theory states that all the events in the world are causally related or what we refer to as being pre-determined.
- Human behaviour is determined by antecedent factors like motives, desires and impulses.
- There are many arguments that support Determinism. These are (i) Psychological Argument (ii) Metaphysical Argument (iii) Theological Argument and (v) Moral argument
- The theory of Free Will states that human volition is self-determined.
- It is the self and not anything else that determines human volition.
- Belief in the freedom of will does not mean that volition is an event without a cause. The self is the cause of all actions.

- Theologians argue that Divine fore-knowledge is not inconsistent with human freedom.
- Panentheism, Concrete Monism and Objective Idealism assert that human self is a finite reproduction of the Absolute Mind.
- Performance of voluntary action implies freedom of will.



9.10 FURTHER READING

1. Bali, D.R. (1989). Introduction to Philosophy. Sterling Publishers Private Limited
2. Titus, H. Harold. (1968). Living Issues in Philosophy. New Delhi: Eurasia Publishing House
3. Chatterjee, Phanibhusan.(1951). Outlines of General Philosophy. Calcutta: Beadon, Street
4. P, George Thomas White. (2006). Introduction to Philosophy, Delhi: Surjeet Publications
5. Sinha, Jadunath. (1984) A Manual of Ethics. Calcutta: New Central Book Agency

9.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: a) True b) True c) True
d) True e) True f) True

Ans to Q No 2: Determinism as a scientific theory holds that every events in the world are causally related. It indicates that all events in the world are explained by antecedent factors or cause. So, determinism as a theory denies the concept of free will to explain the events of the world.

Ans to Q No 3: Psychological argument, Metaphysical argument, teleological argument and moral argument

Ans to Q No 4: Self-determinism is a view which states that the self determines human volitions without being determined by any factors or causes.

Ans to Q No 5: a) True b)True
c) True d)True

Ans to Q No 6: Theologial argument

Ans to Q No 7: a) Antecedent b) Necessitarianism
c) Universal Mechanism and Abstract Monism
d) Divine foreknowledge e) Control
f) Self-determinism

Ans to Q No 8: Soft-determinism

Ans to Q No 9: This doctrine holds that every events of the world including man's will are determined by the sovereign will of God. This doctrine is found in Judaic Christianism and Islamic religious thought.

Ans to Q No 10: This theory holds that every event in the world of nature and man's actions are pre-determined. There is no role of human will in formulating and shaping the courses of actions of the world.

Ans to Q No 11: This theory holds that the universe is governed by natural laws.



9.12 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions

Q 1: What is determinism?

Q 2: What is freedom of will?

Q 3: What are the four arguments found in favour of determinism?

Q 4: What do you mean by law of causation?

B. Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: What do you mean by Determinism? Explain briefly.

Q 2: What is freedom? Explain in brief.

Q 3: Explain briefly the arguments in support of free will.

Q 4: Discuss briefly the concept of determinism.

C) Write short notes on (Answer each question in about 150 words)

a) Freedom of will

b) Determinism

c) Scientific realism

D) Distinguish between (Answer each question in about 150 words)

Q 1: Distinguish between Predestination, Fatalism, and Scientific Determinism.

Q 2: Freedom of will and Determinism

C. Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-500 words)

Q 1: State and explain the different kinds of arguments that support Determinism.

Q 2: Explain the problem that centres around freedom of choice. Why is this question important?

Q 3: State and explain the reasons that support Freedom of Will.

Q 4: How would you try to resolve the conflict between Freedom and Determinism? Explain.

* * * * *

UNIT 10 : DEONTOLOGICAL AND TELEOLOGICAL ETHICS

UNIT STRUCTURE

10.1 Learning Objectives
10.2 Introduction
10.3 Normative Ethics and its difference from other three types of ethics
10.4 Types of Normative Ethics
10.5 Two types of deontological theories:
10.6 Teleological theories:
10.7 Differences between Deontological and Teleological ethics
10.8 Critical Evaluation
10.9 Let Us Sum Up
10.10 Further Reading
10.11 Answers to Check Your Progress
10.12 Model Questions

10.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- Know about four main areas in ethical study,
- Explain normative ethics
- Distinguish between deontological and teleological ethics.
- Describe different types of deontological and teleological ethics.
- Know the main differences between deontological and teleological ethics.
- Critically evaluate both deontological and teleological ethics.

10.2 INTRODUCTION

Ethics is a branch of philosophy; it is a moral philosophy. It is the philosophical thinking about morality, moral problems, and moral judgments. There are generally three kinds of thinking that are differently associated with morality and as a result we have mainly three types of ethics. They are- Descriptive, Normative, and Meta-Ethics. There is another type of ethics known as Applied Ethics. Applied ethics attempts to deal with specific realms

of human action and to find out criteria for discussing issues that might arise within those realms.

Ethics is a normative discipline, not a descriptive discipline. But descriptive ethics is also needed to know about people's beliefs and it may help us to apply normative principles. This ethics involves the observation of the moral decision-making process with the goal of describing the phenomenon. The aim of ethical theory is to give reasoned account of how we ought to act, individually or socially. So, ethics is mainly regarded as three types, i.e. Normative Ethics, Meta-Ethics, and Applied Ethics by many thinkers.

Since Deontological and teleological ethics are the topics of normative ethics we should know what is normative ethics and how it differs from the other three types of ethics that is descriptive and meta-ethics and applied ethics.



LET US KNOW

The ultimate concern of deontological theory of obligation is to guide us in the making of decision and judgment about actions in particular situations.

10.3 NORMATIVE ETHICS AND ITS DIFFERENCES FROM OTHER THREE TYPES OF ETHICS

10.3.1 Normative Ethics

Normative ethics provides a general theory that tells us how we ought to live. It tells us how we can find out what things have what moral properties, so that it can provide a framework for ethics. In normative ethics the judgments take the form of asserting a normative judgment like "I ought not to try to escape from prison", "Is knowledge good?" and so on. Again in normative ethics the judgments may take the form of debating with oneself or with other about what is good or right. This debate may take place in a particular case or as a general principle about what is good or right. It may be said to be a branch of Ethics that investigate into the question 'which crop up when the question regarding how one ought to act arises.'

10.3.2 Descriptive ethics and Normative Ethics

Descriptive ethics is also known as comparative ethics. It studies about people's beliefs about morality but it does not concerned about the observation of the moral decision-making process with the help of which it tries to describe the phenomenon like general ethics. In this sense, it is a type of empirical investigation into people's beliefs, why people believe in certain type of moral beliefs, whereas normative ethics delves into the question of the rightness or wrongness of certain moral beliefs. Descriptive ethics also differs from prescriptive or normative ethics. Normative ethics is the study of ethical theories that tells us how people ought to act. But descriptive ethics aims to uncover people's beliefs about such things as values, which actions are right and wrong, Normative Ethics and which characteristics of moral agents are virtuous. It may also investigate people's ethical ideals or what actions are rewarded or punished by societies or by law and politics.

10.3.3 Normative ethics and Meta-ethics

Meta-ethics talks about the nature of ethics and moral reasoning. Unlike normative ethics, meta-ethics does not try to answer either particular or general questions about what is good, right, or obligatory. It asks and tries to answer logical, epistemological, or semantical questions. What is the meaning or use of the expressions "morally right' or "good"? How can ethical and value judgments be established or justified? Can they be justified at all? What is the nature of morality? Are the examples of meta- ethical problems?

10.3.4 Normative ethics and applied ethics

Normative ethics seeks to tell us how we can find out the moral properties of things. It is concerned with the questions like- what is right, good or obligatory for us. But applied ethics attempts to deal with specific realms of human action to find out criteria for discussing issues that might arise within those realms. Applied ethics is concerned with applying general normative theories of how we ought to live, act, or structure our societies to specific circumstances.

10.4 TYPES OF NORMATIVE ETHICS

There are three types of normative ethics which include three different types of theories namely virtue, deontological and consequentialist theories.

10.4.1 Virtue Ethics

Virtue ethics concentrates on the moral qualities like courage, generosity, compassion, etc. These moral qualities ought to be manifested in our actions. Therefore we ought to act in such ways that exhibit the virtues even if it may bring bad or undesirable consequences.

10.4.2 Deontological Ethics

The word deontology is derived from the Greek word which stands for duty (deon) and science or study of (logos). Deontological ethics is concerned with the actions performed by a moral agent. According to deontological theories; the actions which are intrinsically good or bad, i.e. good or bad in themselves ought or ought not to be performed, without considering the results.

10.4.3 Teleological or consequentialist Ethics

The word "teleology" is derived from the Greek word "tells" that means "ends'. According to consequentialist theories in ethics, we always ought to act in the way which brings about the best consequences. It does not concern about the nature of actions we perform. It is concerned with the results. Here the end justifies the means.

Since the standard of right and wrong cannot be simply the prevailing set of moral rules, moral philosophers have offered us a variety of alternative standards. But in general their views have been of two sorts. They are 1. deontological and 2. teleological theories.

Although both deontological and teleological theories come under normative ethics, deontological theories deny what teleological theories affirm. Therefore we should know the differences between them. Before going to discuss about the differences between them

we must discuss about different types of deontological and teleological theories briefly.

10.5 TWO TYPES OF DEONTOLOGICAL THEORIES

Deontological theories are of mainly two types- 1.Act deontology and 2.Rule deontology.

10.5.1 Act deontology

Act deontological theories maintain that the basic judgments of obligation are purely particular ones. For example "In this situation I should do so and so," and that general ones like "We ought always to keep our promises" are unavailable, useless, at best derivative from particular judgments.

Act deontology is also further divided in to two viz. extreme and less extreme deontological theories. According to extreme deontological theory, we can and must see or decide separately in each particular situation what is right or obligatory thing to do, without appealing to any rules and without observing what will promote the greatest balance of good over evil for oneself or the world. The less extreme act-deontological theory holds that general rules can be built on the basis of particular cases and may be useful in determining what should be done on later occasion. But a general rule must give predominance to a well-taken particular judgment as what should be done. Act deontological ethics is also called "situation ethics" and it includes both the extreme and less extreme forms of act-deontology.

10.5.2 Rule deontology

According to rule-deontologists the standard of right and wrong consists of one or more rules- like "We ought always to tell the truth". They hold that these rules are valid independently of whether or not they promote the good. Here they differ from the teleologists. Unlike the act-deontologists they regard that these rules are basic, they are not derived by induction from particular cases. Rule-deontologists maintain that on the basis of these rules only the judgments about what to do in particular cases to be determined.

Teleologists differ on the question of whose good it is that one ought to try to promote. That means whether it is the good of the individual of or of a great number of people.

10.6 TELEOLOGICAL THEORIES

Teleological theories are mainly of three types; viz., 1. Ethical egoism 2. Ethical universalism or utilitarianism 3. Psychological egoism.

10.6.1 Ethical egoism

An ethical egoist holds that an individual's one and only basic obligation is to promote for himself the greatest possible balance of good over evil. An act or rule of action is right if and only if it promotes a great balance of good over evil for him in the long run. If it does not then it would be wrong. This view was held by Epicurus, Hobbs, and Nietzsche, among others.

10.6.2 Ethical universalism or Utilitarianism

According to utilitarianism, an act or rule of action is right if its ultimate end is the greatest general good. If an act or rule is, or probably is conducive to the greatest possible balance of good over evil in the universe, that action or rule of action is right. The so called utilitarians, like, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill are usually hedonists in their view. Because they assert that the moral end is the greatest balance of pleasure over pain. But some utilitarians are not hedonists, like, G. E. Moore and Rashdall, and so have been called "Ideal" utilitarians. That is a certain kind of teleological theory if obligation and does not entail any particular theory of value, although an utilititarian must accept some particular theory of value.

10.6.3 Psychological egoism

Ethical egoism has generally presupposed psychological egoism. According to psychological egoism-that each of us is seeking his own greatest good, as pleasure, happiness, knowledge, power, self - realization, or a mixed life. This is the ethics of what Butler calls self-love and what Freudians call ego. Here "self-love" or ego is the basic "principle" in human nature.

10.7 THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DEONTOLOGICAL AND TELEOLOGICAL ETHICS

1. Deontological theories deal mainly with the intrinsic qualities of righteousness of a behavior. Teleological theories stress the amount of good or bad on the basis of the consequence of the behaviors. Deontology is an approach to ethics which mainly is concerned with whether the motives behind certain actions are right or wrong instead of focusing on whether the results of the actions are right or wrong. Teleology mainly deals with the consequences of an action. It involves examination of past experiences so that it can find out the results of present action. For example utilitarianism measure an action as good or bad depending upon how much overall pleasure can be derived from a certain action and how much pain is averted.
2. A teleological theory says that the basic or ultimate criterion or standard of what is morally right, wrong, obligatory, etc. is the non-moral value. Here non-moral value means that an action or rule of an action is right if it probably produces or is intended to produce a greater balance of good over evil than any available alternative. But the deontologists deny that the right, the obligatory, and the morally good are wholly, (whether directly or indirectly) a function of non-moral good or of what promotes the greatest balance of good over evil. They assert that there are other considerations that may make an action or rule right or obligatory besides the goodness or badness of its consequences. They bring in to existence certain features of the act itself other than the value , for example, the fact that it keeps a promise, is just, or is commanded by God or by the state.
3. Teleologists believe that there is one and only one basic or ultimate right-making characteristic which is the comparative value (non-moral) or the greatest balance of good over evil. Deontologists either deny that this characteristic is right-making at all or they insist that there are other basic or ultimate right-making characteristics. For deontologists the principle of maximization of good over evil is not the only basic or ultimate one.

4. Deontological theories like Kant's theory, use categorical imperatives, for example, "I will do x because x is the right thing to do." Teleological theories like utilitarianism use hypothetical imperatives, for example "I will do x to get y" in order to decide which rule we ought to follow or which action we ought to perform.

5. Deontological theories are often absolute in nature. This means that the duties or obligations, once established, are considered morally binding in all similar situations. They involve fixed rules or principles that operate as an obligation without exception. But the teleological theories are relative in nature. This means that the rightness or wrongness of the action is relative to the situation i.e., an action is right when it produces the best result in the relative situations.

6. Deontological approaches are often a-priori. They utilize only reason to ascertain moral or wrong without knowing about it. Whereas from the teleological perspective, the rightness or wrongness of killing of a person could be decided only by the desired goal achieved through it.

7. Deontological ethics is referred to as duty-based ethics, as an individual is duty-bound to perform action which is morally good and correct irrespective of its consequences. But teleological ethics referred to as result oriented ethics, since according to teleologist argue that action is preferred whose result or consequence is the most favourable one.

LET US KNOW



Modern deontology has its root in the Enlightenment writers of continental Europe. The ideas of Descartes influenced writers in all scientific and philosophical disciplines, including ethics. However the most influential deontological writer was Kant.

10.8 CRITICAL EVALUATION

Deontological theories are mainly divided in to two namely act-deontology and rule-deontology. Act-deontology has another two forms as extreme and less extreme view. Both forms are not satisfactory. Extreme

form tells us that particular judgments are basic any general rules are to be derived from them, not the other way around. It does not offer us any certain or guiding principle, because it presents a kind of method for determining what is right, either by some kind of "intuition" like intuitionists or by a "decision" like existentialists.

The anthropological and psychological evidence seems to against the existence of such intuitive faculty because in everyday experience what is right in one particular situation may disagree in another particular situation. Besides, intuitionism involves meta-ethical difficulties because Intuitionists hold that the properties referred to by words like "good "and "ought" are indefinable, or simple and unanalizable.

The less extreme view of act-deontological theory determines what is right by "decision" rather than "intuition", is also less satisfactory. It tells us to take the "situation" as his guide, and that one must look carefully to see just what his situation is; but beyond that it has nothing to say. Again it insists that there is nothing else to guide one and one must simply "choose" or "decide" what to do and he must make his action right by choosing it.

Rule deontology is also not free from criticisms. Rule-deontologists hold that the standard of right and wrong consists of one or more rules like "We ought always to tell the truth." We always ought to act in a certain way in a certain kind of situation. Here, the stock objection is that no rule can be framed which does not admit of conflicts between the rules. One might say that the rules may have all the necessary exceptions built into them, so that they have no exceptions .But it must be confessed that, no deontological theory has presented us with a conflict-less and exception-free system of concrete rules about what we are actually to do.

W.D. Ross, a rule deontologist, distinguishes between actual duty and prima facie duty between what is actually right and what appears to be right 'on the first appearance'

In case of teleological theories also we cannot say that any theory is completely free from defects. For example-ethical egoism as a teleological theory is regarded as self-contradictory. Because it cannot be to one individual's advantage that all others should pursue their own advantage. As Kant says, one cannot will the egoistic maxim to be a universal law. This

argument, however, does not show that ethical egoism is logically self-contradictory, for there is no difficulty if what is to one person's advantage coincides with what is to that of all the others.

If ethical egoism wills the egoistic maxim as a universal law, it must be construed as a proposal to replace what we know as morality with something else, namely what Butler calls "cool self-love." Then it may be that we should all adopt this principle of cool or rational self-love, whether as a morality or as a substitute for morality. It will then go against an ethical egoist to argue that each of us should do what or probably will promote his own greatest good, because it will result general good.

Utilitarianism is a kind of teleological theory of obligation and does not entail any particular theory of value. But utilitarianism must accept some particular theory of value. Because it would also be possible, to adopt teleological theories intermediate between ethical egoism and utilitarianism. For example, theories that say the right act or rule is one which is conducive to the greatest balance of good over evil for a certain group---one's nation,class,family or race.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1 what are the two types of Deontological Theories?

Q.2 Is Utilitarianism a deontological theory?

Q.3 What is the ultimate end of moral action according to Utilitarianism?

Q.4 what is "situation ethics"?

Q.5 What is "normative ethics"?

Q.6. What is "descriptive ethics"?



ACTIVITY : 10.1

1. Discuss different types of normative ethics.



10.9 LET US SUM UP

The important points about the deontological ethics and teleological ethics are:

- Normative ethics provides a general theory that tells us how we ought to live. It tells us how we can find out what things have what moral properties, so that it can provide a framework for ethics.
- Deontological and teleological ethics are the topics of normative ethics.
- According to deontological theories; the actions which are intrinsically good or bad, i.e. good or bad in themselves ought or ought not to be performed, without considering the results.
- The word deontology is derived from the Greek word which stands for duty (deon) and science or study of (logos). Deontological ethics is concerned with the actions performed by a moral agent.

- According to the consequentialist or teleological theories in ethics, we always ought to act in the way which brings about the best consequences.
- Deontological theories are of mainly two types- 1.Act deontology and 2.Rule deontology.
- Teleological theories are mainly of three types; viz., 1. Ethical egoism and 2. Ethical universalism or utilitarianism 3. Psychological egoism.



10.10 FURTHER READING

1. Frankena, K. William. 1973. Ethics. Prentice-Hall.
2. Lilly, William.1964. Introduction to Ethics. Methuen.
3. Sinha, Jadunath. 1973. A Manual of Ethics.New Central Book Agency, Calcutta.
4. Mackenzie, S.John.2004. A Manual of Ethics. Surajeet Publication, New Delhi.

10.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q. No.1: Deontological theories are of mainly two types- 1.Act deontology and 2.Rule deontology.

Ans. to Q.no.2: Utilitarianism is not a deontological theory. It is a teleological theory.

Ans.to Q.No.3: According to utilitarianism, an act or rule of action is right if its ultimate end is the greatest general good. If an act or rule is, or probably is conducive to the greatest possible balance of good over evil in the universe, that action or rule of action is right.

Ans.to Q.No.4: Act deontological ethics is also called "situation ethics" and it includes both the extreme and less extreme forms of act-deontology.

Ans.to.Q.No.5: Normative ethics seeks to tell us how we can find out the moral properties of things. It is concerned with the questions like- what is right, good or obligatory for us.

Ans.to Q.No. 6: Descriptive ethics is also known as comparative ethics. It studies about people's beliefs about morality but it does not concerned about the observation of the moral decision-making process with the help of which it tries to describe the phenomenon like general ethics.



10.12 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very Short Questions

Q.1. What is the etymological meaning of deontology?

Q.2. What is meta-ethics?

Q.3. What is the main principle of teleological ethics?

Q.4. Is Kant a teleologist?

Q.5. Whether deontological ethics is included in normative or meta-ethics?

Q.6. Is there any relation between normative and applied ethics?

B. Short Questions (Answer in about 150-200 words)

Q.1. Briefly explain ethical egoism.

Q.2. Write about main points of utilitarianism.

Q.3. Distinguish between act-deontology and rule-deontology.

Q.4. Distinguish between descriptive and normative ethics.

Q.5. Discuss briefly psychological egoism.

C. Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q.1. What is deontological theory? Critically discuss both act-deontology and rule-deontology.

Q.2. What is teleological ethics? How it differs from deontological ethics?

Q.3. What is deontological ethics? How it differs from teleological ethics?

Q.4. Explain the differences between teleological and deontological ethics.

Q.5. What is teleological ethics? Explain different theories of teleological ethics.

Q.6. Give a critical account of both deontological and teleological ethics.

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UNIT 11 : PURUṢĀRTHA

UNIT STRUCTURE

11.1 Learning Objectives
11.2 Introduction
11.3 Artha
11.4 Kama
11.5 Dharma
11.6 Moks. a
11.7 Four Basic Sciences
11.8 Let Us Sum Up
11.9 Further Reading
11.10 Answers to Check Your Progress
11.11 Model Questions

11.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- clarify the meaning of Purus. a– rtha,
- describe the nature of the different goals of life as viewed in Indian tradition,
- explain the Institutional structure of economic values,
- describe the philosophical perspective of sensuous pleasure,
- elaborate the goal of dharma as commitment to religious and social duties,
- explain the nature of Moks. a as the ultimate goal,
- describe the four fold division of basic sciences in Indian tradition.

11.2 INTRODUCTION

Puruṣārtha are the four goals of human life recognized by Indian tradition. They are artha or wealth, wealth, ka¯ma or sensuous pleasure, dharma or righteousness and moksa or the spiritual liberation from the bondage of the word, embodiedness and karma-rebirth structure. These are ideals that human beings strive to achieve. They give meaning or purpose to human life. Literally 'purus. a' means 'self' and 'artha' means 'meaning' or 'purpose'.

11.3 ARTHA

In ***Kautilya***'s arthasāstra two district meaning of wealth is suggested. These are (a) wealth or property and (b) land. Taking artha as land suggests that acquisition of land, empire–building or expansion of a dominion was considered to be one of the goals of human life. From ancient times to the modern age territorial integration is regarded to be indispensable for social well – being or nation building in the form of strong prosperous flourishing nation.



Kautilya : Also known as Canakya and Visnugupta (around 322 BC) is the author of the artha-sastra, one of the earliest treatises on political economy.

Kautilya gives prominence to artha over dharma and Ka¯ma. It is artha that promotes virtue and enjoyment. So it leads to sarvatha–siddhi or success in all. So, artha is taken both as means and end. But Kautilya does not offer a clear elucidation of artha as means and as end. An alternative interpretation suggests that as 'means' artha represents wealth and as end any object that brings happiness. Yet it should be remembered that when Kautilya assigns the highest place to artha he is not prescribing unrestricted greed for wealth but is imposing the condition that wealth must be based on virtue and then only it will result in enduring happiness. Such wealth is the key to all success. So wealth as such is not a good in itself. Sometimes it may have negative value as the evil of another. Wealth which causes fear from one's own people or from other people is regarded by Kautiya as provocative wealth or a form anartha.

Prominent contemporary philosopher ***J. N. Mohanty*** brings about some illuminating interpretation of the concept of artha. He states that 'artha' means various things including work, advantage, profit, utility, the useful, reward, gain, property, wealth, money, also thing object, matter, case and more significantly in philosophical context, meaning and purpose. Mohanty finds some new explanation of artha in Kautilya's arthasa¯stra. Here artha is defined to be the livelihood of humans (manusyanam vrttirarthah). It also means (as mentioned above) manusyavati bhumi, i.e, land which possesses humans. According to Cha¯nakya sutra 3 the kingdom (state, society, territory) is the foundation artha (arthasya mulum – rajyam). Again at Cha¯nakyasutra 12 it is mentioned that karya or action is the root of artha (arthamulam karyam). Now question arises as to how and when to do the actions. The answer states that the agent of action should know time (kalavit

J. N. Mohanty : Is a philosopher of our time. He offers illuminating insights into some of the concepts of Indian philosophical tradition.

karyam sadhayet). One must be guided by experience and insight in this regard. So, Mohanty observes that 'if one keeps all of them in mind, the good of artha, or artha as a purusartha, would comprehend a whole complex of possible goals amongst whom there will be a progression, as also a common link'.

Thus, a complex array of ends and means constitutes artha. So, Mohanty aptly observes that artha 'is not as is commonly held, merely a question of making money, accumulating wealth, deeper than that lies a certain understanding of the nature of the self – or rather a certain self – understanding. The self who pursues the goal of artha is, first of all, rooted on the land is a subject in a kingdom, belongs to a society, participates, along with his follow subjects, in commercial and financial institutions such as buying and selling, money, exchange and value, works to earn his livelihood, in so working is guided by retention of the past and pretention of the future, i.e., is guided by the intrinsic temporality of his situation, i.e., of his being in the world and being-with others. He further adds that this self is a person who is in interaction with other persons and is grounded on the earth in his earthly existence. His most basic intentionality is desire (iccha) which finally leads him to such actions the fruits of which he enjoys or suffers.



Intentionality : The consciousness of some object.

The interactions in the pursuit of wealth involves the inter subjectivity – the self– consciousness of a subject whose ***intentionality*** is desire for another self–consciousness agent in the form of owner and a worker or a landlord and his tenant etc. In this context artha as work precedes artha as trade or commerce, money or exchange. Work is the basis of all artha and fundamental interrelation at work is clearly that of end and means. The end is satisfaction and the means are work, production of wealth, trade, commerce and accumulation of value. The fundamental temporality of desire is prospective, future-oriented which also is looking back to the past.

The desire which underlies artha need not be narrowly selfish or based on personal greed. The desire may be altruistic, benevolent and for public good. The general tendency of Indian philosophical tradition favours such a standpoint. However Ca¯rva¯ka School propagates selfish satisfaction of sensuous desires to be the only aim of human life.



ACTIVITY : 11.1

1. Is artha alone final goal in human life? What do you think? Discuss.

.....

.....

.....



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1. What are the two distinct meanings of artha as suggested by Kautilya?

.....

Q.2. Does artha mean only the accumulation of wealth?

.....

Q.3. Choose which of the following is not required in the pursuit of artha :

a) Commercial and financial institutions b) Land

c) Pretention of the future d) worship of a deity

Q.4. Do the Ca⁻rva⁻kas accept artha as an end of human life?

.....

Q.5. Does Kautilya give prominence to artha over dharma? (Answer in about 30 words)

.....

.....

11.4 KĀMA

The word kāma means desire, love, intention, pleasure, enjoyment, benefit etc. It is also used as adverb to mean 'voluntarily' or 'intentionally'. As one of the supreme ends of life it is not the pursuit of gross sensuous desires but has wider and superior dimension. Kāma represents a higher form of self-consciousness than artha because the desire in kāma has another desire as its object and not a thing. In artha object of desire is a thing like land, produce, wealth etc. and these are desired as means for something else. In kāma the desire is an end in itself. Desire here becomes love. Neither the person who loves nor the person who is loved is a pure

self. Both of them are embodied. Here the object of love is embodied subjectivity and so is the case with the subject. So, the pursuit of kama self-consciousness manifest itself as intersubjectivity correlated to intercorporeality.



LET US KNOW

Intersubjectivity : The state of being intersubjective. An intersubjective property is one in which opinions of different subjects co-incide. Here in the pursuit of kama as love it refers to reciprocal interation of flling as to love and wanting to be loved by another subject.

Intercorporeality : It refers to the consciousness of physical attraction and interaction.

Kāma begins with desires in the form of search for pleasure. But it gets refined or it moves higher to become love when the desire is transformed into self – surrender, and becomes apprehension of a rasa as in aesthetic experience. So, art and poetry are its manifestations. Thus, kā ma begins as desire and develops itself into desireless desire and ends as love. Kama as love place the highest value on the unique other, the beloved, and finds complete satisfaction in the experience of rasa. This is the search of universality in the particular. But in the pursuit of kama even in the form of rasa remains a duality of the self and the other. It does not reach the identity of the one with the other. Further, J.N. Mohanty observes that the pursuit of santa rasa is not achieved in Kāma. Kāma in the form of satisfaction of the sensuous desires is regarded to be the only puruṣārtha by the Carvaka School. But a distinction between sensuous pleasure and rational pleasure is made by Vātsyāyana, the author of kāma-sutra. He rejects the gross egoistic hedonism of the some of the Cārvāka thinkers and regards happiness (kāma) wealth (artha) and virtue (dharma) as the supreme ends of life. For him wealth and happiness should be pursued in harmony with virtue. These should not be achieved at the sacrifice of one another. The harmonious cultivation of the three is the highest good. Vātsyāyana also mentioned the sixty four fine arts the cultivation of which is recommended for the sake of refined pleasure.



LET US KNOW

Rasa : It is the essence of aesthetic experience. It is in the form of feelings.

Vātsyāyana : (About 400AD) The author of the kāma-sutra, was a different person from the Vātsyāyana belonging to Nyāya school.

Thus, kāma is not the mere satisfaction of erotic desires nor the exclusion of the other aims of human life. It is inconformity with other values and finds it's higher expressing in aesthetic experiences.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.6. Which one of the values is considered as Puruṣārtha by the Cārvāka School?

.....

Q.7. How does Vātsyāyana react to the Cārvāka concept of Puruṣārtha? (Answer in about 60 words)

.....

.....

.....

Q.8. Does the appreciation of santa rasa achieved in the pursuit of Kāma?

.....

Q.9. How many fine arts are mentioned by Vātsyāyana?

.....

Q.10. Is the identity of the one with the other achieved in the pursuit of kāma?

.....

11.5 DHARMA

The term dharma carries a host of significations with it generally it is used in the sense of law, duty, righteousness etc. In the Mīmāṁsā system the term is used in the sense of merit, virtue, right action and the potency that produces pleasure and happiness. Dharma is the principle of motion

in Jainism. In Buddhism it is the doctrine of Buddha, nature, category, quality and ultimate reality. Dharma as a puruṣārtha signifies the moral value which is fundamental and foundational. It allows interpretation but no justification.

As one moves from the pursuit of artha and kāma to that of dharma, one's self-consciousness deepens further. The agent who strives for dharma is an embodied self who has an individuality as well as social existence. He is also a desiring ego who may perform Vedic injunctions for some benefits, e.g. one perform a yajna with the desire to go to heaven (svargakamo yajeta). But he ultimately becomes the desireless ego in the pursuit of dharma.

As an individual living in the society one has to participate in the moral and social life of the age and this is also one of the aims of life. Thus, in the pursuit of dharma one accepts moral norm of the community as one's own, abides by the rules imposed by it, plays his role in relation to the family, society and the state, including his role in relation to himself and to the deities. Thus, dharma basically consists in role playing. It consists in following rules of the community of that time in matters of moral life. In the pursuit of dharma one puts some restraints on desires and passions. Here desires are considered to be capable of being kept in control by performing social responsibilities, performing religious and self directing obligation such as suci and cultivating desirelessness (niskāmata) and the sense of equanimity (samatva).

In the pursuit of dharma, the conventional morality in the form of does and don't prepares the ground by propagating personal and inner directed virtues such as purity (suci), charity (dana) and austerity; higher virtues such as equanimity (samatva) and compassion (karuna). Unlike kama here is not love for the beloved but compassion for all beings as the ruling passion.

Some philosophers recommend the triple ends of artha, Kama and Dharma. These three are known as 'trivarga'. The philosophers who enjoin the cultivation of the three are known as trivargika. Kautiya and Vatsyayana are the advocates of the triple ends. Kautilya gives highest place to artha but enjoins that artha should be based on virtue so that it may bring in happiness. Vātsyāyana observes that one who pursues the triple ends enjoys

supreme happiness on earth and in heaven after death. For him wealth is superior to happiness. Happiness is superior to virtue (dharma). When there is a conflict among them, the former should be pursued at the sacrifice of the other, but the latter should not be pursued at the sacrifice of the former, since the former are superior to the latter. The best way is the harmonious cultivation of the three. If there is no incompatibility among the three ends, all should be perused and this is the best choice. Sometimes the three ends are not compatible. According to Vātsyāyana, in such cases any two should be pursued. In case when even any two cannot be persued because of their incompatibility, only one of them should be sought – Excessive involvement in any one to the exclusion of others is not recommended by him. Excessive charity is not conducive to dharma; but it exhausts wealth, and thwarts happiness. Excessive penance sacrifices happiness, undermines health and also destroys the capacity for earning wealth. Similarly excessive hankering after wealth sacrifices happiness and dharma. Excessive indulgence in sensual pleasure sacrifices wealth and dharma. So, excess should be avoided. Again when an action is conducive to me and repulsive to others, its comparative merits and demerits should be weighed.

Dharma prepares the individual for the ultimate goal of mokṣa. But dharma has no ground or foundation. It is self–grounded and self–justified. That is why the essence of Dharma is said to be lying hidden (dharmasya ttattvam nihitam guhayam).



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.11. What is the meaning of dharma?

.....

Q.12. Who are the advocates of Triple ends or trivarga?

.....

Q.13. What is the viewpoint of Vātsyāyana regarding the concept of happiness? (Answer in about 30 words)

.....

.....

Q.14. Does dharma recommend restrain on passion and emotions?

.....

Q.15. Mention some of the virtues the cultivation of which facilitates the pursuit of dharma?

.....

Q.16. Who according to Vātsyāyana enjoys supreme happiness in this world and in heaven?

.....

Q.17. Why is the essence of dharma regarded to be lying hidden?

.....

11.6 MOKṢA OR LIBERATION

Mokṣa is the ultimate end of human life. The term mokṣa has its equivalent in English emancipation, liberation, release, salvation. Most of the philosophical systems of India regard mokṣa as the ultimate end of human life. The Cārvāka School is the exception. Further as mentioned above there are philosophers known as trivargikas who advocates the ends of artha, kāma and dharma to the exclusion to mokṣa. There are different terms to signify the ultimate end of liberation such as nirvana, kaivalya, apavarga etc. About the nature of the state of mokṣa and the means for it the systems differ from each other.

Buddha did not speak much about the nature of nirvāna but his teachings and the way he lived his life suggests that nirvāna is the state when no pain or suffering is there; it is a state that can be attained in this life and right knowledge and effort leads one to this state. The Vaibhaśika School of Buddhism considers nirvāna as a series of cognitive mental states devoid of affliction while the Sautrantikas regard mokṣa or nirvāna as a series of cognitions devoid of objects. These two philosophical schools belong to Hinayana religious order of Buddhism and Hīnayāna's ideal of Nirvāna is considered to be negative, individual and selfish. But many of Buddha's teachings imply that nirvāna is the positive state of bliss. For the Buddhist idealist nirvāna is the state where true nature of the self as momentary consciousness is realised. False notion of the permanent self is destroyed. For the Sunyavādin the distinction between bondage and liberation is from the phenomenal viewpoint. From the ultimate view point nirvana and samsara

is the same sunyatā or ultimate reality though it appears to be different from different view points.

For the Jainas the soul remains in bondage due to the influx of karma into it. By possession and practice of right faith, knowledge and conduct, the influx of fresh karma to the soul is stopped. This state is called samvara or stoppage. Then the already existing karma in the self should be exhausted. This state is called Nirjara or wearing out. When the last particle of karma has been exhausted, the soul becomes completely free from karma and shines in its intrinsic nature of infinite faith, knowledge, bliss and power. This is the state of moks. a and here one attains omniscience.

The Vaiseśika regards mokṣa to be the absolute negation of pain. It involves the destruction of all specific qualities of the soul. Thus mokṣa is the state in which the soul is in its natural condition and devoid of empirical content. The destruction of merits and demerits is the necessary precondition for mokṣa. Nyāya view of liberation is same as that of Vaiśeṣika.

In the Mīmāmsā system of Kumārila liberation is regarded to be negative state. It is a state of absolute negation of all experience of cognition, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, impression, merit and demerit. It is the natural transcendental condition of the self free from empirical contents. It is not the enjoyment of happiness in heaven. It is higher than that and also an eternal state from which one never returns to the world of birth and rebirth. Prabhākara also agrees with Kumārila in describing mokṣa as a negative state of absolute extinction of pain.

For the Sāṅkkya philosophers bondage is due to the false identification of the self which is pure consciousness with the products of prakṛti called the ego or ahamkara which is material in nature. With right knowledge the self realize its state of pure consciousness as distinct from prakṛti and becomes disinterested in material nature. This brings liberation and cessation of all pain and sufferings.

For Advaita Vedanta mokṣha is the realisation of the true nature of the self which is one and identical with Brahman. So, long one is in ignorance, one falsely identify oneself as different from the ultimate reality and views the multiplicity of the world to be real. In the state of ignorance one suffers birth and rebirth and attendant pain or sufferings of the world. As the true knowledge dawns, the world of multiplicity disappears and oneness with

Brahman is realised. Another important school of Vedānta known as Visiṣṭā dvaita regards the state of liberation to be a state in which the self realizes its state of communion with Brahman where it maintains its distinct existence as the part of Brahman.

In his interpretation of the ultimate ends of human life J.N. Mohanty observes that there are two routes to mokṣa. One of them is through dharma and other is through kāma. There is one poetic path of love. It is the appreciation of rasa which ultimately culminates in sānta rasa as depicted by Abhinavaguptā. This leads the aspirant to egolessness. The other path is through purification of soul (cittasuddhi), through dharma and then through the meditation on the truth of the self on to egolessness. Moṣka is egolessness – a life of transcendental subjectivity as constituting the source of all worldly reality. Striking example of the former kind is the poetic personality of Tagore and the latter is the ascetic existence of Gandhi's personality, his 'beautiful soul' becoming a work of art.



LET US KNOW

Abhinavaguptā : A great aesthetic of kasmir who flourished around 980 AD. He belonged to the Pratyabhijñā School of Saivism and wrote the tantraloka among other treatises.



ACTIVITY:11.2

1. What do you mean by the nature of Moksha? Discuss.

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.....

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CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.18. What are the different names of the term 'Mokṣa' given by different systems of Indian Philosophy?

.....

Q.19. Write the name of the school, which views that Nirvana can be attained in this life.

.....

Q.20. State the three prescribed paths of Jaina School for the attainment of Nirvāna.

.....

Q.21. Who uses the term 'Sānta rasa' for the first time.

.....

Q.22. Do the traivargikas and Cārvāka accept mokṣa as a goal?

.....

Q.23. Did Buddha speak explicitly about the nature of nirvāna?

.....

Q.24. Does Hīnayāna agree with Mahāyana in its vision of nirvāna?

.....

Q.25. According to J. N. Mohanty, how many routes to mokṣa are there?

.....

11.7 THE FOUR BASIC SCIENCES

In the Indian tradition there are four basic sciences which have these four Purusarthas as their themes.

These are:

1. Arthasastra	:	The sciences of political economy.
2. Kamasutra	:	The aphorisms on erotic pleasure.
3. Dharmasastra	:	The sciences of ethics.
4. Moksa-sastra	:	The sciences of spiritual freedom.

The pursuit of the four goals is a matter of active endeavor to achieve something. For this not only conceptual knowledge of the goals but the knowledge of the means and practice to achieve them is also required. This is the reason behind the development of the four fold sciences.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS



Q.26. What is the science of political economy in Indian tradition?

.....

Q.27. What is the science of ethics known as?

.....

Q.28. Do the four basic sciences include the theoretical knowledge only?

.....



11.8 LET US SUM UP

- Artha is the wealth or economic values. Pursuit of artha presupposes social, economic and commercial institutions. The desire which underlie artha need not be narrowly selfish or based on personal greed. The desire may be altruistic, benevolent and for public good.
- The pursuit of Kāma presuppose corporeality, sexuality and sensitivity to pleasure and pain. The pursuit of Kāma may transcend the bodily level and move to a higher form of self-consciousness. It becomes the desire for another person not as a means but as end in itself. The desire becomes love. The persons who love and the persons who are loved are embodied selves. So, there is inter-subjectivity and also inter-corporeality. Kāma sometimes becomes the desire for the apprehension of rasa as an aesthetic experience. So Kāma can find its expression in art and poetry. The solitary materialist school of Indian Philosophy considers Kāma to be the only puruṣārtha and artha to be pursued only as a means to it.
- Dharma consists in playing one's role in relation to family, society and the state including one's role in relation to oneself and to God. One has to play social roles, perform religious rites and self directed obligation, cultivate desirelessness and sense of equality. This brings desires and passion under subjugation. This pursuit of dharma requires bodily and social existence like Kāma and artha. The pursuit of dharma also prepares the aspirant for the ultimate ideal of mokṣa.
- It is the spiritual liberation from the bondage of the world, embodiedness and karma-rebirth structure. Mokṣa is the ultimate ideal that a person aspires. This makes one free from sufferings. This presupposes the bodily and social existence of the individual who

strives for mokṣa. Different philosophical system views mokṣa in different ways. For Saṅkara, it is the highest state of the self's identity with the Brahman while for Ramanuja, it is self's communion with God. The discriminatory knowledge of one's true self and the non-self, detached mode of action, devotion to God etc. are regarded to be means for mokṣa by different philosophers

- The four puruṣārthas give meaning to human life. They are complementary to each other and require the harmonious cultivation of all the four. They are comprehensive to in corporate material well-being keeping the complete vision and dimensions of human capabilities and also potentials of spiritual uplift. This traditional way of guiding our life is compatible with and conducive to our modern life.



11.9 FURTHER READING

1. Bilimoria, Purusottam, Prabhu, J. & Sharma, R. (ed).(2007). *Indian Ethics.* New Delhi. OUP.
2. Gopalan, S. (1979). *Hindu Social Philosophy*. New Delhi. Wiley Eastern Ltd.
3. Mohanty, J. N. (2001). *Explorations in Philosophy.* Oxford publication.
4. Mohanty, J.N. (2002). *Classical Indian Philosophy*. Oxford Publication.
5. Sharma, I. C. (1970). *Ethical Philosophies of India*. Harper Torch books.

11.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q. No. 1 : Wealth and Land

Ans. to Q. No. 2 : No

Ans. to Q. No. 3 : d) Worshipping a deity

Ans. to Q. No. 4 : No

Ans. to Q. No. 5 : Yes, according to Kautilya, it is artha that promotes virtue and happiness. So, it leads to sarvatha siddhi or success in all.

Ans. to Q. No. 6 : Kāma or sensuous desire

Ans. to Q. No. 7 : Vātsyāyana, the author of Kāmasūtra, rejects the gross egoistic hedonism of the Cārvāka thinkers and holds that happiness, wealth and virtue are the supreme ends of human life. He views that wealth and happiness should be pursued in harmony with virtue. And the concept of highest good emerges when three of them mingle or combine.

Ans. to Q. No. 8 : No

Ans. to Q. No. 9 : Sixty four

Ans. to Q. No. 10 : No

Ans. to Q. No. 11 : It means the moral value which is fundamental and foundational.

Ans. to Q. No. 12 : Kautilyua and Vātsyāyana

Ans. to Q. No. 13 : Vātsyāyana, as an advocate of Trivargya, holds that when artha, kāma and dharma are pursued together then one enjoys happiness on earth and in heaven after death**.**

Ans. to Q. No. 14 : Yes

Ans. to Q. No. 15 : Purity, charity, equanimity, compassion etc.

Ans. to Q. No. 16 : A person who pursue harmonious cultivation of artha, Kama and dharma

Ans. to Q. No. 17 : Dharma has no ground or foundation. It is self-grounded and self-justified.

Ans. to Q. No. 18 : Nirvāna, Kaivalya, apavarga etc.

Ans. to Q. No. 19 : Buddha

Ans. to Q. No. 20 : Right faith, right knowledge and right conduct

Ans. to Q. No. 21 : Abhinavaguptā

Ans. to Q. No. 22 : No

Ans. to Q. No. 23 : No

Ans. to Q. No. 24 : No

Ans. to Q. No. 25 : Two

Ans. to Q. No. 26 : Artha-sāstra

Ans. to Q. No. 27 : Dharma-sāstra

Ans. to Q. No. 28 : No, they emphasize on practice



11.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short questions

Q.1. What are the two distinct meanings of wealth, according to Kautilya?

Q.2. What are the four basic values mentioned in Indian Philosophy.

Q.3. State the four basic sciences found in Indian tradition.

Q.4. What do you mean by mokṣa?

Q.5. Who is the author of Kāmasūtra?

Q.6. State the meaning of dharma as a puruṣārtha.

Q.7. State the three ends of human life included in 'trivarga'.

B) Short questions (Answer in about 150-200 words)

Q.1. Writes short notes on :

a) Artha

b) Kāma

c) Dharma

d) Mokṣa or liberation

Q.2. How does J. N. Mohanti bring out the concept of Artha? Explain briefly

Q.3. Can Kāma transcend to love? What do you think? Explain briefly.

Q.4. Briefly explain the concept of mokṣa.

Q.5. Briefly comment on artha as one of the puruṣārthas of Indian tradition.

Q.6. Do you find any distinction between Mohantiy's concept of artha and Kautilya's concept of artha? Explain briefly.

Q.7. Does dharma prepare a man for the ultimate goal? Explain in brief.

C) Long questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q.1. What is artha? Explain after Kautilya.

Q.2. How does J.N. Mohanty explain and interpret the goal of artha?

Q.3. Explain the goal of desire or Kāma as a purusārtha.

Q.4. Is Dharma a moral ideal? Explain its nature.

Q.5. Discuss the views of different philosophical schools regarding the nature of mokṣha or liberation.

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UNIT 12 : THEORIES OF PUNISHMENT

UNIT STRUCTURE

12.1 Learning Objectives
12.2 Introduction
12.3 Notion of Crime and Punishment
12.4 Theories of Punishment
12.5 Deterrent Theory
12.6 Reformative Theory
12.7 Retributive Theory
12.8 Capital Punishment
12.9 Let Us Sum Up
12.10 Further Reading
12.11 Answers to Check Your Progress
12.12 Model Questions

12.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

- describe the concept of crime and punishment
- elaborate the deterrent theory of punishment
- discuss the reformative theory of punishment
- explain the retributive theory of punishment
- differentiate between different theories of punishment
- attempt a comparative assessment of different theories of punishment.

12.2 INTRODUCTION

The theories of punishment presuppose that punishment is an evil. Punishment is imposed because sometimes some people do wrong. Punishment may be either legal or divine. In the legal context this is called crime or offence. It denotes only those offences against society which are recognized by natural law. And these offences are liable for punishment. The issue of punishment deals with the legal process whereby the acts of violation of criminal law are punished according to the provisions of law. In the theological (divine) context this is called sin or evil. A man is rewarded for his good deed. On the other hand, a man is punished for his evil deeds.

If a man voluntarily violates a moral law (which is recognized by society), the authority of the moral law demands that he ought to be punished. This is the ethical justification of punishment. Justification of punishment can be derived from two approaches. The first one is **teleological approach** and the second one is **deontological approach**. Teleological approach holds that any act or policy is judged by its consequences in terms of good produced by it. While, deontological approach holds that an act is good or right irrespective of its consequences. From deontological approach we can discuss the retributive theory. Again from the teleological approach we can describe the **Deterrent** and **Reformative** theory.

12.3 NOTION OF CRIME & PUNISHMENT

Determinism as a scientific theory is of the view that the entire range of nature including man participates in an unbroken chain of events between cause and events. All events in the world are explained by antecedent or prior factors. The determinists accept the orderliness of the universe, the universal commands of natural laws and the advancement of science in explaining that all events are causally related. All human behaviour, like the physical happenings in the world, is determined by natural laws and is the result of antecedent events. In other words, determinism denies any freedom of will. There is only an 'unbending' necessity between facts of the world. The theory of Determinism is also known as Necessitarianism. The determinists advocate certain arguments in support of their view. They are:-



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q,1. State whether the following statements are True or False :

a) In the legal context punishment is called crime. (True/False)

b) Punishment is called sin or evil in the theological context. (True/False)

c) Justification of punishment can be derived from teleological and deontological approach. (True/False)

d) De-ontological approach holds that an act is good or right. (True/False)

Q.2. Fill in the blanks.

a) ..... holds that an act is good or right irrespective of its consequences.

b) ..... holds that an act or policy is judged by its consequences in terms of good produced by it.

c) The term crime is used in a narrower sense than .....

Q.3. What is crime?

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Q.4. What are the theories of punishment?

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ACTIVITY : 12.1

1. Do you find any difference between crime and sin? Explain.

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2. The term crime is used in a narrower sense than sin. What do you think?

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12.4 THEORIES OF PUNISHMENT

Three main theories have been put forward to justify punishment. These are generally known as:

- The Preventive theory. This theory holds that the aim of punishment is to hinder others from committing similar offences.
- The Educative theory. This theory holds that the aim of punishment is to educate or reform the offender himself.

- The Retributive theory. This theory holds that the aim of punishment is to vindicate the authority of the moral law.

12.5 THE PREVENTIVE THEORY or THE DETERRENT THEORY

This theory indicates that the aim of punishment is to hinder others from committing similar offences. It is expressed in the dictum of the judgment– "You are not punished for stealing sheep, but in order that sheep may not be stolen." The deterrent theory or the preventive theory works in two directions: (a) individual deterrence or specific; and (b) General deterrence. In case of individual deterrence an offender is punished for his crime in order to show that he commits a mistake. Again, individual deterrence or specific deterrence works in two ways. First, an offender may be kept in jail or prison to physically prevent her from committing another crime for a specified period. Second, this incapacitation will discourage the offender from repeating his/her criminal behaviour. On the other hand, in case of general deterrence an offender is punished not for his reformation but for the benefit of others. Here, punishment is not an end; rather it is imposed on a criminal as a means for the benefit of others. So, general deterrence shows that punishment imposed on a criminal as an example so that others learn that committing crimes are always dangerous.

This theory supports capital punishment or death penalty for the most dreaded criminals so that they cannot repeat the same type of crime. As for instance, if someone kills a man then he should also be killed to stop killing. In this context, this theory shows that criminals have no right to take away a life. That is why he should be sentenced to death to protect the public from murdering anyone else. Punishment should be an example so that others do not commit the same mistake. Here criminals are used as a means in order to prevent others from committing similar mistakes. But this theory cannot be accepted. We cannot use a criminal as a means in order to prevent others from committing the same crime. Because criminals are not things or objects that we can use for the benefit of others. Hence, punishment should be an end not a means. This theory raises a serious question i.e., is their any scope of reformation of a criminal in preventive theory? In answer, it can be said that there would not be any scope of reformation of a criminal if we accept the death penalty. In this context, the

preventive theory is not satisfactory. Sociologists and Criminologists want to show that most of the crimes are impulsive. A crime may stem from irrational thoughts and feelings. So, exemplary punishment is not conducive to discourage people from indulging in crime.

In short, it can be opined that Preventive theory or Deterrent theory does not encourage for reformation of a criminal. So, the very purpose of punishment imposed on a criminal is not entertained. Therefore, this theory is not applicable in a modern society as a satisfactory theory of punishment.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.5. State whether the following statements are True or False:

a) The Deterrent theory works in two directions. (True/False)

b) The Deterrent theory supports capital punishment. (True/False)



ACTIVITY : 12.2

1. Do you support preventive theory? Discuss.

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2. Is capital punishment inevitable in preventive theory? Discuss.

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12.6 REFORMATIVE THEORY OF PUNISHMENT

According to the supporters of the Reformative theory, the aim of the punishment is to reform the criminal himself. In this theory, punishment is not imposed as a means for the benefit of others. Rather, punishment is given to educate or reform the offender himself. Here, the crime committed by the criminal is an end, not a means as in the Deterrent theory. This view is commonly accepted in the present time. This theory favours the humanitarian sentiments of the age. Therefore, punishment is imposed for the welfare of the criminal himself. Unlike the Deterrent theory, the

Reformative theory does not treat the criminal or the offender as a thing or means for the benefit of others. Hence, punishment is inflicted on a criminal for his reformation.

This theory does not justify capital punishment. Because punishment is inflicted only to educate or reform the criminal himself. Punishment does not always make reform in a criminal. On the other hand, kind treatment sometimes produces a better result than punishment. It may be more favourable to the reformation of the criminal. Forgiveness can change the nature of the criminal and give the scope of repentance and reformation to the criminal. It is clear that the reformative theory does not justify capital punishment. It supports reformation of the criminal.

The Reformative theory is supported by physiologists, sociologists and psychologists.

A) **Physiologists** hold that crimes are due to physiological defect. Therefore, the criminals should not be punished. Rather, they should be treated in hospitals by psychologists or psycho-analysts. That is why, according to this theory, crime is not a deliberate act of violation on part of the criminal. It is only due to his mental instability. As for instance, we can mention Kleptomania. In ***Kleptomania***, a criminal is compelled to steal. Therefore, criminal anthropologists hold that criminals should not be punished. Rather, they ought to be treated in hospitals or reformatories. But the problem is that all crimes are not due to insanity or physiological defects. There are some crimes which are deliberate violations of the moral law and should be punished. Because such crimes are not due to physiological defects. As for instance, we can think about corruptions. It is evident that some businessmen indulge in adulteration of food, black-marketing etc. They deliberately violate certain moral laws. So, they ought to be punished.



Kleptomania : It is a mental illness in which a man has a strong desire to steal.

B) Again there are some crimes which are due to social inequalities. For instance, theft is a crime. The authority of the moral law demands that the person who is involved in theft should be punished. But if we investigate the case properly we understand that the cause of theft is poverty. Therefore, criminal sociologists view that we cannot think of prevention of crime without improving the social and economic

conditions of the common people. Crimes can be prevented only if the society is reconstructed on the basis of justice and equity. The advocates of this view are called criminal sociologists.

C) This theory is supported by psychologists. They hold that crimes are not due to willful violation of the moral law. Rather, crimes are due to mental disorder or insanity. That is why criminals should not be punished. They should be treated in hospitals or reformatories for reformation. Freud, a famous psychologist views that crimes are due to sex wishes or spite wishes. Therefore, the treatment of the criminal should be educational or medical rather than punishment. But there are some crimes which are deliberate violation of the moral law committed by some people. Therefore, they should be punished. So, punishment prevents others from committing similar crimes. It also can refine the criminal's mind not to take to the wrong path.

It is true that the Reformative theory can work fruitfully in case of reformation of non-habitual offenders. But in some cases it does not work smoothly, because a hard core criminal cannot be reformed. If we accept it then criminals will repeat the same type of offence. That is why, in stead of trying for the reformation of his criminal mind he should be punished. Thus, it can be said that the Reformative theory will be more effective if it is intended to supplement normal punishment, rather than replace it altogether.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.6. Fill in the blanks :

a) ..... holds that the aim of the punishment is to reform the criminal himself.

b) The reformative theory does not justify .....

c) ..... holds that crimes are due to mental disorder or insanity.



ACTIVITY : 12.3

1. Does reformative theory justify capital punishment? Discuss.

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2. Is reformative theory satisfactory? Discuss.

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12.7 THE RETRIBUTIIVE THEORY

This theory holds that the evil consequences of a man's deed are not merely evil to others, but the evils in which he is himself involved. It implies that punishment is an end in itself not a means to any end beyond itself. If a man commits a crime, the authority of the law demands that he ought to be punished. The main aim of the punishment is to safeguard the authority of the moral law. If a man commits a crime deliberately, the authority of the law demands that the man should be punished. Through the punishment of a criminal the authority or the supremacy of the moral law is established. If the criminal is not punished by the authority of the moral laws than it loses its dignity, majesty and supremacy. Therefore, if a man consciously violates a moral law he ought to be punished to vindicate the authority of the moral law. Again, this theory views that if a man takes the life of a man, justice demands that the criminal has no right to live. So, he should be sentenced to death. But it can be viewed that this theory justifies capital punishment under exceptional circumstances.

The supporters of this theory are Aristotle, ***Kant, Hegel, Bradley***. Aristotle holds that if a man commits a crime he gets negative reward in return. He deserves to get negative reward because he has committed a crime or violates a moral law. Immanuel Kant points out that if a man voluntarily commits a crime he should be punished. He should not be considered a means for the welfare of others. Rather he should be considered an end unto himself. Therefore, Kant says that moral law is categorical imperative in the sense that moral laws are unconditional. In his Metaphysics of Morals (1797), Kant observed: "Judicial punishment… can never be inflicted simply and solely as a means to forward a good, other than itself, whether …of the criminal, or of civil society; but it must at all times be inflicted on him, for no other reason than because he has acted criminally." Kant argued that a human being should always be treated as an end in itself, and not a means to another's end. This is the supreme principle of morality or the 'categorical imperative'. If an



Kant : (1724-1804) Immanuel, German philosopher.

Hegel : (1770-1831) George Wilhelm Friedrich, German idealist.

Bradley : (1846-1924) Francis Herbert, Idealist philosopher.

individual commits a crime, he violates the moral law. So, it shows that the crime commited by a criminal implies that he is responsible for that. None is responsible for his account. Therefore, Kant holds that moral law is imperative or unconditional because it comes from within to restore justice. That is why he beautifully writes that 'If justice perishes then it is no more worth while that man should live upon the earth.'

Hegel also like Aristotle holds that if a man commits a crime, he gains a reward in return for breaking a moral law. Bradley holds that punishment is imposed for the sake of punishment. Punishment is demanded by justice in order to safeguard the authority of the moral law. Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) a French Sociologist formulated social solidarity of punishment which is similar to the Retributive theory of punishment. His view is that crime is a violation of collective conscience, which consists of social values. He viewed that punishment is essentially a ceremonial reaffirmation of social values that are violated and challenged by the crime. In Durkheim's view, punishment of criminals is something like the sacrifice of individuals for the common good. So, Durkheim treats punishment as an end in itself like the Retributive theory.

The Retributive theory has **two** forms. The first one is **rigorist** and the second one is mollified form of punishment. The rigorist theory holds that if the offence is severe, the punishment should be severe. On the other hand, if the offence is light, the punishment should be light. If a person commits a murder, justice demands that the person should be sentenced to death. This form of punishment was found in the **Old Testament** of the **Judeo-Christian Bible**: "When a man causes a disfigurement in his neighbour… …it shall be done to him, fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth…" But the mollified form of the Retributive theory holds that punishment should be inflicted under some circumstances. The circumstances are the age of the criminal, his intention, provoking circumstances etc. There are taken into account when punishment is inflicted to a criminal. That is why this theory will say that if a person commits a murder, he should not be hanged without going through the circumstances under which he has commited the crime. According to some advocates of the retributive theory, men have free will and are capable of making rational decisions. An offender who is insane or otherwise incompetent should not be punished. In contrast to this, a person who deliberately upsets the balance of society should be punished.

Hence, it can be said that the mollified form of the retributive theory seems to be more satisfactory than the other theories of punishment.

The merit of the retributive theory is that it lays emphasis on the termination of social discrimination. None can get rid of punishment if he/she violates the authority of the moral law. Social status is not the determining factor to inflict punishment on a criminal. But Manu, an ancient law giver, prescribed the different levels of punishment for different castes. Aristotle also suggested the level of punishment. According to him, a slave possesses harsher punishment than a free man on the ground that the 'slave was less sensitive'.

The retributive theory seems to be more satisfactory than the other theories of punishment. John Mackenzie writes that neither reformative theory (for the criminal himself) nor preventive theory (for the welfare of others) can function unless and until it is supposed that punishment is the vindication of the authority of the moral law. It shows that both the theories take the motto of the retributive theory i.e., punishment is given in order to safeguard the authority of the moral law.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.7. State whether the following statements are true or false:

a) The retributive theory justifies capital punishment. (True/False)

b) According to the retributive theory, the aim of punishment is to safeguard the authority of the moral law. (True/False)

c) Aristotle, Kant, Hegel and Bradley advocate the retributive theory of punishment. (True/ False)

Q.8. What are the two forms of retributive theory?

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Q.9. What is mollified form of the retributive theory? (Answer in about 20 words)

.....

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Q.10. What is the motto of the retributive theory?

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ACTIVITY : 12.4

1. Do you support the Retributive theory of punishment? Discuss.

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2. Is capital punishment endorsed in the retributive theory? Discuss.

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12.8 DEBATE ON CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Capital Punishment indicates death penalty under a judicial verdict in accordance with the provisions of law as a punishment for crime. In the recent years most of the countries cast for vote for the abolition of capital punishment. However, it still continues as a part of the Indian penal system even though death is awarded in the rarest of the rare cases it is converted into life imprisonement. Death penalty seems to be rare in the Indian penal system because most of the crimes are converted into life imprisonment. Therefore, the question remains whether the issue of capital punishment should be retained in the statue of books or it should be abolished altogether. An argument against the capital punishment is that as such-crimes as befit death punishment are not inborn criminality on the point of the offender. That is why any crime against the violation of law is subject to scrutinize. It means, we have to see why he has chosen this criminal path. There may be some reasons, like lake of education, proper guidance and wholesome environment etc. On the very occasions factors like these lead to crimes.

From the debate on Capital punishment we can put forward the view that both the reformative theory and mollified form of the Retributive theory go against the capital punishment. Because the Reformative theory lays emphasis on the reformation of the criminal mind without imposing punishment. It undoubtedly helps to rectify a criminal's mind. That is why it is advocated in modern times. But in all cases we cannot accept it wholeheartedly. Now a days, we encounter the problem of terrorism.

Terrorists are not the ordinary illiterate or underprivileged people who commit crime under the stern of circumstances. They are rather a motivated group intent on killing people. In dealing with such criminals we cannot offer. Therefore, Capital punishment must be retained in our statute books in order to fight terrorism and other heinous crimes.



12.9 LET US SUM UP

- The concept of Justification of punishment can be deduced from two approaches. The first one is **teleological approach** and the second one is **deontological approach**.
- Teleological approach holds that any act or policy is judged by its consequences in terms of good produced by it. On the other hand deontological approach indicates that an act is good or right irrespective of its consequences. From deontological approach we can discuss the retributive theory. Again from the teleological approach we can describe the Deterrent and the Reformative theory.
- The theories of punishment can be discussed under two general philosophies: one is utilitarian and the other is retributive. The utilitarian theory of punishment seeks to punish offenders to discourage, or deter future wrong doing. On the other hand, the retributive theory punishes the offenders because they deserve to be punished.
- The Preventive theory of punishment holds that the aim of punishment is to hinder others from committing similar offences.
- The Educative theory or the reformative theory of punishment shows that the aim of punishment is to educate or reform the offender himself.
- The Retributive theory holds that the aim of punishment is to vindicate the authority of the moral law.
- The dictum of the preventive theory is-"You are not punished for stealing sheep, but in order that sheep may not be stolen."
- The reformative theory does not justify capital punishment. Because punishment is inflicted only to educate or reform the criminal himself. Punishment does not always make reform in a criminal. On the other hand, kind treatment sometimes produces a good result than punishment.

- According to the retributive theory, punishment is an end in itself not a means to any end beyond itself. This theory upholds the view that if a man commits a crime, the authority of the law demands that he ought to be punished. The main aim of the punishment, according to this theory is, is to safeguard the authority of the moral law. On the other hand if a man commits a crime deliberately, the authority of the law demands that the man should be punished.
- The Retributive theory has two kinds. The first one is rigorist and the second one is mollified form of punishment. The rigorist theory holds that if the offence is severe, the punishment should be severe. On the other hand, if the offence is light, the punishment should be light. But the mollified form of the Retributive theory holds that punishment should be inflicted under some circumstances. The circumstances are: the age of the criminal, his intention, provoking circumstances etc.
- John Mackenzie opines that neither reformative theory (for the criminal himself) nor preventive theory (for the welfare of others) can function unless and until it is supposed that punishment is the vindication of the authority of the moral law.



12.10 FURTHER READING

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3. Sinha, Jadunath. (1973). A Manual Of Ethics. New Central Book Agency, Calcutta 9.
4. Tom L. Beauchamp. (2001). Philosophical Ethics. Mc Grew-Hill College.

12.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans. to Q. No. 1 : a) True b) True c) True d) True

Ans. to Q. No. 2 : a) De-ontological approach b) Teleological approach c) Sin

Ans. to Q. No. 3 : The term 'crime' is generally used as an offence against society which is recognized by the natural law.

Ans. to Q. No. 4 : There are three theories of punishment. They are respectively :

i) Deterrent theory of punishment

ii) Reformative theory of punishment

iii) Retributive theory of punishment

Ans. to Q. No. 5 : a) True b)True

Ans. to Q. No. 6 : a) The reformative theory of punishment

b) Capital Punishment c) Psychologists

Ans. to Q. No. 7 : a) True b)True c)True

Ans. to Q. No. 8 : Mollified and Rigorous form of Punishment.

Ans. to Q. No. 9 : The mollified form of the retributive theory holds that punishment should be inflicted under same circumstances.

Ans. to Q. No. 10 : The motto of the retributive theory is, punishment is given in order to safeguard the authority of the moral law.



12.12 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short Questions

Q.1. What is teleological approach in the theories of punishment?

Q.2. Write the three principal theories of punishment.

Q.3. What is retributive theory of punishment?

Q.4. State the motto of the deterrent theory.

Q.5. What is mollified form of punishment?

Q.6. Mention the two forms of retributive theory.

B) Short Questions (Answer in about 150 words)

Q.1. Write short notes on:

a) Capital punishment

b) Preventive theory of punishment

c) Reformative theory

d) Retributive theory

e) Crime and punishment

f) Mollified form of retributive theory

g) Rigorous form of retributive theory

Q.2. Briefly comment on the preventive theory.

Q.3. What is reformative theory of punishment? Discuss briefly.

Q.4. Discuss briefly the retributive theory of punishment.

Q.5. What are the two forms of retributive theory? Which one you prefer, briefly discuss.

C) Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

Q.1. Define Crime? Do you find any distinction between Crime and Sin? Explain.

Q.2. What are the theories of punishment? Explain the preventive theory of punishment? Is it satisfactory?

Q.3. Explain the reformative theory of punishment? Is it satisfactory?

Q.4. Explain the retributive theory of punishment? Is it satisfactory?

Q.5. What is capital punishment? Is capital punishment tenable?

Q.6. What are the two forms of the retributive theory? Discuss.

Q.7. Do you accept the mollified form of punishment? If so, give reasons in support of your answer.

Q.8. Do you find any distinction between Reformative theory and Retributive theory? Discuss.

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UNIT 13 : Meta-Ethics: Its Nature and Distinction from Normative Ethics

UNIT STRUCTURE

13.1: Learning Objectives
13.2: Introduction
13.3: What is Meta-ethics
    13.3.1: Ethical Naturalism
    13.3.2: Ethical Non-Cognitivism
    13.3.3: Ethical Non-Naturalism (Intuitionism)
13.4: What is Normative ethics?
    13.4.1: Teleological Ethics
    13.4.2: De-ontological Ethics
    13.4.3: Virtue Ethics
13.5: Difference between Meta-Ethics and Normative Ethics
13.6: LET US SUM UP
13.7: Further Reading
13.8: Answers to Check Your Progress
13.9: Model Question

13.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to know

- the nature of Meta-ethics, that involves an answer to the question like what is meta-ethics and how is it different from normative ethics
- meta-ethics as the most abstract ethics that is concern with the basic principle governing all moral values.
- that the task of meta-ethics is not to prescribe norms, actions or values of ethics.
- that it is different from normative ethics which is concern with an authoritative standard or a model or norms by which things are judged
- that the meta-ethics is an ethical theory that does not deal with norms but rather concern with analyzing the meaning of ethical terms likes, 'good', 'right', 'should' etc.

13.2 INTRODUCTION

Ethics is a branch of philosophy which is concerned with ideas about moral judgments and the basis for rules of conduct, which apply to all humans. It deals with ethical questions like what is right? What is justice? What is virtue or how people should live etc. Ethics also explore the choice people make about the value and reasoning that lay behind them and about the meaning and use of moral terms. The study of ethics is broadly divided into two branches, namely meta-ethics and normative ethics. While normative ethics is based on law or norms theory that considers what kinds of things are good and bad and how we are to decide what kinds of action are right or wrong, meta-ethics on the other hand deals with philosophical analysis of the meaning of ethical terms like 'good', 'right', 'justice' etc. It may be noted that it was Moore's ethical theory of the indefinability of good that set the ground for this new direction of ethics in terms of analyzing moral language, which is popularly known as meta-ethics. Prior to Moore moral philosophy was primarily concern with concepts of moral value and judgments that either states or implies that something is good or bad, right or wrong. That is in other words prior to Moore, moral philosophy was mainly concern with making moral judgment, that are basically normative in nature.

13.3 WHAT IS META-ETHICS?

Meta-ethics is the branch of ethics that make a philosophical analysis of the meanings and character of ethical language like 'good', 'right', 'virtue' etc. It ask question like: "what is goodness?" or "how can we differentiate what is good from what is bad?", "what does it mean to say that something is right or wrong?' or "in what sense can a moral statement be said to be either true or false?" or "what do we mean when we say that euthanasia is wrong?" It is a bird's eye view of the entire project of ethics. It investigates the origin and meaning of ethical principles. Henceforth meta-ethics is the study of the origin and meaning of ethical concepts.

Meta-ethics can be broadly divided into the following subcategories:

13.3.1 Ethical Naturalism

Ethical naturalism also called moral naturalism or naturalistic cognitivism is a theory that all ethical statements can be translated

into natural or factual ones that are non-ethical. It express proposition that are true on the basis of objective features of the world, independent of human opinion. It claims that the things in one domain are identical with some of the things in another domain that belong to certain natural properties. For example it claims that moral properties like goodness and rightness can be reduced or describe in terms of natural properties like psychology. It is therefore also called a form of reductionism. Utilitarianism for instance can be understood within the framework of ethical naturalism. It claims that the only good is happiness. We can interpret this to mean not simply that happiness is the only thing that is good, but that happiness is what goodness is. That is it reduces goodness to happiness. Hence it implies that they are the same property. Happiness is a natural (psychological) property, and therefore, so is goodness.

G.E.Moore rejected the theory of ethical naturalism. He identified it as the fundamental philosophical mistake. This is because it defined moral words such as 'good' and 'right' in non-moral terms. He argued that equating goodness with any of the natural properties of things is inconsistent with the possibility of any ethics and commits the fallacy known as naturalistic fallacy.

13.3.2 Ethical Non-Cognitivism

Ethical non-Cognitivism is a meta-ethical view according to which ethical sentences do not express proposition and thus cannot be either true or false. It argues that ethical sentences lack truth value. There are different types of non-Cognitivism, namely emotivism, quasi-realism and prescriptivism.

Emotivism is a non-cognitivist doctrine that holds that ethical sentences serve merely to express emotion. It argues that ethical sentences are expressions of approval or disapproval. It does not make any assertion. For example to say "abortion is wrong" means something like "no abortion" which is neither true nor false because it is not asserting a genuine proposition. It is only expressing our emotion, expressing our disliking for abortion and thereby encouraging other

not to go for abortion. A.J.Ayer and C.L.Stevenson was an influential emotivist. Stevenson maintained that an ethical judgment is merely a linguistic act by which the speaker expresses her or his attitude and thereby seeks to influence the attitude and in turn the conduct of the listener.

Quasi-realism is also a non-cognitivist theory according to which ethical statements behave linguistically like factual claims. According to this theory ethical statements can be appropriately called 'true' or 'false', even though there are no ethical facts for them to correspond to. On the other hand prescriptivism is a non-cognitivist ethical theory according to which moral statements functions like universalized imperative sentences. Contemporary linguistic philosopher R.M, Hare argued against the emotivist theory and said that the function of moral discourse is not to express or influence attitudes but rather to guide conduct. Henceforth a moral judgment, according to Hare is a kind of prescriptive judgment that can be prescribed and universalize. For example, to say "abortion is wrong" means something like "don't abort". It is like prescribing a course of conduct that is general and exceptionless. That is anyone else in the same or relatively similar situation ought to conduct in the same way. Hare's version of prescriptivism requires that moral prescriptions be universalizable and hence actually have objective values, in spite of failing to be indicative statements with truth-values per se.

13.3.3 Ethical Non- Naturalism (Intuitionism)

Ethical non-naturalism is the meta-ethical doctrine according to which ethical statements express propositions that cannot be reduced to non-ethical statement (in the way ethical naturalism assumes). It therefore holds that it is not possible to define 'good' for example in terms of one or more natural properties like 'pleasant,' 'desired' etc. It argued that ethical statements are indefinable. That is, ethical statements cannot be defined in any other terms. According to Moore any attempt to define it in term of natural property commit a fallacy known as naturalistic fallacy. Moore's argues that an ethical term like 'good' is a simple, non-natural property just like any colour

for example 'yellow'. It is in this sense cognitivist. However it does not mean that it is in some way supernatural or devines. It simply means that goodness cannot be reduced to natural properties such as pleasure or any happiness or to other terms which can be physically seen, touched or measured. It is an intrinsic value that can be known only intuitively. The philosophy that ethical terms or concepts can be known intuitively is known as the doctrine of intuitionism or ethical intuitionism. It is therefore a variant of ethical non-naturalism which was developed in an attempt to address the epistemological problem, inherent in ethical non-naturalism, of how we can ever know that anything is good, how we can distinguish good from bad, and how we can justify our moral beliefs without reducing them to any naturalistic properties. That is ethical intuitionism in other word is a doctrine that claims that we can have intuitive awareness of moral properties or of moral truths.

13.4 WHAT IS NORMATIVE ETHICS?

The term "normative" reflects the ordinary view that some things are better than others. It is an authoritative standard or rules by which other things are judged or confronted. Accordingly a normative ethics is that branch of ethics that deals with norms and includes moral prescriptions like the golden rule. It considers what kinds of things are good and bad and how we are to decide what kinds of action are right and wrong. It also decides how people ought to act and behave, as well as how a person makes moral choices. An example of a normative ethical question would be like, 'is capital punishment right?'

Normative ethics can be split into three categories namely, teleological, deontological and virtue ethics.

13.4.1 Teleological Ethics

According to the teleological theory moral judgments are based entirely on the effects produced by an action. That is an action is considered right or wrong in relation of its consequences. Consider for example, an action phrases like, "will this hurt me?" or "will this hurt others?" the answer to such questions will be determined by

what we think the consequence will be, good or bad. And just as there can be different opinions about whether a particular result is good or bad, this accounts for the great variety of teleological theories. Some may answer that an action is right if it benefits the person performing the action.

13.4.2 Deontological Ethics

Deontological ethics on the other hand is a theory of ethics that is base in duty. The word 'deontological' comes from the Greek word deon, which means 'duty' and science or study, of (logos). It is the "science of duty" or duty-based ethics which is concerned with the duty to acts, regardless of the good or bad consequences that may be produced. That is it is concerned with the acts themselves, which are intrinsically right or wrong. That is a rightness of an action does not depend on its consequences, which is why it is also sometimes called non-Consequentialist. Deontology is different from other theories, such as utilitarianism, which says we have an obligation to take the course of action that achieves the most positive outcome or consequence. According the theory of utility, the best consequence is happiness/pleasure, because it is considered the absolute good. Consequentialism tells us we need to take into account the final consequence of our action, even if the act itself is not morally good. On the other hand, the theory of deontology states we are morally obligated to act in accordance with a certain set of principles and rules regardless of outcome. In religious deontology, the principles derive from divine commandment so that under religious laws, we are morally obligated not to steal, lie, or cheat. Thus, deontological theories and duties have existed for many centuries. However it was Immanuel Kant, who has formulated the most influential form of a secular deontological moral theory according to which the rules (or maxims) should derive from human reason. Moral law according to Kant should consists of a set of maxims, which are categorical in nature and we are bound by duty to act in accordance with categorical imperatives.

There are three formulations of Kant's categorical imperative:

The First Formulation of the Imperative

"Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law without contradiction."

The Second Formulation of the Imperative

"Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never merely as a means to an end but always at the same time as an end."

The Third Formulation of the Imperative

"Therefore, every rational being must so act as if he were through his maxim always a legislating member in the universal kingdom of ends."

13.4.3 Virtue Ethics

When normative ethics has virtues as standard of good character in terms of which an action is judged, it is called virtue ethics. According to virtue ethics we ought to possess certain character traits such as courage, generosity, compassion, honesty etc and these ought to be manifest in our actions. It focuses on the agent and argues that we ought to act in ways that exhibit the virtues. It attempts to answer the question like "what sort of person I ought to be?" The answer lies in a virtue that is morally desirable state of character. The theory is directed not at what actions one ought to do, but on what person one should be. It therefore addresses specific question what is a virtuous person like? What is a vicious person like? What makes traits of character virtuous or vicious? Virtue ethics aims to specify the virtues, that is, traits of characters it is good or bad to possess. It argues and explains for example that courage is a virtue whereas cowardice a vice. Aristotle for example advocated virtue ethics and discusses in his Nicomachean Ethics, the conditions under which moral responsibility may be ascribed to individual agents, the nature of the virtues and vices involved in moral evaluation and the methods of achieving happiness in human life. The central question concerning Aristotle virtue ethics was the

question of character that takes for an individual human being to be a good person. Aristotle argues that ultimate goal of human life could be happiness or living well. He further argues that neither the ordinary notions of pleasure, wealth and honor nor the philosophical theory forms provide an adequate account of this ultimate goal. This is because even individuals who acquire the material goods or achieve intellectual knowledge may not be happy. He concluded that genuine happiness lies in action that could be attained only through the cultivation of virtue.

13.5 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN META-ETHICS AND NORMATIVE ETHICS

The distinction between normative ethics and meta-ethics does not come without some justifications. There is the general distinction between use and mention that is between using an expression and talking about it. And there is the more specific distinction between knowing how to use a language and knowing how to explicate that use, with regard to the logic of the expressions in question, how they are to be classified and otherwise related to one another. Nevertheless distinction can be maintained with regard to the meaning of meta-ethics and normative ethics in the following sense:

1) Meta-ethics implies or presupposes no specific normative ethical doctrines, so that the same meta-ethics is compatible with different and even opposed normative ethics

2) Normative ethics implies or presupposes no specific meta-ethical doctrines, so that the same normative ethics is compatible with different and even opposed meta-ethic

It will be noted that these two views are logically distinct. It might be possible to hold that the same meta-ethics for example emotivism, is compatible with such different normative ethics as hedonism and deontologism, while at the same time denying that the same normative ethics, example hedonism, is compatible with both emotivism and intuitionism. The reverse is also possible. Hence it may be concluded that thought distinct in their primary questions and concerns, meta-ethics and normative ethics are not independent of each other.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1: Define Meta-ethics.

.....

Q.2: What are the other names of ethical naturalism?

.....

Q 3: Define Ethical Non-cognitivism.

.....

Q 4: What is Quasi realism?

.....

Q 5: What is ethical Non-naturalism?

.....

Q 6: What is the doctrine of intuitionism or ethical intuitionism?

.....

Q 7: Normative ethics can be split into how may categories? What are they?

.....



13.6 LET US SUM UP

- Meta-ethics is a philosophical inquiry that looks at the underlying reasons for why we form certain moral judgements and beliefs.
- It is an abstract inquiry into the metaphysic and linguistic nature of morality. It questions what do we mean when we make ethical claims (it is wrong to kill).
- Another meta-ethical issue is whether there is any objective basis to morality. Whether God or divine command can give us an objective basis to morality or perhaps reason and rationality is the source of objectivity. These issues don't have a "direct" relevance to how we ought to act or what we should do in this or that situation.
- Normative ethical questions specific actions that aims to provide guidelines as to how one acts, behaviours, lives, forms certain

judgements. It discusses topics like the ethics of abortion, stem cell research, euthanasia, war, charity, capital punishment. That is it deals with questions of "Ought" and "should".. should we do this or that? What one ought to do in this or that situation?

- In other words while normative ethics addresses such questions as "What should one do?", thus endorsing some ethical evaluations and rejecting others, meta-ethics addresses the question "What is (moral) goodness?" seeking to understand the nature of ethical properties and evaluations.



13.7 FURTHER READING

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13.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q 1: Meta-ethics is the branch of ethics that make a philosophical analysis of the meanings and character of ethical language like 'good', 'virtue', 'right 'etc.

Ans to Q 2: Moral naturalism or naturalistic cognitivism is a theory that all ethical statements can be translated into natural or factual ones that are non-ethical.

Ans to Q 3: Ethical non-cognitivism is a meta-ethical view according to which ethical sentences do not express proposition and thus cannot be either true or false.

Ans to Q 4: Quasi-realism is a non-cognitivist theory according to which ethical statements behave linguistically like factual claims.

Ans to Q 5: Ethical non-naturalism is the meta-ethical according to which ethical statements express propositions that cannot be reduced to non-ethical statements.

Ans to Q 6: The philosophy that ethical terms or concepts can be known intuitively is known as the doctrine of intuitionism or ethical intuitionism.

Ans to Q 7: Normative ethics can be split into three categories. They are teleological, deontological and virtue ethics.



13.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions

1. What is meta-ethics ?
2. What is normative ethics ?
3. Cite two examples of normative ethics?
4. What is the difference between normative ethics and meta-ethics?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

1. Define cognitivism?
2. Define non-cognitivsm as a theory of ethics?
3. What are the different types of cognitivism?
4. Cite two fundamental moral questions that are central to the theory of meta-ethics?
5. Define virtue ethics?

C) Short notes (Answer in about 150 words)

1. Is utilitarianism a type of consequentialism? Give reason for your answer.

2. How would the meta-ethicist address the question "what is 'good'?"
3. How is emotivism different from prescriptivism?
4. Is utilitarianism a type of consequentialism? Give reason for your answer.

D) Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

1. What do you understand by emotivism?
2. What do you understand by utilitarianism?
5. Explain naturalism as a theory of ethics?
6. What do you understand by consequentialism? Is it different from deontology? Give reason.
7. Give a meta-ethical account of ethical terms such as "good"?

* * * * *

UNIT 14 : MOORE: INDEFINABILITY OF GOOD

UNIT STRUCTURE

14.1: Learning Objectives
14.2: Introduction
14.3: The Indefinability Of Good
  14.3.1: Simple and Complex Property
  14.3.2: Open question argument
14.4: Naturalistic Fallacy
14.5: Good as Intrinsic Value
14.6: Criticism
14.7: Let us sum up
14.8: Further Reading
14.9: Answer to check your progress
14.10: Model Question

14.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to

- Discuss the objective of the study is to sets out Moore criticisms of 'ethical naturalism'.
- Describe the 'naturalistic fallacy'.
- Explain why good is indefinability.

14.2 INTRODUCTION

Moore's ethical propositions involves a wide range of unique concepts like, "ethical" or "moral," such as "good," "right," "duty," etc. According to Moore, the most fundamental of these is "good". This is because others count as moral concepts or properties only because they bear logical relationships to "good." Moore draws a significance understanding of what good is and is no, a position other ethical theorists has generally not grasped. He makes a distinction between the verbal definitions of a word, that is what a word is used to mean or how people generally use a word and second, is concern with the real definition of a word, that is what the real nature of an object or notion is. In other words, Moore's ethics bring forth an important distinction between two di?erent kinds of ethical claims: claims about what things are good, and claims

about what actions we ought to perform. Consider for example, an act is right if and only if it produces more good than any other available action. Moore's view was that of these two kinds of ethical properties: the property of a state of a?airs being good, and of an act being right - the former was the more fundamental.

Moore in his "Principia Ethica", argued that philosophers who tried to make an ethical claim by appealing to a definition of the term "good" in terms of one or more natural properties like "pleasant", "more evolved", "desired", etc commit a fallacy which he called the "Naturalistic Fallacy". He argued that, the term "good" is in fact indefinable, because it names a simple, non-natural property, and cannot be analyzed in terms of any other property. It is an intrinsic value that lacks natural properties. Thus, when a Hedonist, for example, claims "Anything that is pleasant is also good", it is always possible to counter with "That thing is pleasant, but is it good?" His argument for the indefinability of good is often called the Open Question Argument.

14.3 THE INDEFINABLITY OF GOOD

G. E. Moore maintained that "good" is an indefinable primitive that cannot be defined in term of some natural properties. The core position of Moore's indefinability of good is that, it is a simple property. That something is definable is to have complex property. This is because simple properties cannot be defined. Hence when we say something is good, there are three possible view about goodness either (i) goodness is a simple unde?nable property, (ii) it is a complex, de?nable property, or (iii) the word 'good' is meaningless, and 'there is no such subject as Ethics.' Moore dismisses (iii). His argument against (ii) is often called the 'open question' argument.

14.3.1 Simple and Complex Property

That something is good is to have a property of goodness. There are basically two types of properties namely: simple and complex properties. Moore's plausible idea is that some 'properties' are complexes of other, more basic (simple) properties. He gives the property of being a horse as an example of such a property. That it

has four legs, a head, a heart, a liver, etc. etc. all of them arranged in de?nite relations to one another such that we might think just as clearly and correctly about a horse. That is the proposed de?nition of the property of being a horse is identical to, a certain combination of more basic properties. Moore contrasts the property of being a horse with yellow or yellowness. Consider for example, we may define the colour yellow by describing its physical equivalent; we may state what kind of light-vibrations must stimulate the normal eye, in order that we may perceive it. However it may be noted that those light-vibrations are not themselves what we mean by yellow. They are not what we perceive. Indeed, we should never have been able to discover their existence, unless we had ?rst been struck by the patent di?erence of quality between the di?erent colours. The idea is that we can say what yellow is, in sense that we can say what properties invariably accompany yellowness: e.g., dispositions to emit certain light-vibrations. But we cannot say what the nature of the property of being yellow is: and this is because the colour 'yellow' is a simple property, which is not analyzable. Therefore it is indefinable.

The point of argument is that good like yellow is a simple indefinable property. Moore's argument for this position is known as the open question argument.

14.3.2 Open question argument

Moore's main argument for the indefinability of good is the argument that has come to be known as the open-question argument. According to this argument, Moore advances the considerations usually cited in this context: the "desire to desire to desire to desire" passage and the thought experiment concerning the difference between the questions "is pleasure good?" and "is pleasure pleasant?" The argument runs as follow:

1. Goodness is a simple and inde?nable property because, for any analysis F of goodness, it is not clear whether F-ness is itself good.

2. Goodness is a simple and inde?nable property because, for any proposed analysis F of goodness, the proposition that F-ness is good is distinct from the proposition that F-ness is F.

3. Goodness is a simple and inde?nable property because, for any proposed analysis F of goodness, for any object x the proposition that x is good is distinct from the proposition that x is F.

While the ?rst version of the argument does not seem convincing, the second or third version of the argument apparently relies on the following two principles:

1. 'Given that x is F, is x good?' is an open question.

2. 'Given that x is good, is x good?' is not an open question.

Conclusion: 'x is F' and 'x is good' express di?erent propositions.

What must 'open question' mean for this argument to be valid? The property for which 'F' stands and the property for which 'good' stands are not identical. What view of propositions is needed for this argument to be valid? This is an open question.

The phrase "open question" suggest that people who think that good is definable will maintain that the ethical principle which incorporates their definition cannot be sensibly rejected; to anyone who rejects it, the upholder of the definition will reply: "this is not an open question : the very meaning of the word decides it ; no one can think otherwise except though confusion."

Moore's point is that every attempt at definition leaves it an open question as to what good really is. But this could be the case only if the definition failed to capture all of what is meant by "good." Consider the case of a bachelor. Who is a bachelor, "a bachelor is an unmarried man." Here it makes no sense to respond "yes, but is a bachelor really an unmarried man?" or "but is every unmarried man really a bachelor?" The reason it doesn't is that the full meaning of "bachelor" is captured by "unmarried man." On the other hand, the reason it makes sense to ask these kinds of questions about purported definitions of "good" is that they fail to capture its full meaning. Since

this is true of every purported definition of "good," "good" cannot be defined.

Moore further argued that any attempt to define 'good' in terms of natural properties commit the fallacy which is known as Naturalistic fallacy. He calls it naturalistic fallacy because he claims that the proposed de?nition try to analyze goodness in natural terms.

14.4 NATURALISTIC FALLACY

Naturalistic theories attempt to define 'good' in terms of natural properties. By natural properties Moore include all non-moral properties. Any attempt to define good or goodness in terms of naturalistic property according to Moore commit the fallacy known as naturalistic fallacy. Moore holds that the role of ethics is to define one moral concept in terms of another moral concept. In this sense, the notion of 'good' in ethical sense can be defined for example in terms of 'right' or 'ought'. Consider for example, 'A right action is one that leads to a good consequence'. The problem which such definition of 'good' is that it equate 'good' with 'right' or 'right' with 'good'. The question arises is good always right or is right always good. It is an open whose definition would be circular and not a definition at all. Henceforth for Moore we are forced to admit that good is indefinable.

Moore's explicate the fundamental truth of the argument that good in indefinable, by considering any common naturalistic definition of good. He considers for example, 'good' is 'productive of pleasure'. The question is not whether this statement is true or false. It is rather a question of whether this gives an adequate definition of good. Moore does admit that good actions are as a matter of fact, 'productive of pleasure'. Some may even go further and state that productiveness of pleasure is part of the meaning of the terms 'good', but it does not constitute the whole of its meaning. Hence 'production of pleasure' cannot serve as a definition of 'good'. There are still others who may maintain that what causes an action to be good is the fact that it produces pleasure, but a statement of what causes an action to be good is not a definition of goodness as such. Similarly we may say that light of a certain wave length causes the colour yellow, but this would not be a definition of yellow.

From the aforesaid discussion, what Moore needs to prove is only that 'good' includes something more than 'productivity of pleasure' or for that matter any other natural characteristic in its connotation. This is because the concept 'good' is not identical with the concept of 'productive of pleasure'. The answer to the question, what is good, can only be decided by introspection or by seeing what we mean in our own minds when we use the term 'good'. In other word 'good' can only be recognized (in particular cases) through acts of intuitive apprehension.

14.5 GOOD AS INTRINSIC VALUE

Moore claims that once arguments based on the naturalistic fallacy had been discarded, good can be understood more in terms of intrinsic value. Moore sets out his list of intrinsic goods such as friendship and the appreciation of beauty (and intrinsic evils such as consciousness of pain). He maintains that these intrinsic values are incommensurable, and thus that the assessment of priorities among them is inescapably a matter of individual judgment. That is in other word, the questions of intrinsic goodness could only be settled by appeal to what he called "moral intuitions". It is self-evident propositions which recommend themselves to moral reflection, but which are not susceptible to either direct proof or disproof. As a result of his view, he has often been seen by later writers as an advocate of ethical intuitionism. Moore however distinguished his view from deontological intuitionists, who held that intuitions could determine questions about what actions are right or required by duty. On the other hand, Moore as a consequentialist, argued that duties and moral rules could be determined by investigating the effects of particular actions or kinds of actions, and so were matters for empirical investigation rather than direct objects of intuition. In Moore's view, intuitions revealed not the rightness or wrongness of specific actions, but only what things were good in themselves as ends to be pursued.

14.6 CRITICISM

It is argued against Moore that if we cannot provide a definition of 'good', it become impossible to study the fundamental notion of ethics. If

we accept Moore's position that we know 'good' only intuitively, and that it is the end of the matter, it may be argued that good may be know intuitively, but that it may not be the end of the matter. That is, the critic argued that there is scope to maintain that ethics can contain a great many universally true statements about good. Consider the example , 'yellow' is a notion that is simple and cannot be analysed into any simpler notions; it can only be known by a direct apprehension of the colour, so that a man born blind, cannot have such a direct apprehension and thus the colour remains unknowable. If we go by Moore, 'yellow' like 'good' is a notion that would be indefinable. However many true scientific statements can be made about 'yellow'. For example, it can be described in terms of the wave length with which it is correlated in physics, although the colour sensation is certainly not identical with the wavelength. Again another way of defining it is that yellow can be stated to be the complementary colour of blue; or that nit is the limit of a series of colours passing from red through orange; or that it is the colour of certain natural objects like buttercups and sulphur and so on. Similarly, even if good in indefinable, the critic argued that there still can be made a great many universally true statements about 'good'. Reference may be made of true statement about good such as good is always productive of pleasure, or that good is always commanded by God. This is however not providing definition of good.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1: Who is the writer of 'Principia Ethica'?

.....

Q.2: Can good be defined through some natural property?

.....

Q.3: If something is good, what property it should have?

.....

Q.4: What is Moore's main agrument for the indefinability of good.

.....

Q.5: Who has presented the naturalistis fallaby?

.....



14.7 LET US SUM UP

- The central thesis of Principia Ethica is that "good" is a simple, non-natural concept or property.
- For something to be ontologically simple is for it to possess no parts, to admit of no divisions or distinctions in its own constitution.
- A simple is not made up out of anything, and thus cannot be broken down into anything.
- Simples are therefore unanalyzable. In the case of "good," it is a concept not made up of other concepts. Consequently it cannot be analyzed, broken down into constituents, in the way that "bachelor" can.
- Moore illustrates the situation by comparing "good" to color concepts like "yellow." Color concepts cannot be known by analytic description, but only by acquaintance, that is, direct cognition.
- Attempts at description or definition (that is, analysis) such as "yellow is a color brighter than blue," fail to capture the essence of yellow.
- Likewise, purported analyses of "good," in terms concepts like "pleasure" or "desire" or "evolutionary progress," fail to capture what is meant by "good."



14.8 FURTHER READING

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2. G. E. Moore, Principia Ethica. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903
3. Baldwin, Tom, "George Edward Moore", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2010 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2010/entries/moore/>.
4. Hurka, Thomas, "Moore's Moral Philosophy", The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Fall 2015 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2015/entries/moore-moral/>.

5. Frankena, William, 1939, "The Naturalistic Fallacy," Mind, 48: 464-77
6. Hare, R.M., 1952, The Language of Morals, Oxford: Clarendon Press.



14.9 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q 1: G. E. Morro.

Ans to Q 2: No.

Ans to Q 3: Goodness.

Ans to Q 4: Open Question Argument

Ans to Q 1: G. E. Morro.



14.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short Question

1) Who has written the book 'principia ethica'?
2) What according to G.E. Moore cannot be defined in terms of some natural properties?
3) What is naturalistic fallacy?
4) Give a name of consequentialist philosopher.
5) Cite two examples of ethical naturalism.

B) Short Questions (Answer in about 150 words)

1) Write short note on the indefinability of good?
2) What is meant by moral intuitions?
3) What is meant by intrinsic value? Cite two examples.
4) Is good always productive of pleasure?

C) Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

1. What do you understand by ethical naturalism?
2. Is good definable? Discuss after Moore's Principia Ethica.
3. Discuss after Moore the meaning of the phrase "open question?"
4. Is good analyzable? Give reason for your answer.

* * * * *

UNIT 15 : EMOTIVIST ANALYSIS OF MORAL LANGUAGE

UNIT STRUCTURE

15.1. Learning Objectives

15.2. What is emotivist analysis of moral language or emotivism?

15.3. Ayer's emotivism

15.4. Ayer and the principle of verification

15.5. Evaluating Ayer's emotivism

15.6. Stevenson's emotivism

15.7. Emotivism and moral disagreement

15.8. Let us sum up

15.9. Further reading

15.10. Answers to check your progress

15.11. Model questions

15.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to know

- About the concept of emotivist analysis of moral language.
- What is emotivism?
- What is Ayer's view about emotivism?
- What is Ayer's view about the principle of verification?
- What is Stevenson's emotivism?

15.2 IS EMOTIVIST ANALYSIS OF MORAL LANGUAGE OR EMOTIVISM?

Emotivist analysis of moral language means the theory of emotivism about moral languages or moral judgments, sentences, words, and speech acts or ethical sentences. Emotivism is a meta-ethical view that claims that ethical sentences do not express propositions but emotional attitudes. Hence, it is colloquially known as the hurrah or boo theory. Emotivism claims that moral judgements express the feeling or attitude of approval or disapproval.

According to emotivism moral judgments do not function as statements of fact but rather as expressions of the speaker's or writer's feelings. According to the emotivist theory, when we say "You acted wrongly in stealing that money", we are not expressing any fact beyond that stated

by "You stole that money". It is, however, as if we had stated this fact with a special tone of abhorrence, for in saying that something is wrong, we are expressing our feelings of disapproval toward it. Emotivism was expounded by A.J. Ayer in Language, Truth and Logic (1936) and developed by Charles Stevenson in Ethics and Language (1945).

Emotivism claims that moral judgements express the feeling or attitude of approval or disapproval. To say that 'Murder is wrong' is to express one's disapproval of murder. Ethical language is 'emotive'. So, in one sense, emotivism claims that morality is 'subjective'. However, there is an important distinction between emotivism and the theory that is called 'subjectivism'. Subjectivism claims that moral judgements assert or report approval or disapproval, and there is a difference between expressing disapproval and asserting it.

One form of subjectivism claims that to say 'X is wrong' is simply to say that it is generally disapproved of. But this can't be right, because it is not a contradiction to say 'Most people approve of X, but X is wrong nonetheless'. For example, racism has been very common historically. We may argue that 'racism is wrong' even while acknowledging that most people approved of it.

A second form of subjectivism, 'speaker subjectivism', claims that the meaning of 'X is wrong' is something like 'I disapprove of X' or again 'I think X is wrong'. This is a fact about oneself, so the statement can be true or false and is verifiable. Speaker subjectivism, therefore, is an unusual form of cognitivism: the facts that make moral judgements true are facts about the individual speaker's mind.

Speaker subjectivism entails that we cannot make mistakes about what is right or wrong. If I say 'Murder is right', I am simply stating that 'I approve of murder'. If I am sincere, then I do approve of murder, and so murder is, indeed, right ('for me', we might say). But we naturally think that people can make mistakes about morality. Speaker subjectivism makes no sense of deliberation, trying to figure out what is right or wrong. Why should I bother to deliberate? Whatever I come to feel will be right!

By contrast, emotivism claims that moral judgements do not express any kind of truth or falsehood, because they are not cognitive. It can explain the objections to subjectivism above. To say that 'most people approve of racism' does not contradict 'racism is wrong', because 'racism is wrong'

doesn't state something true or false. And one cannot be infallible in the sense of getting the answer right, there are no moral truths.

Emotivism can be considered as a form of non-cognitivism or expressivism. It stands in opposition to other forms of non-cognitivism (such as quasi-realism and universal prescriptivism), as well as to all forms of cognitivism (including both moral realism and ethical subjectivism).

15.3 AYER'S EMOTIVISM

A.J. Ayer develops his emotive theory of ethics within the framework of logical positivism. In his "Language, Truth and Logic" he holds that a statement is literally meaningful if and only if it is either analytic or empirically verifiable. If the statement is analytic, it can be confirmed or disconfirmed by the test of logical consistency. It is verified simply by appeal to the definitions of signs used in the statement. If it turns out to be tautology, it is true; if it turns out to be contradiction, it is false. If the statement is empirical, it can be verified or disverified by observation. When there is no conceivable way to find such evidence, the statement has no literal meaning. As logical positivist Ayer believes that there are just two species of significant propositions-tautologies and empirically verifiable assertions of fact. Propositions of logic and mathematics and all definitions of symbols fall into the first category; propositions of science and of ordinary life, in so far as they state matters of fact, fall into the second category. Ayer applies this verifiability theory of meaning to ethics.

Ayer finds that "what seems to be an ethical judgment is very often a factual classification of an action as belonging to some class of actions by which a certain moral attitude on the part of the speaker is habitually aroused." Such judgments are verifiable and therefore, literally meaningful. Descriptions of social mores or psychological phenomena of moral experience are factual statements which belong to the science of sociology or psychology. Definitions that specify the meaning of ethical terms without asserting the objective existence of ethical properties are analytic sentences which have logical meaning and are used for conceptual clarification. There are, however, many judgments in which an ethical term is used in a purely normative way, e.g.; 'pleasure is good', 'theft is wrong'. Judgments of this kind, according to this kind, according to Ayer, can be verified in neither of the approved ways. They cannot be shown to be true or false by definition. Again goodness or wrongness

is not a property which can be given in experience. These judgments are non-sense from an empirical point of view. As G.J. Warnock describes the situation, "since, naturally and rightly, the positivists are disinclined to swallow 'intuition' as a respectable means of verification, and since no one was disposed to maintain that moral judgments in general were either tautologous or verifiable by ordinary sense experience, it followed that they could not be significant propositions: they could not really be, as their grammatical form might lead one to suppose, assertions in which genuine 'properties' were ascribed to things, or indeed genuine assertions of any kind at all. They must be, in their grammatical form, mere masqueraders."

According to Ayer, fundamental ethical concepts are pseudo-concepts. Moral judgments are not assertions but merely emotive expressions through which we express our feelings and attitudes. Sentences like 'Milk is white' and 'Marry is happy' express propositions that are either true or false. But when one says 'Theft is wrong', one is not asserting anything. The sentence does not express any proposition at all. We may speak of ethical sentences but not of ethical propositions, for no ethical sentences express propositions. Thus, 'ought to be' is without meaning, for we can experience what is, but we cannot experience what ought to be. Such words convey no information about the actual word. Describing emotions is different from expressing emotions. The primary function of moral judgment is to express the speaker's feelings and attitudes about certain object, but not to make any assertion about them.

Ayer agrees with Moore in rejecting naturalism which defines ethical words in natural terms.

The significance of ethical words is to be determined in terms of the different feelings they express and of the different emotional responses they are calculated to evoke. Moral sentences are therefore non-cognitive. They are unverifiable for the same reason as cry of pain or a word of command is unverifiable---because they do not express genuine propositions. At this point there is a duality in Ayer's doctrine. He likens a moral utterance to a "cry of pain" or a "word of command". These functions are different. On the one hand an ethical sentence is like an ejaculation such as 'Hurrah' or 'Boo'. On the other hand, some of the ethical sentences are used in such a way as to give the sentences in which they occur the effect of commands. Like a word of command an ethical sentence seeks to arouse emotion in the listener and thus to incite him to action. Whether ethical sentences are expressions of

feelings or excitants of attitudes, they have no cognitive meaning. The duality of functions suggests that according to Ayer, if a moral theory cannot account for the moving appeal of ethical utterances, it would be inadequate. Moral language is often intimately associated with action. When I denounce something I am trying to persuade others to stop doing it. Moral judgements are expressive or imperative but they are never descriptive. Therefore, Ayer's emotive theory is known as radical emotivism.

If ethical sentences have no literal meaning, it is impossible to argue about their truth or falsity. It is Ayer's contention that we never argue about purely moral matters. There is clash of subjective attitudes but no logical contradiction of assertions. In moral matters, "the dispute is not really about a question of value but about a question of fact." In contesting a person's moral opinion, we attempt to call his attention to matters of fact which we think must have overlooked. If our opponent agrees with every factual consideration which we can bring forward, but still disagrees with us about the moral value of the action or situation in question, then, says Ayer, "we abandon the attempt to convince him by argument" and we have in the end recourse to "mere abuse".



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Fill up the blanks:

(a) A.J. Ayer develops his emotive theory of ethics within the framework of……..

(b) Ayer in his …….. holds that a statement is literally meaningful if and only if it is either analytic or empirically verifiable. .

(c) As ……. Ayer believes that there are just two species of significant propositions.

(d) According to Ayer, fundamental ethical concepts are ……

(e) Ayer agrees with Moore in …… naturalism which defines ethical words in natural terms.

15.4 EVALUATING AYER'S EMOTIVISM

It is often believed that the emotive theory is an attempt to discredit ethics. But this criticism is based on misunderstanding. The emotive theory only explores the consequences of a sounding point of logic which was already made by David Hume that 'ought' does not follow from 'is', that there is no

logical bridge between the realm of facts and the realm of values. Ayer's account of the nature of ethical sentences is based on the verification principle. If verification has to be made in terms of observation of sensible events, then clearly our moral utterances must be separated from descriptive sentences. Ayer's concern is to mark off scientific from non-scientific discourse, statements of fact from pseudo-statements which purport to, but do not state facts. What he has particularly resented in the intuitionist mythology of objectivity of moral values is authoritarianism, because it leads to acceptance of certain persons as undisputed authorities in moral matters.

There are difficulties which beset Ayer's emotive theory of ethics. It maintains that moral approval or disapproval is an affective-conative attitude, not a cognitive judgment claiming truth. But, as Paton points out, "When I say that an action is morally good I am at least attempting to rise above my contingent personal likes and dislikes". This implies an appeal to principles which provide the basis for our moral responses. If reasonable grounds for accepting fundamental moral principles are available, this will place moral judgments beyond emotive responses. From Ayer's point of view, the utterance of every ethical sentence is accompanied by a suitable feeling state. But it is possible to conceive the possibility of a moral judgment without at the same time experiencing any moral emotion. Moral evaluation can be as cool and unemotional as mathematical calculation. In mathematics the result is reached by applying certain rules of calculation. Similarly an ethical decision may be arrived at through the application of certain criteria. Emotion is therefore not a necessary accompaniment of a moral judgment. Even empirical statements such as 'the house is on fire' may express an emotion or arouse a feeling and stimulate action. So to express an emotion is not a distinctive characteristic of moral judgments.

In Ayer's radical emotivism the basic moral utterance does not have the form of statement but is a mere ejaculation like 'Hurrah' or 'Ouch'. The difficulty of such a view is that most of the typical ethical words (good, right etc.) have predicative uses in ethical sentences but typical emotive words ('Hurrah', 'Ah' etc.) have no such use. When I say 'patriotism is good', I do not merely express an emotion but point out that acts of a certain kind conform to an ideal. If its correct transcription is "Patriotism, bravo!" the question arises, "is the use of the exclamation deliberate or involuntary?". If it is deliberate, then the moral judgment is only an elliptical assertion of my

mental state and this is nothing but auto-biographical version of naturalism which Ayer repudiates. If the exclamatory expression is an involuntary symptom of the felt emotion like bursting into tears of grief, then emotivism must be regarded as an inadequate account of what we do when in a moral conflict we finally decide in favour of one of the alternatives and say "This is the right thing to do". Here we do not express any emotion but only an evaluation with full deliberation. It may be that when I use an ethical sentence I express my feelings, but this is not the primary reason why I make the judgment, when I say 'Patriotism is good', I have a feeling towards patriotism because I believe that it is moral. It is this belief that patriotism is moral which I express by the judgment made. The essence of ethical judgment is evaluation. To evaluate something is not to express or excite emotions.

Ayer's radical emotivism cannot account for the fact that ethical judgments are subject to rational examination. Moral judgments may embody subjective preferences or sentiments but when they are criticized by reason they become objects of cognition. Even cognitive statements may express that the speaker has certain sentiments concerning the matter he speaks about, but this emotive function is incidental to their cognitive significance. So it is difficult to agree with Ayer that moral evaluation is non-cognitive. The real contrast is not between evaluation and cognition but rather between evaluation and description. The radical emotivism breaks down in its claim that the non-descriptive is purely emotive. It fails to explain the fact that moral judgments imply a claim to impartiality, impersonality and interpersonal authority which is independent of personal preferences and sentiments. Justification of our moral judgment is made in a broader and rationally coherent context. So it is a mistake to deny the efficacy of reason in moral decision. C.I. Lewis aptly remarks, "If it were not that present valuing and doing maylater be a matter of regret, then there would be no point and no imperative to consistency of any kind. No act would then be affected by relation to any principle, and no thinking by any consideration of validity. Life in general would be free of any concern; and there would be no distinction of what is rational from what is perverse or silly". A belief in a moral order is inherent in the common sense function of ethical discourse. In the context of that belief it makes sense to give rational justification of a moral decision. An appeal to feelings will here not do.

15.5 STEVENSON'S EMOTIVISM

However, emotivism does not depend on the principle of verification nor onHume's theory of judgements of reason. As Warnock notes, emotivism as a theory is only developed with the work of Charles Stevenson. Warnock argues that Stevenson makes three central points. First, Stevenson develops the distinction between beliefs and attitudes. We can understand the difference in terms of the idea of 'direction of fit'.

A man goes shopping, taking his shopping list with him. When shopping, he uses his list to guide what he puts in his basket. At the end of the shop, what is in his basket should 'fit' his list. If it doesn't, the mistake is with the basket, and the basket should be changed to fit the list. Now suppose that the man is being followed by a store detective. She makes a list of each thing that the man puts in his basket. At the end of the shop, her list should 'fit' his basket. If it doesn't, the mistake is with her list, and the list should be changed to fit the basket. The shopper's list is a list of what he wants. Desires have a 'world-to-mind' direction of fit. We seek to change the world to fit our desires and thereby satisfy them. They are not true or false, but represent how the world should be. By contrast, the detective's list is a list of what she believes is in the shopper's basket. Beliefs have a 'mind-to-world' direction of fit. We change our beliefs to fit the world, and thereby have true beliefs. They represent how the world is, not how we want it to be. Stevenson argues that moral attitudes regard what is to be done - they have a world-to-mind 'direction of fit' and are non-cognitive.

Second, Stevenson develops the distinction between the descriptive and emotive meanings of words. He argues, quite independent of appeals to the verification principle or the scope of reason, that moral words have emotive meanings, which are neither descriptive nor analytic. The central ethical terms - 'right', 'wrong', 'good' and 'bad' - only have emotive meanings, of expressing approval or disapproval. But many moral terms ('steal', 'honesty', 'respect') have both descriptive and emotive meanings. To be told that someone is 'honest' is to learn something about them. For instance, they can't be honest while lying frequently! And whether someone lies frequently is a matter of fact. But the term 'honest' isn't just a description; it also has an emotive meaning of approval.

15.6 EMOTIVISM AND MORAL DISAGREEMENT

One of the most powerful objections to emotivism is that it oversimplifies ethicaldiscussion. If I say 'abortion is wrong' and you say 'abortion is right', I am just expressing my disapproval of it and you are expressing your approval. I'm just saying 'Boo! To abortion' and you're saying 'Hurrah! for abortion'. But about this there can be no discussion, no reasoning. Even worse, emotivism claims that we are trying to influence other people's feelings and actions. But trying to influence people without reasoning isjust a form of manipulation.

Ayer responded that ethical discussion is about the facts. When arguing over animalrights, say, we are constantly drawing facts to each other's attention. I point out how much animals suffer in factory farms. You point out how much more sophisticated human beings are than animals. And so on. Though we agree on the facts, yet still morally disagree, there is nothing left to discuss.

Stevenson rejects this. The moral disagreement that remains is a disagreement in attitude,a practical disagreement - no one can live both by the attitude that 'eating meat is wrong 'and by the attitude that 'eating meat is right'. Attitudes can be discussed, because people do not have feelings or make choices in isolation. Any attitude has implications for other attitudes. If I disapprove of an action, I must also have similar feelings about similar actions, or my attitudes will not provide consistent guidance about how to live. Moral disagreement, then, can be about the relations between different attitudes. For example, deciding whether abortion is right or wrong is complicated because there are many attitudes involved, sympathy towards the mother, sympathy towards the foetus, feelings about human life, death, and parenthood. It is difficult to work out how these attitudes can all be acted upon, and that is why people disagree. We may still object that rationality in weighing up which attitudes to give up, which to keep, is still missing. We have no sense of one set of attitudes being part of a 'better life' than any other. Further objections to emotivism are discussed in the handout "The denial of moral truth: objections".



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 2: Write short notes on:

(a) Stevenson's emotivism.

(b) Emotivism and moral disagreement.

Q 3: State whether true or false:

(a) Emotivism as a theory is only developed with the work of Charles Stevenson.

(b) Desires have a 'world-to-mind' direction of fit.Beliefs have a 'mind-to-world' direction of fit.

(c) The central ethical terms - 'right', 'wrong', 'good' and 'bad' - only have emotive meanings, of expressing approval or disapproval. But many moral terms ('steal', 'honesty', 'respect') have both descriptive and emotive meanings.

(d) One of the most powerful objections to emotivism is that it oversimplifies ethical discussion.

(e) Emotivism claims that we are trying to influence other people's feelings and actions. But trying to influence people without reasoning is just a form of manipulation.



15.7 LET US SUM UP

- Emotivist analysis of moral language means the theory of emotivism about moral languages or moral judgments, sentences, words, and speech acts or ethical sentences.
- Emotivism is a meta-ethical view that claims that ethical sentences do not express propositions but emotional attitudes. Hence, it is colloquially known as the hurrah or boo theory. Emotivism claims that moral judgements express the feeling or attitude of approval or disapproval.
- Emotivism was expounded by A.J. Ayer in Language, Truth and Logic (1936) and developed by Charles Stevenson in Ethics and Language (1945).
- Emotivism can be considered as a form of non-cognitivism or expressivism. It stands in opposition to other forms of non-cognitivism (such as quasi-realism and universal prescriptivism),

as well as to all forms of cognitivism (including both moral realism and ethical subjectivism).

- A.J. Ayer develops his emotive theory of ethics within the framework of logical positivism. In his "Language, Truth and Logic" he holds that a statement is literally meaningful if and only if it is either analytic or empirically verifiable. If the statement is analytic, it can be confirmed or disconfirmed by the test of logical consistency.
- According to Ayer, fundamental ethical concepts are pseudo-concepts. Moral judgments are not assertions but merely emotive expressions through which we express our feelings and attitudes.
- According to Ayer, moral utterances should be classed with ejaculations or exhortations, as mere expressions or excitants of feeling.
- The main difficulty with logical positivism is that according to the principle of verification, the principle of verification itself is meaningless.
- In Ayer's radical emotivism the basic moral utterance does not have the form of statement but is a mere ejaculation like 'Hurrah' or 'Ouch'.
- Ayer's radical emotivism cannot account for the fact that ethical judgments are subject to rational examination. Warnock notes, emotivism as a theory is only developed with the work of Charles Stevenson.
- Stevenson develops the distinction between the descriptive and emotive meanings of words
- One of the most powerful objections to emotivism is that it oversimplifies ethicaldiscussion.
- Stevenson rejects this. The moral disagreement that remains is a disagreement in attitude,a practical disagreement - no one can live both by the attitude that 'eating meat is wrong 'and by the attitude that 'eating meat is right'



15.8 FURTHER READING

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3. Hospers, J, An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis, Allied Publishers, Bombay, Indian Reprint, 1971.
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15.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to the Q. 1

(a) Logical positivism

(b) Language, truth and logic.

(c) Logical positivist

(d) Pseudo-concepts

(e) Rejecting.

Answer to the Q. 2

(a) Emotivism as a theory is only developed with the work of Charles Stevenson. Warnock argues that Stevenson makes three central points. First, Stevenson develops the distinction between beliefs and attitudes. We can understand the difference in terms of the idea of 'direction of fit'.

Stevenson argues that moral attitudes regard what is to be done - they have a world-to-mind 'direction of fit' and are non-cognitive.

Second, Stevenson develops the distinction between the descriptive and emotive meanings of words. He argues, quite independent of appeals to the verification principle or the scope of reason, that moral words have emotive meanings, which are neither descriptive nor analytic. The central ethical terms - 'right', 'wrong', 'good' and 'bad' - only have emotive meanings, of expressing approval or disapproval. But many moral terms ('steal', 'honesty', 'respect') have both descriptive and emotive meanings.

(b) One of the most powerful objections to emotivism is that it oversimplifies ethical discussion. If I say 'abortion is wrong' and you say 'abortion is right', I am just expressing my disapproval of it and you are expressing your approval. I'm just saying 'Boo! To abortion' and you're saying 'Hurrah! for abortion'. But about this there can be no discussion, no reasoning. Even worse, emotivism claims that we are trying to influence other people's feelings and actions. But trying to influence people without reasoning is just a form of manipulation.

Stevenson rejects that ethical discussion is about the facts. The moral disagreement that remains is a disagreement in attitude,a practical disagreement - no one can live both by the attitude that 'eating meat is wrong 'and by the attitude that 'eating meat is right'. Attitudes can be discussed, because people do not have feelings or make choices in isolation. Any attitude has implications for other attitudes. If I disapprove of an action, I must also have similar feelings about similar actions, or my attitudes will not provide consistent guidance about how to live. Moral disagreement, then, can be about the relations between different attitudes. For example, deciding whether abortion is right or wrong is complicated because there are many attitudes involved, sympathy towards the mother, sympathy towards the foetus, feelings about human life, death, and parenthood. It is difficult to work out how these attitudes can all be acted upon, and that is why people disagree. We may still object that rationality in weighing up which attitudes to give up, which to keep, is still missing. We have no sense of one set of attitudes being part of a 'better life' than any other. Further objections to emotivism are discussed in the handout "The denial of moral truth: objections".

Answer to the Q. 3

(a) False

(b) Yes

(c) Yes

(d) No

(e) Yes



15.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Very short questions:-

1. What is emotivist analysis of moral language?
2. What is emotivism?
3. What is Ayer's theory of emotivism?
4. What is the principle of verification?
5. What is Stevenson's view about emotive theory of moral language?

B. Short questions (Answer each question in about 150 words)

1. Ayer's emotivism
2. Ayer and the principle of verification
3. Stevenson's emotivism
4. Drawbacks of Ayer's theory of emotivism
5. Emotivism and moral disagreement

C. Short notes (Answer each question in about 150 words)

1. Ayer's emotivism
2. Stevenson's emotive theory
3. Evaluation of Ayer's emotivism
4. Ayer and the principle of verification

D. Long questions: (Answer each question within 300-500 words)

1. Explain the theory of emotivism.
2. What is Ayer's theory of emotivism? Explain.
3. How did Ayer depend his emotive theory upon the principle of verification? Analyze.
4. Give a critical evaluation of Ayer's theory of emotivism.
5. Briefly explain Stevenson's emotive theory.
6. Briefly describe about the relation between emotivism and moral disagreement.

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