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Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Second Edition

Donald M. Borchart, Editor in Chief

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is "able not to be." Having protested the positing of mysterious entities, quiddities, and essences and having equated substances with bodies or things, Valla then reduces the remaining nine categories of Aristotle to two: quality and action. Definitions, according to Valla, are explications of all the qualities and actions that are present in a thing. In the course of his exposition, Valla has occasion to challenge the validity of many scholastic distinctions: for example, those between the concrete and the abstract, between matter and form, and so on. Unsatisfactory as Valla's own offerings may be (they are not clearly dedicated to the solution of any specific philosophical problems), nevertheless it must be admitted that a fresh consideration of technical terms was certainly called for at the time and was eventually carried through by later critics.

Valla displays great sensitivity to nuances of meaning in his *Elegantiae Linguae Latinae* (Elegancies of the Latin language), in which he makes careful analyses of the usage of many Latin terms. Critics have observed that Valla's own style was not as elegant as it could have been, but his advice was widely consulted.

Valla was often accused of bad form in his attacks on people and schools of thought, but one must recall that invectives and ad hominem attacks were the order of the day. In the Renaissance professional rivalry did not bother to conceal itself under polite or semipolite discussions of issues. Valla defended himself against the charge of malevolence and vindictiveness in a letter to Giovanni Serra, in which he concludes: "I do not censure all authors, but only a few, . . . not all philosophers but some from all sects, not the best but the worst, not impudently but calmly, ready to accept correction should it prove valid."

See also Aristotelianism; Aristotle; Epicureanism and the Epicurean School; Hedonism; Humanism; Italian Philosophy; Nicholas of Cusa; Renaissance; Stoicism.

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Neal W. Gilbert (1967)

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VALUE AND VALUATION

The terms *value* and *valuation* and their cognates and compounds are used in a confused and confusing but widespread way in our contemporary culture, not only in economics and philosophy but also and especially in other social sciences and humanities. Their meaning was once relatively clear and their use limited. *Value* meant the worth of a thing, and *valuation* meant an estimate of its worth. The worth in question was mainly economic or quasi economic, but even when it was not, it was still worth of some sort—not beauty, truth, rightness, or even goodness. The extension of the meaning and use of the terms began in economics, or political economy, as it was then called. *Value* and *valuation* became technical terms central to that branch of economics which was labeled the theory of value. Then German philosophers, especially Rudolf Hermann Lotze, Albrecht Ritschl, and Friedrich Nietzsche, began to take the notion of value and

values in a much broader sense and to give it primary importance in their thinking.

Philosophers from the time of Plato had discussed a variety of questions under such headings as the good, the end, the right, obligation, virtue, moral judgment, aesthetic judgment, the beautiful, truth, and validity. In the nineteenth century the conception was born—or reborn, because it is essentially to be found in Plato—that all these questions belong to the same family, since they are all concerned with value or what ought to be, not with fact or what is, was, or will be. All these questions, it was believed, may not only be grouped under the general headings of value and valuation but are better dealt with and find a more systematic solution if they are thought of as parts of a general theory of value and valuation that includes economics, ethics, aesthetics, jurisprudence, education, and perhaps even logic and epistemology. This conception matured in the 1890s in the writings of Alexius Meinong and Christian von Ehrenfels, two Austrian followers of Franz Brentano. Through them and through others like Max Scheler and Nicolai Hartmann, two twentieth-century German followers of Edmund Husserl (himself influenced by Brentano), the idea of a general theory of value became popular on the Continent and in Latin America. It had some influence in Great Britain, in the works of Bernard Bosanquet, W. R. Sorley, J. M. Mackenzie, John Laird, and J. N. Findlay, but rather less than elsewhere, for, on the whole, British philosophers have held to more traditional terms such as *good* and *right*. But it received an excited welcome in the United States just before and after World War I. The idea was introduced by Hugo Münsterberg and W. M. Urban, taken up by Ralph Barton Perry, John Dewey, D. H. Parker, D. W. Prall, E. W. Hall, and others, and later refurbished by S. C. Pepper and Paul W. Taylor. This wide-ranging discussion in terms of *value*, *values*, and *valuation* subsequently spread to psychology, the social sciences, the humanities, and even to ordinary discourse.

PHILOSOPHICAL USAGES

The uses of *value* and *valuation* are various and conflicting even among philosophers, but they may perhaps be sorted out as follows. (1) *Value* (in the singular) is sometimes used as an abstract noun (*a*) in a narrower sense to cover only that to which such terms as *good*, *desirable*, or *worthwhile* are properly applied and (*b*) in a wider sense to cover, in addition, all kinds of rightness, obligation, virtue, beauty, truth, and holiness. The term can be limited to what might be said to be on the plus side of the zero line; then what is on the minus side (*bad*, *wrong*, and

so forth) is called *disvalue*. *Value* is also used like *temperature* to cover the whole range of a scale—plus, minus, or indifferent; what is on the plus side is then called positive value and what is on the minus side, negative value.

In its widest use *value* is the generic noun for all kinds of critical or pro and con predicates, as opposed to descriptive ones, and is contrasted with existence or fact. The theory of value, or axiology, is the general theory of all such predicates, including all the disciplines mentioned above. The classic example in English of this approach is the work of R. B. Perry. In its narrower use, *value* covers only certain kinds of critical predicates and is contrasted with descriptive predicates and even with other critical ones like rightness and obligation. In this case the theory of value, or axiology, is a part of ethics, rather than the other way around. The work of C. I. Lewis is the best example of the narrower approach.

Those who take the wider approach sometimes distinguish "realms of value"; Perry and Taylor, for example, list eight of these: morality, the arts, science, religion, economics, politics, law, and custom or etiquette. Even when *value* is used in the narrower sense, several meanings of the term, or kinds of value, are sometimes distinguished. (The narrower distinctions may also be recognized by those who use *value* in the wider sense.) These meanings correspond to the senses or uses of *good*, which G. H. von Wright prefers to call "forms" or "varieties of goodness." Many classifications of kinds of value, or forms of goodness, have been proposed. Lewis distinguishes (*a*) utility or usefulness for some purpose; (*b*) extrinsic or instrumental value, or being good as a means to something desirable or good; (*c*) inherent value or goodness, such as the aesthetic value of a work of art in producing good experiences by being contemplated or heard; (*d*) intrinsic value, or being good or desirable either as an end or in itself, which is presupposed by both (*b*) and (*c*); (*e*) contributory value, or the value that an experience or part of an experience contributes to a whole of which it is a part (not a means or an object). A stick of wood may be useful in making a violin, a violin may be extrinsically good by being a means to good music, the music may be inherently good if hearing it is enjoyable, the experience of hearing it may be intrinsically good or valuable if it is enjoyable for its own sake, and it may also be contributively good if it is part of a good evening or weekend.

Dewey, however, attacks the distinction between means and ends while stressing the notion of total value or goodness on the whole—goodness when all things are considered. To Lewis's list of kinds of value, some writers, W. D. Ross for instance, would add moral value, the kind

of value or goodness that belongs to a virtuous man, to good motives, or to morally approved traits of character. Von Wright distinguishes instrumental goodness (a good knife), technical goodness (a good driver), utilitarian goodness (good advice), hedonic goodness or pleasantness (a good dinner), and welfare (the good of man). He also mentions moral goodness but argues that it is a sub-form of utilitarian goodness; Ross would deny this.

(2) *Value* as a more concrete noun—for example, when we speak of “a value” or of “values”—is often used (a) to refer to what is valued, judged to have value, thought to be good, or desired. The expressions “his values,” “her value system,” and “American values” refer to what a man, a woman, and Americans value or think to be good. Such phrases are also used to refer to what people think is right or obligatory and even to whatever they believe to be true. Behind this widespread usage lies the covert assumption that nothing really has objective value, that *value* means being valued and *good* means being thought good. But the term *value* is also used to mean (b) what has value or is valuable, or good, as opposed to what is regarded as good or valuable. Then *values* means “things that have value,” “things that are good,” or “goods” and, for some users, also things that are right, obligatory, beautiful, or even true.

In both usage (a) and usage (b) it is possible to distinguish different kinds of values, corresponding to the different kinds of value or forms of goodness mentioned above. It is also common to distinguish more or less clearly between material and spiritual values or among economic, moral, aesthetic, cognitive, and religious values.

Some philosophers, especially those influenced by Scheler and Hartmann, think of *value* as a general predicate like “color,” which subsumes more specific value predicates analogous to “red” or “yellow.” They call these more specific value predicates “values” (*Werte*, *valeurs*). Just as “a color” does not mean “a thing that has color” but a particular color like red, so “a value” does not mean “a thing that has value” but a particular kind of value, like pleasure value or courage value. These philosophers call a thing that is good “a good” or “a value carrier,” not “a value.” Since the adjective *valuable* simply means “having value” or “being good” in some sense (or, perhaps better, “having a considerable amount of value”), much of the above will apply to it, *mutatis mutandis*.

(3) *Value* is also used as a verb in such expressions as “to value,” “valuing,” and “valued.” *Valuing* is generally synonymous with *valuation* or *evaluation* when these are used actively to mean the act of evaluating and not pas-

sively to mean the result of such an act. But sometimes *valuation* and *evaluation* are used to designate only a certain kind of valuing, namely, one that includes reflection and comparison. In either case *valuation* may be, and is, used in wider or narrower senses corresponding to the wider and narrower uses of *value*. For Dewey and Richard M. Hare it covers judgments about what is right, wrong, obligatory, or just, as well as judgments about what is good, bad, desirable, or worthwhile. For Lewis *valuation* covers only the latter use. The expression “value judgment” is also used in both of these ways. Among the writers who distinguish two main kinds of normative discourse, evaluating and prescribing, some, like Taylor, classify judgments of right and wrong as well as judgments of good and bad under evaluations and judgments, using *ought* under prescriptions; others put judgments of right and wrong under prescriptions.

Dewey always distinguishes two senses of “to value.” It means either (a) to prize, like, esteem, cherish, or hold dear, or (b) to appraise, appraise, estimate, evaluate, or value. In the second sense reflection and comparison are involved; in the first sense they are not. In the first sense, he seems to regard mere desiring or liking as a form of valuing. Others often follow him in this, but some writers limit valuing to acts in which something is not merely desired or liked but judged to be good or to have value. Even Perry, who holds that the statement “X is good” = “X has positive value” = “X is an object of favorable interest,” insists that we must distinguish between desiring X and judging X to have value, which would be judging X to be desired.

Thus, words such as *value* and *valuation* may be, and are, used in a variety of ways, even when they are used with some care—which is, unfortunately, not often the case both in and out of philosophy. In using the terms, one should choose a clear and systematic scheme and use it consistently. Because of the ambiguity and looseness that the terms often engender, it would seem advisable to use them in their narrower senses or not at all, keeping to more traditional terms such as *good* and *right*, which are better English, whenever possible.

PHILOSOPHICAL THEORIES

Philosophical theories of value and valuation, whether conceived in the wider or in the narrower manner and whether formulated in the traditional or in the newer “value” vocabulary, have been of two sorts. Normative theories make value judgments or valuations; they tell us what is good or what has value, what is bad, and so on. Metanormative theories analyze value, valuation, and

good; they neither make value judgments in this way nor tell us what is good or has value. Instead, they define what goodness and value are and what it means to say that something is good or has value. Sometimes philosophers also offer descriptive generalizations about what is valued or regarded as good in some culture or group of cultures, and explanatory theories about why this is so valued or regarded (David Hume, Moritz Schlick, F. C. Sharp, John Ladd). However, this is usually ancillary to their discussions of normative or metanormative questions. In themselves such descriptive and explanatory theories belong to anthropology, psychology, and sociology, not to philosophy. Recently, many analytical philosophers have been maintaining that even normative theories, however important they may be, have no place in philosophy proper, where theories of value and valuation should be limited to metanormative questions.

NORMATIVE THEORIES. In the broader conception, a normative theory of value must show, at least in general outline, what is good, bad, better, and best, and also what is right, obligatory, virtuous, and beautiful. In the narrower conception, normative theories of value have usually addressed themselves primarily to the question of what is good in itself or as an end or what has intrinsic value, an approach that Dewey has persistently attacked. They ask not what goodness and intrinsic value are but what the good is, what has value for its own sake, what is to be taken as the end of our pursuit or as the criterion of intrinsic worth.

Some theories have answered that the end or the good is pleasure or enjoyment or, alternatively, that the criterion of intrinsic value is pleasantness or enjoyableness. More accurately, they say that only experiences are intrinsically good, that all experiences that are intrinsically good are pleasant and vice versa, and that they are intrinsically good because and only because they are pleasant. These are the hedonistic theories of value, held by such thinkers as Epicurus, Hume, Jeremy Bentham, J. S. Mill, Henry Sidgwick, von Ehrenfels, Meinong (at first), and Sharp. There are also quasi-hedonistic theories in which the end or the good is said to be not pleasure but something very similar, such as happiness, satisfaction, or felt "satisfactoriness," to use Lewis's term. Examples are to be found in the writings of Dewey, Lewis, Parker, P. B. Rice, and perhaps Brand Blanshard.

Antihedonistic theories are of two kinds. Some agree that there is, in the final analysis, only one thing that is good or good-making but deny that it is pleasure or any other kind of feeling. Aristotle says it is eudaimonia

(excellent activity); Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, communion with God; Benedict de Spinoza, knowledge; F. H. Bradley, self-realization; Nietzsche, power. Others, such as Plato, G. E. Moore, W. D. Ross, Laird, Scheler, Hartmann, and Perry, are more "pluralistic," holding that there are a number of things that are good or good-making in themselves. They differ in their lists but all include two or more of the following: pleasure, knowledge, aesthetic experience, beauty, truth, virtue, harmony, love, friendship, justice, freedom, self-expression. Of course, hedonists and other "monistic" thinkers may also regard such things as intrinsically good, but only if and because they are pleasant, self-realizing, or excellent.

METANORMATIVE THEORIES. The scope of metanormative theories may also be inclusive or limited, but both kinds will pose similar questions and offer similar answers. Their questions and answers have been variously stated in the formal or material mode, or the linguistic or nonlinguistic, but they will not be classified here.

One question or group of questions posed by metanormative theories concerns the nature of value and valuation: what is goodness or value? what is the meaning or use of *good*? what is valuing? what are we doing or saying when we make a value judgment? A subquestion here is what moral value and evaluation are, and how they are distinct from nonmoral value and valuation, if at all. Another question or set of questions has to do with the justification or validity of value judgments and normative theories: can they be justified or established with any certainty by some kind of rational or scientific inquiry? can they be shown to have objective validity in any way? if so, how? what is the logic of reasoning in these matters, if there is one? Here a subquestion is what is the logic of moral justification or reasoning, if there is one, and is it in any way distinctive. Beyond this there is an even more "meta" level of questioning: what is the nature of a metanormative theory, and how can it be defended? This last problem, as well as the subquestions just mentioned, has frequently been discussed in the twentieth century and earlier but will not be considered here.

In reply to the first question or group of questions, some philosophers have held that terms like *value* and *good* stand for properties; that in value judgments we are ascribing these properties to objects or kinds of objects (including activities and experiences), although we may also be taking pro or con attitudes toward them; and that, therefore, value judgments are descriptive or factual in the sense of truly or falsely ascribing properties to things. They are therefore cognitivists or descriptivists in value

theory. Of these the naturalists add that the property involved is a natural or empirical one, which can be defined. Aristotle, von Ehrenfels, and Perry claim that value is the relational property of being an object of desire or interest (an interest theory of value); Parker, that it is the satisfaction of desire (another interest theory of value); Lewis and Rice (as well as the early Meinong), that it is the quality of being, enjoyed or enjoyable in some way (the affective theory of value). George Santayana seems sometimes to hold one of these views, sometimes another, and sometimes to regard value as an indefinable natural quality ascribed to what we desire or enjoy.

Other cognitivists add that value or goodness is a metaphysical property that can neither be observed by or in ordinary experience nor made an object of empirical science. Examples of metaphysical definitions are being truly real (Neoplatonists), being ontologically perfect (Hegelian idealists), or being willed by God (theologians). Still others assert that intrinsic goodness or value is an indefinable nonnatural or nonempirical quality or property different from all other descriptive or factual ones (they even describe it as being nondescriptive or nonfactual). These philosophers are called intuitionists or nonnaturalists (Plato, Sidgwick, Moore, Ross, Laird, Scheler, Hartmann, and perhaps the later Meinong). They all hold that value belongs to objects independently of whether we desire, enjoy, or value them, and even independently of God's attitude toward them—as some metaphysical theorists and naturalists also do. Meinong, Scheler, Hartmann, and Hall contend that value is intuited through the emotions even though it is objective; Sidgwick, Ross, Laird, and others, that it is an object of intellectual intuition.

In the mid-twentieth century many writers, both analytical philosophers and existentialists, have taken the position that value terms do not stand for properties, natural or nonnatural, and that value judgments are not property-ascribing statements but have some other kind of meaning or function. These writers have therefore been called noncognitivists or antidescriptivists. Their positive theories are varied. Some argue that value judgments are wholly or primarily embodiments or expressions of attitude, emotion, or desire, and/or instruments for evoking similar reactions in others (A. J. Ayer, Bertrand Russell, Charles L. Stevenson). Others maintain that this account of value terms and judgments is inadequate and that value judgments are to be thought of as prescriptions, recommendations, acts of grading, or simply as valuations, not something else (Hare, Taylor,

Stephen E. Toulmin, Patrick H. Nowell-Smith, R. W. Sellars, and J. O. Urmson).

Whether value judgments are susceptible to being justified or proved, and, if so, how, depends very considerably on the position taken in answer to the questions regarding the meaning of good. Some value judgments are derivative—for instance, the conclusion of the following inference:

What is pleasant is good.
Knowledge is pleasant.
Therefore, knowledge is good.

The real question is about the justification of basic or nonderivative value judgments. According to the intuitionist, such judgments cannot be justified by argument, but they do not need to be, since they are intuitively known or self-evident. According to the naturalist, they can be established either by empirical evidence (in Perry's view, by empirical evidence about what is desired) or by the very meaning of the terms involved (analytically or by definition). According to the metaphysical and theological axiologist, they can be established either by metaphysical argument, or by divine revelation, or by definition. Noncognitivists, being of many persuasions, have various views about justification. Some extreme emotivists and existentialists assert or imply that basic value judgments are arbitrary, irrational, and incapable of any justification (Ayer and Jean-Paul Sartre). Others believe that there are intersubjectively valid conventions, like "What is pleasant is good," which warrant our arguing from certain considerations to conclusions about what is good (Toulmin). Still others contend, in different ways, that attitudes, recommendations, commitments, conventions, and, hence, value judgments may be rational or justified, even if they cannot be proved inductively or deductively (Hare, Taylor, J. N. Findlay, and, up to a point, Stevenson).

See also Aesthetic Experience; Aristotle; Augustine, St.; Ayer, Alfred Jules; Beauty; Bentham, Jeremy; Blanshard, Brand; Bosanquet, Bernard; Bradley, Francis Herbert; Brentano, Franz; Dewey, John; Ehrenfels, Christian Freiherr von; Epicurus; Freedom; Good, The; Hare, Richard M.; Hartmann, Nicolai; Hume, David; Husserl, Edmund; Justice; Lewis, Clarence Irving; Lotze, Rudolf Hermann; Love; Meinong, Alexius; Mill, John Stuart; Moore, George Edward; Nietzsche, Friedrich; Perry, Ralph Barton; Plato; Pleasure; Ritschl, Albrecht Benjamin; Ross, William David; Russell, Bertrand Arthur William; Santayana, George; Sartre, Jean-Paul; Scheler, Max; Schlick, Moritz; Sellars, Roy Wood; Sidgwick, Henry; Spinoza, Benedict (Baruch) de; Stevenson,

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William K. Frankena (1967)

VALUE AND VALUATION [ADDENDUM]

The ambiguities in the use of *value* and related words that William Frankena acutely summarized persist. But there has been some further work on value, especially in the narrow ethical sense of what is desirable or worth pursuing, that deserves comment. Some of the most interesting recent research has been by psychologists.

In relation to aesthetic value, psychologists have investigated how the kinds of experiences that we think point toward aesthetic value in their objects are produced. The psychology of identification with characters in fiction has been a fertile subject. So has the role of the unexpected (or not entirely expected) in appreciation of music. In all of this, there has been a tendency to connect aesthetic value with the quality of experiences that works of art (or beauties in nature) provide to those who are prepared to respond to them.

In relation to value in the narrow ethical sense of what is desirable or worth pursuing, much psychological research has investigated what people find satisfying in the present, or what they can be expected to find satisfying later (when they experience it), or what they prefer for the future. The evidence can seem telling, and yet many philosophers would want to distinguish sharply between what people like or prefer on one hand, and what has or would have value in their lives on the other.

There is the further complication that what has value in one life might have less or more within the context of a different kind of life. A kind of experience could be wonderful in one life and routine in another. C. I. Lewis (1883-1964) spoke of contributory value within a context. This suggests a contrast between instrumental value—the value that something causally has as a means to something else—and two kinds of noninstrumental value. One, which might be termed intrinsic, is a fixed