

## Part II: The Good/Bad Contrast

Part II, 'The Good/Bad Contrast' applies the analysis from Part I to value opposition, as paradigmatically represented by the good/bad contrast. The good/bad contrast is a scalar opposition, in that the epistemic field it divides organises objects arranged on *better than* scales (on *better than* scalar fields). Value differences supervene on descriptive differences; similarly, the *better than* scalar field supervenes upon some descriptive epistemic field. The good/bad opposition partitioning the *better than* field exploits a di- or trichotomising descriptive partition of the descriptive field which preserves the *better than* relation between the resulting categories. This creates a jointly descriptive and evaluative opposition. The different logical properties and roles of the kinds of descriptive criteria used to construct partitions over *better than* fields (including good-makers, better-makers and intensifiers) are defined and explained, and some significant structural characteristics of evaluative epistemic fields are discussed. These include 'overridingness', which is a feature of 'nested' evaluative fields. The structure of nested evaluative fields explain many features of the systemic connexions between the power-inflected epistemic constructions examined in Part III.

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## Introduction: Rational Evaluation

In the Introduction to Chapter 1 of Part I, I argued that in public-epistemological contexts, very simple and basic epistemic strategies and tools will be 'selected for' because of the special conditions that influence the public communication, handling and dissemination of knowledge. In this Part, I will be looking at some of the epistemological strategies and tools appropriate to public systems of **evaluative** knowledge. It is important to keep in mind, first, that I am not holding that all evaluative experience can be accommodated without loss of meaning within public epistemological frameworks<sup>1</sup>, and secondly that the kinds of epistemic strategies and tools that I am describing do not exhaust the possibilities for construction, or even for systematic construction, of evaluative experience<sup>2</sup>. The strategies that I will be describing are, again, well-trodden pathways, utilising large, visible and readily identifiable landmarks, from which we may frequently privately wander, and which we can cooperatively choose to change or avoid according to the demands of the particular epistemological practices in which we are engaged.

There is considerable resistance, however, both in the philosophical literature and in lay perceptions about value, to the idea that value can fall within the domain of 'knowledge', with 'knowledge's' attendant justification practices, teloses, (such as 'getting it right') and constraints (such as, defeasibly, avoiding disagreement). But the evidence is there for anyone who wishes to see. For example, we know very well that to hold something both good and bad at the same time in the same respect involves self-contradiction. As Timur says<sup>3</sup>:

Good and evil have...some characteristics of contradictory terms. The same aspect of the same thing cannot at the same time be good and evil (p 58).

This fact alone places claims about goodness and badness firmly within the epistemological domain, and constrained by the rules of that domain. Again, we

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1. For example, it may be that there are some intrinsically private evaluative experiences that therefore cannot be completely represented in public epistemological frameworks, and that there are also aspects of evaluative experience (such as faith) that fall outside of empirical epistemological frameworks altogether.

2. There are many media for the construction and communication of evaluative experience, including the various arts and religions, as well as symbolic practices (such as the celebration of birthdays).

3. M. Timur (1955), Better as the Value Fundamental, *Mind*, Vol. 64, JA, pp 52-60.

know very well that reasons can be and are given for value judgements, and academics in particular, as professional evaluators, have no excuses for not knowing this, since this is exactly what they spend most of their marking time doing. In fact, we routinely rely heavily upon the skills of professional evaluators in all walks of life, often in contexts in which those evaluators are accountable for the evaluations that they make. Accountability involves not just taking responsibility for one's evaluations, but being able to give reasons for, or justify them. In fact, the refusal to justify evaluations that affect others is a hallmark of being in a superior power position with respect to them, and constitutes an abuse of that power. This point may well bear significantly on the traditional and hugely influential construal of evaluation as non- or antirational, and I will return to this presently.

The practice of giving reasons for evaluations reveals systems of public knowledge to be capable of accommodating at least a subclass of evaluative experience. The lack of recognition, then, of the existence of public systems of evaluative knowledge, which share many of the features of other kinds of systems of knowledge, is striking and puzzling.

There are several pervasive myths about reason, values and evaluation which I think have contributed to scepticism about explicitly making and justifying value claims in the public domain, and about attempting full-blown theories of value, value epistemologies and theories of public value adjudication. The explicit study of the philosophy, and especially the epistemology, of value, is an area which traditionally has been and remains neglected, marginalised, and conflated with or subverted to the goals of other areas of enquiry. This is consistent with a Western intellectual and cultural tradition that is strongly influenced by a system of interlinked, oppositionally constructed and value-ordered categories, or binarisms<sup>4</sup>, that interact with the categories, also oppositionally constructed and value-ordered, of reason and value<sup>5</sup>.

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4. Also known as dualisms, dichotomies, etc., these will be the subject of Part III of this work.

5. For some discussion of these and analogous polarisations, see, e.g., Elisabeth J. Porter (1991), *Women and Moral Identity*, Sydney, Allen & Unwin, especially Chapter 4; Karen Green (1993), Reason and Feeling: Resisting the Dichotomy, *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, Vol 71, No 4, Dec, pp 385-399, and Val Plumwood (1993), *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*, London: Routledge, e.g., pp 183-9.

In the Western intellectual and cultural tradition, like the associated categories of facts and values, reason and values are forced to occupy different terrains. Reason is held to be universal, in that its conclusions are supposed to hold for all reasoners, while values are particular and hence relativistic, binding only on those who hold them, further, reason should rule the collective decision-making process while value marks out the inviolable domain of the individual in that process; reason is appropriately publicly exercised and the knowledge it generates endorsed by public adjudication, which should be kept value-free, while the private realm, family life and leisure, are the showcases of one's values, values which should not be open to public judgement, and which are never legitimately coerced by the state. Reason is objective in the sense of giving us knowledge about objects that is not relevantly affected by our particular subjectivities, while value tells us more about the subject than about the objects of value; reason is an activity of the mind, while value is a function of the body, of desire, impulse and urge; reason is active and under the control of the thinker, while value is passively experienced by the valuer; reason is ordered and rule-governed, while values are chaotic and inchoate. It should be apparent from this list of contrasts that reason and value link to a whole series of important binarisms that constrain Western thought: in order of appearance, universal/particular or relative, collective/individual, public/private, objective/subjective, mind/body, active/passive, and order/chaos. Each of these, in addition, have strong masculine/feminine associations, which is why explicit study of these structures has emerged most forcefully and influentially in Feminist research.

Binarisms will be the focus of discussion in Part III of this thesis. For present purposes, it is sufficient to suggest that our understanding of evaluative experience, and how it might relate to reasoning and knowledge, is seriously impaired because of the place made for value in a large and hugely influential, oppositionally-constructed network of concepts. As will be argued in Part III, these constructions serve ideological purposes. It is well worth asking, then, what ideological purposes might be served by constructing value in opposition to reason; in particular in such a way that it appears to be beyond the reach of public discussion and, in particular, of rational or reason-based dissent.

It should be noted, preliminarily to my discussion in Part III, that power influences upon public epistemological practices are crucial to understanding the actual contents of systems of value. For example, the dominance of 'consumerist' values

(e.g., the interpretation of the value 'achievement', in terms of one's capacity to consume in the marketplace) in social systems organised by Capitalist power relations is obviously no accident, and this should alert us to the presence of a connexion between power and values. This connexion, however, is often understood in ways which are disrespectful to the active intelligences of the human beings participating in a public system of values, that is, the connexion between power and values is often understood to be achieved by 'socialisation' or 'brainwashing' which only an elite few have the character and capacities to resist. Apart from being disrespectful to the participants in the public knowledge system, this account has the disadvantage of not providing potential solutions to the problems raised by distorted systems of value (such as racism, child abuse, environmental delinquency, and so on) that do not involve simply competing for brainwashing powers. And this kind of solution is an extremely dangerous one, reiterating manipulative structures that do not contain checks against new distorted systems replacing old ones.

An attitude of respect for the users of public systems of evaluative knowledge might prompt us to ask, however, how beings like ourselves can come to be **persuaded** of (not brainwashed into accepting) false or distorted systems of values. I will argue in Part III that this persuasion is successful because it exploits, in lying or deceptive public justification practices, the basic epistemological strategies and tools with which we organise and share our evaluative experience. It exploits what is best about us (our evaluative intelligence, and more effectively, our moral intelligence) in order to coopt our cooperation against our own interests, and the interests of other beings, in the service of the powerful. A clear picture of the underlying structure of evaluative knowledge will be able to provide us with a template for revealing lying justifications and other forms of deception for what they are. Further, demystifying the realm of evaluative experience and judgement will go some way towards empowering us as members of communities and societies who engage in public justification practices, to take seriously our own direct evaluative experience, and to confidently communicate about and negotiate about what matters to us, about value.

How, then, do we construe that subclass of evaluative experience, and of evaluative practices, that we would call rational evaluation? The first important distinction to make in understanding rational evaluation is that between **value responses to**

**the world** (which are analogous to perception) and the practice of **forming value judgements** from those responses<sup>6</sup>. Confusing these two is a major source of the reduction of evaluation to desire, for example, of confusion about the differences between value judgements and expressions of emotion, as well as of various crude forms of subjectivism and relativism about value.

It is only at the point of constructing evaluative experience into value judgements that an epistemological approach to evaluation begins to engage. It is here that we begin to draw upon taxonomic strategies and tools (including those described in Part I of this work) so as to impose a publicly-shared order upon our evaluative experience.

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6. On this contrast, see for example R. Kirke (1988), Prima Facie Good, *The Journal of Value Inquiry*, Vol 22, pp 279-297, especially pp 289-90.

## Chapter 1. Good, Bad and Better Than

### i) Some Broad-Brush Value Epistemology

The category of epistemological practices with which I am centrally concerned here can be broadly described as organising our thinking about what the world should be like. Thinking in a self-conscious, organised fashion about what **should be** requires us to taxonomise evaluatively: i.e., construct epistemic fields in such a way that evaluative information can be encoded upon them, and mapped with the proposition. This information can then be systematically and consistently applied. Again, in public-epistemological contexts, the concepts, justification practices and so on that survive the 'selection' processes of long-term acceptance will select out proposed arrangements that do not in some way engage with the value experiences of users<sup>7</sup>, as well as those which are too difficult or awkward to take up because of structural idiosyncrasy or unnecessary complexity. The distillation effect provided by public-epistemological selection over systems of evaluative knowledge will, then, again reveal basics of the human epistemology of evaluative experience.

Value judgements are meant to organise and communicate evaluative information (information about what is better); this information is required **whenever a decision has to be made**. This is because every decision involves a choice between alternatives, and we must choose the relevantly best, all things considered, from the options sensibly available to us. It is this kind of information that an evaluative epistemic field encodes and organises.

Some decisions are about questions of what the world is like; some are about what the world should be like, and some are about what we should do in the world.<sup>8</sup> These three types of decisions reflect different teloses for thinking, and all have specialist values (which we can express as principles) which we develop, both from *a priori* sources and from experience, to guide our decisions. It is easy to see that

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7. This is essential to the success of attempts at persuasion.

8. On the distinction between sentences which are 'declarative' and 'valuative' (the latter containing 'imperatives', 'optatives' and 'hortatives', as well as goodness claims, as subclasses) see Everett W. Hall (1947), A Categorical Analysis of Value, *Philosophy of Science*, Vol 14, Oct, pp 333-444, especially p 334. See also R.M. Hare (1972), *The Language of Morals*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.



these three kinds of thinking draw upon each other, and, while there will always be mutual influence between them, they can in principle be conceptualised as 'nesting' inside each other, especially if we wish to construe practice or action in the world as the organising framework for all epistemological activity. We can see that every practical decision requires not only general guidance about how best to act, but also information about first, what the world is actually like, and secondly about what it should be like. No doubt both our understanding of the way the world is, and our views about what is good and bad in it and about how things should be, are strongly influenced by the practices in the context of which we ask these kinds of questions.

In ordinary evaluative contexts, we perceive that some things are better than others. These perceptions may be highly perspectival, or they may be shared by other experiencers in greater or lesser degrees<sup>9</sup>. The degree of perspectivity of a judgement is usually flagged linguistically or contextually<sup>10</sup>. These perceptions are taken up as data and organised into epistemic arrangements in exactly the same way that our perceptions of say colour, size and loudness are taken up into systems of description. We use our value perceptions to develop evaluative criteria, and construct these into evaluative principles. The criteria are selected or constructed from properties which we are able to isolate as making a thing better or worse<sup>11</sup>. For example, experimenting in the kitchen, we might discover that we have achieved a good result with a particular dish. We will then set about trying to isolate what made the dish so good so that we can repeat the success. Constructing the recipe is analogous to constructing an evaluative principle.

Evaluative principles can be used like recipes to guide our creative activities, or they can be used as a basis of choice. Just as with descriptive epistemic organisation, however, selection, construction and creativity in the development of evaluative

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9. This permits what R. and V. Routley (1983), in *Semantical Foundations for Value Theory*, *Nous*, Vol. 17, pp 441-458, call a 'contextual relativism', where particular rankings are affirmed by speakers, but where the possibility of disagreement is underpinned by the stable sense of 'better' (p452). I agree with their view, however, that 'grading ... is less an individual than a shared or a group preference ranking' (p 453).

10. The linguistic flagging of distinctions between subjective and objective evaluational perspectives (exemplified by the perspectives of 'WANT', and 'GOOD') appears to be universal according to Cliff Goddard and Anna Wierzbicka (1994), in *Introducing Lexical Primitives*, *Semantic and Lexical Universals*, C. Goddard and A. Wierzbicka (eds), Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp 31-54.

11. Principles will be further discussed in Chapter 2, Sections i and ii, and criteria will be discussed in some detail in Chapter 3.

principles are constrained at one end of the epistemological spectrum by *a priori* features of this process, and at the other end by the nature of the data. *A priori* elements might include the synthetic *a priori* principle that 'the good should be' (or something similar), that things should improve rather than degenerate, and so on. They would include, for example, the principle that a kind of thing's function is relevant to its value as a thing of that kind. However, abstract constraints guiding the development of evaluative organisational frameworks will shade into empirical constraints upon evaluative experience. We can view the value contrast between pleasure and pain, or well-being and suffering, for example, as empirical value 'primitives', that is, as basic building blocks of our perception of value, or of our value responses to the world.

The axiological literature is, unfortunately, prone to obscurity, and in particular to controversial ontological presuppositions. In line with the general aims of this thesis, I am concerned to keep the background epistemological model as simple and realistic as possible. While the authors I will be discussing vary in their presuppositions concerning the proper objects of evaluation and the ontological status of 'value', I will represent their accounts, as far as possible, in my own terms. It should be clear from the epistemological model that I am using to structure my account that, since value judgements concern 'what the world should be like', and since they give us information about what should be the case, the objects of evaluation are epistemic objects that can exist, that is, actual and possible things, kinds of thing, states of affairs, and other actual and possible descriptive features of the world, organised in various ways.

## ii) The Problem of Sign

There is a large body of literature in the fields of linguistics, philosophy of language psychology and axiology on the problem of the relationship between certain apparently categorical terms or concepts (e.g., 'large' and 'small') and the comparatives with which they are intimately logically connected (e.g., 'larger than'). The questions raised can include anything from the direction of linguistic, logical or developmental priority to attempts to define the categoricals in terms of the comparatives. There is also a long tradition in axiology of treating the comparative *better than* as a value 'fundamental'. Examples include William

Urban<sup>12</sup>, who argues that an ordering relation is an *a priori* element of evaluation, A.P. Brogan<sup>13</sup>, M. Timur<sup>14</sup>, and G.E. Moore<sup>15</sup>. More contemporary examples include R. Chisholm and E. Sosa<sup>16</sup>, R. and V. Routley<sup>17</sup> and S. O. Hansson<sup>18</sup>. In addition, there is an axiological literature embedded in philosophy of action and moral philosophy in which, for example, preference (e.g., Von Wright<sup>19</sup>) or choice (e.g., R.M. Hare<sup>20</sup>) can be interpreted as practical analogues of the comparative *better than* (and Hare in fact explicitly attempts a definition of goodness in terms of choice).

Authors holding the view that the comparative is the value 'fundamental' must solve the problem of how the categoricals are derived from the underlying comparative. This problem can also be described as the problem of accounting for **value sign**. Value sign is the positive, negative or indifferent value connotation that is a feature not only of the paradigmatic value terms 'good'/'indifferent'/'bad', but of many different types of value contrasts, including practical and epistemological value contrasts (e.g., permissible/impermissible, and true/false respectively), and concomitantly of many value terms and expressions. 'Courageous' and 'delightful', for example, are **positively** signed, and 'unpleasant' and 'poor', for example, are **negatively** signed.

'Sign' (positivity, indifference or 'no sign', and negativity) appears to signify categories of value which, relative to a given evaluative principle, are mutually exclusive and exhaustive. Further, the categories 'positive value' and 'negative value' are **opposites** (although particular expressions with opposite signs may not be themselves opposites, for example 'courageous' and 'unpleasant' are oppositely

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12. W. Urban (1916) Knowledge of Value and the Value Judgement, *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Method*, Vol. 3, pp 673-687.

13. A. P. Brogan (1919) The Fundamental Value Universal, *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Method*, Vol. 16, pp 96-104.

14. M. Timur (1955, op. cit.).

15. G.E. Moore (1942), A Reply to My Critics, *The Philosophy of G.E. Moore*, P.A. Schilpp (ed.), N.Y.: Tudor.

16. R. M. Chisholm and E. Sosa (1966), On the Logic of 'Intrinsically Better', *American Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 3, pp 244-249.

17. 1983, op. cit.

18. (1990) Defining "Good" and "Bad" in Terms of "Better", *Notre Dame Journal of Formal Logic*, Vol. 31, No. 1, Winter, pp 136-49.

19. E.g., G. H. Von Wright (1972), The Logic of Preference Reconsidered, *Theory and Decision*, Vol. 3, pp 140-169.

20. E.g., R.M. Hare, op. cit.

signed but not opposites). 'Good' and 'bad' are the paradigmatic signed value terms.

M. Timur says (op. cit.):

We shall find that the most fundamental concept in our judgments of value is that of betterness which may also be called excellence, superiority or moral height ...Superiority and inferiority are two aspects of the same relationship as convex and concave are two aspects of the same curve....They are two aspects of the same fundamental relation which we find in our scales of value (p 56).

Further:

The relationship of superiority-inferiority pervades every scale of value from the top to the bottom. However, when we proceed from the highest to the lowest term or *vice-versa*, we have to pass through a point which divides the scale into two parts each of which has some characteristics peculiar to itself.. In the upper part the terms are superior to one another by a gradual difference. In the lower part they are inferior to one another by a gradual difference. But when we cross the supposed line between the two parts we find that when coming from above downwards there is a sudden fall and when going from below upwards there is a sudden rise. These two parts correspond to what are commonly called good and evil or value and disvalue (p 56).

On p 58 he says:

The same aspect of the same thing cannot at the same time be good and evil. ...That there is a common concept which underlies both 'good' and 'evil' is further shown by the fact that propositions in which a wholly good thing is compared with a wholly evil thing in value cannot be properly interpreted without it. Take, for example, the proposition, 'Pleasure is better than pain'. If better is taken to mean 'more good' it would appear that pain is also good in some degree...If good and evil are independent notions we can interpret the above proposition only by saying that it is a combination of two propositions: 'Pleasure is good' and 'Pain is evil'. But this ignores the comparison of value between pleasure and pain.

I have quoted Timur's observations at some length because they succinctly both raise the core problems for an account of the relations between the good/bad or positive/negative value contrast and the comparative *better than*, and in addition

highlight just those features which provide clues to their solution. The first observation is that 'better/worse', like 'knowledge/ignorance', is an opposition by direction over the same comparative relation (see Part I, Chapter 2, Section vii). This fact will turn out to be a crucial clue to the puzzle of the relations between the good/bad contrast and *better than*. 'Better/worse', like toggle affirmation and negation, is a basic building-block of evaluative epistemic fields, and of global partitions over these fields.

The second observation concerns the problem of 'sign' described above. Timur has attempted to articulate the problem by contrasting the 'gradual' differences within signed categories, with the 'sudden' change in value when we cross from 'positive' sign to 'negative' sign. What he means is that the comparisons within the categories are somehow not as significant as the comparisons between the categories. While within-category contrasts are ordinary *better than* comparisons, something much more is being said in a positive/negative comparison than that the 'positive' object is better than the 'negative' object (although that, also, is being said). The positive/negative contrast has more **discriminatory weight**. This, again, should alert us to analogies with toggling partitions over epistemic fields, which structurally represent global categories of salient difference among the objects organised by the field.

Finally, Timur notes that 'good' and 'bad' are contradictories or contraries: they cannot be predicated at the same time, in the same respect, etc., of the same object. But in addition, they are mutually semantically dependent, and the *better than* (the comparative) relation between them is somehow implicated in this mutual dependence. I have explained in some detail in Part I how the toggling subfields of an epistemic field are predicate categories which are first, mutually exclusive, and secondly, mutually epistemically or semantically dependent. Further, in asymmetrical relational fields, the relation can be used structurally to dichotomise the field (either through the mutual exclusivity and exhaustiveness of the relata, through the meta-epistemic opposition by direction of the relation itself, or through a combination of these). Where this is done, the toggling sub-fields are relata to the relation that defines the field; if that relation is comparative, then objects in those fields will stand in comparative relations with each other.

The epistemic model of opposition, based on the mutually exclusive and exhaustive partitioning of epistemic fields, that I have defended in Part I, reveals a very simple

and obvious solution to the problem of sign. The good/bad contrast, in its generic use, is not at all mysterious; it is merely an instance of scalar opposition, constructed from a *better than* scalar field either dichotomously or trichotomously divided into mutually exclusive and exhaustive subcategories. Where the scalar field is trichotomously divided, the value opposites are the extreme categories, and the category falling in between is 'indifference'<sup>21</sup>.

The partitioning of the field is done in order to structurally represent significant value differences between the objects organised by the field. This is required in order to summarise the value discriminations represented on the field in such a way that they are commensurate with accept/reject choices (consistently with the epistemic role of evaluation in guiding decisions): this is the role of the good/bad contrast. The subcategories are constructed using some criterion (a scalar toggle) which consistently preserves the *better than* ordering between those categories for all objects on a given epistemic field.

### iii) Prescribing for Existence: the Axiological Toggle.

Later I will be arguing that evaluation presupposes and uses descriptive information, so that descriptive taxonomising is embedded within evaluative taxonomising. However, the scalar opposition over *better than* should nevertheless conceptually be able to 'stand alone'; that is, we should be able to articulate the nature of the scalar toggle which di- or tri- chotomises value scales in value terms. I will suggest that the value toggle that partitions value scales in this way can be understood through what I have described as a synthetic *a priori* principle that in general, 'the good should be'. This needs to be unpacked a little.

'Should be' is **ontologically prescriptive**. I am not using 'prescriptive' here as a practical concept, but as an axiological analogy of a practical concept. We can imagine beings like ourselves except that they are not agents. Such beings could make judgements about what 'should be', i.e., 'prescribe' for existence, without thereby being bound to do anything about it (because 'ought' implies 'can'). While for agents like ourselves the judgement that something 'should be' can engage our practical reason in various ways, we can nevertheless epistemologically distinguish the knowledge that something should be from the knowledge that we must therefore

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21. That is, 'internal' indifference, as distinguished from the 'indifference' (evaluative epistemic negativity) of anything off the field. This distinction is explained in Chapter 2, Section ii.

try, if we can, to bring it about. This is because the former does not always imply the latter, again, because 'ought' implies 'can'. The simplest way of demonstrating the logical independence of axiological from practical prescriptive judgements is to show that there can be states of affairs which i) are not such that they cannot have value, but ii) are such that they cannot be practically prescribed (i.e., as a goal). An example of a class of states of affairs of this kind is 'those states of affairs uncaused by any agent'. This can be good, bad or indifferent, but cannot be prescribed to an agent as a goal without practical contradiction. The possibility of states of affairs meeting these two conditions is underpinned by the fact that things which can be practically prescribed are restricted by presuppositions of and limitations upon agency, and so are a subcategory of things which can be (and hence which can be such that they should be).

Nevertheless, axiological prescriptions do engage our practical reason through a practical imperative to bring about what should be: what we choose or do has to make things better than they would be without our intervention, if only from our own point of view. While it is going too far, then, to **identify** judgements of goodness with choice, there is a close connexion between the two: that one option is better than the other is **grounds** for choice of that option, and that one option is good by comparison with the not-goodness (indifference and badness) of the other options is **grounds** for choice of that option. In general, value judgements provide the **axiological value grounds** for practical decisions.

'Should be', if it underpins the comparative good/bad contrast, must itself be implicitly comparative. We can again approach this by analogy with practical prescription. Practical prescriptions presuppose: i) that what is prescribed can be achieved; ii) that what should be the case is not the case already (so, for example, prescribing 'shut the door' is 'unhappy' if the door is already shut<sup>22</sup>); and iii), that what is prescribed is in some sense better than what is or otherwise will be the case (and this betterness constitutes the reason for changing it or preventing it).

Three corresponding presuppositions of prescribing that something should be the case, then, are i) that it is possible that it be the case; ii) that it, or some implicitly posited counterfactual, is not already the case. What I mean by this is that although

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22. See J.L. Austin (1975) How to Do Things With Words (2nd Ed.), J.O. Urmson & M. Sbisà (ed.s), N.Y.: Oxford University Press. The notion of 'unhappy' performative utterances is introduced on p 14.

we often say things like: 'That is as it should be', in such cases we are implicitly comparing what 'is' to some posited alternative actuality, i.e., 'That is what it should be compared to what it might be otherwise'; finally, iii) that what is prescribed is better than what is posited as actual.

From i), we can suppose that what is axiologically prescribed should be possible. From ii), we can suppose that what is axiologically prescribed should be relativised to some posited actuality which is inconsistent with what is being prescribed. We can express this, for example, as 'Given that A is the case,  $\sim$ A should be the case'. From iii), we can suppose that what is axiologically prescribed must be better than the posited actuality from the point of view of which it is prescribed, so that from 'Given that A,  $\sim$ A should be', we can infer that  $\sim$ A is better than A.

These considerations might explain the occurrence to R.M. Hare (op. cit.) of an interestingly similar account of the relations between choice and a (stipulatively defined) 'better than'. He says: 'A is a *better* X than B' is to mean the same as 'If one is choosing an X, then, if one chooses B, one ought to choose A' (p 184). Here, first, the expression of these logical relations within a framework of choice presupposes (through 'ought implies can') the **possibility** of choosing A, corresponding to the claim in my account that an axiological prescription must concern a possible object. Secondly, the antecedent ('if one chooses B') corresponds to a posited actuality on my account. Further, the prescription of the choice of A corresponds to the axiological prescription 'A should be the case' on my account, relativised to the posited actuality B. Thirdly, by Hare's definition, the prescribed A is *better than* that posited actuality. Finally, Hare has contained the evaluative relations that he seeks to articulate within an epistemic field of 'Xs' ('if one is choosing an X'). This field can be constructed for any kind of possible epistemic object that we please, but should represent some unifying salient similarity among the objects of evaluation. This, as argued in Part I, Chapter 2, provides the common ground for the relevant comparison of differences. This fact will turn out to be important to understanding evaluative comparisons between states of affairs, to be discussed in Section iv of this chapter and in Chapter 3 Section i.

If 'should be' is the axiological toggle over evaluative epistemic fields, then it must be capable of partitioning a field both di- and trichotomously, as required. The dichotomous contrast is 'should be' and '(not)should be'. The trichotomous



contrast (with a middle, 'indifferent' area), is 'should be', 'neither should be nor should not be', and 'should not be'. This toggle represents significant value relations between the areas of the field that it divides, such that, if any object in a worse subfield is posited as actual, then some object in the better subfield 'should be' instead. From the point of view of the objects in the negative category posited (disjunctively) as actual, objects in the positive category (disjunctively) should exist.

This also must be relativised to the overall posited goodness of the background scalar field. That is, it is only if objects of the kind organised by the scale (Hare's Xs) should exist, that any subcategory of these should exist. This positing as good of the background value field is directly analogous to the spotlighting of descriptive epistemic fields. Recalling that epistemic fields are hierarchically constructed, the 'should be' light must be on at the most general level of the hierarchical epistemic field if it is to 'shine through' evaluatively affirmed lower-level subcategories. The positive/negative or good/bad contrast, then, can be seen to be directly analogous to an affirmation/negation toggle. **The general epistemic strategic role of this division is to telescope value scales into a framework for accept/reject choices;** I would argue that all mutually exclusive and exhaustive 'signed' contrasts (including permissible/prohibited and true/false) are instances of this general epistemic strategy.

'Should be', then, is the axiological toggle that underpins the good/bad contrast and preserves its ordering relation; and means that, for any two objects  $x$  and  $y$  from some background scalar *better than* field  $R$ , if  $x$  is good and  $y$  is bad, then, if  $y$  exists, then  $x$  should exist, and if  $x$  exists, then  $y$  should not exist.

The following accounts are representative attempts from the axiological literature to define 'good' through *better than*. They are all attempts to discover the nature of the axiological toggle. I will argue that each attempt taps into some important feature of the 'should be' toggle that I have defended.

#### iv) Alternative Accounts

##### a) The Brogan/Moore Solution: Betterness of Existence.

Brogan<sup>23</sup> defines, and Moore<sup>24</sup> gives a logical equivalent of, 'good' (and 'bad') through the comparison of a thing's existence with its non-existence (i.e., if a thing is 'good', it is better that it exist than that it not exist, and for Brogan, vice versa for 'bad'). This view is obviously connected to the insight that good things are things that should be or exist.

This account attempts to use the comparative value of an object's existence and its non-existence as an axiological toggle that preserves the ordering relation between the good and bad areas of the value scale. Unfortunately, however, there are persuasive reasons for rejecting the Brogan/Moore solution.

The evaluative comparison of a thing's **existence** with its **non-existence** brings with it insoluble problems. First, this involves ranking by *better than* two epistemic objects: the existing object and its non-existing counterpart. But an object posited as a non-existent object is epistemically necessarily non-existent. It is not clear to me how such a thing could have any value. If 'the good should be', in other words if superior relative value implies, all else equal, that a thing should exist, then no epistemically necessarily non-existent things could ever have superior value, with respect to their existent counterparts or anything else. They are on a par with impossible objects in being outside the domain of possible bearers of value. Another way of putting this problem is to recognise that an existent object and its non-existent counterpart differ only in one 'property': existence. If Hare is correct concerning the supervenience of the evaluative upon the descriptive<sup>25</sup>, then if one of these comparison objects is better than the other, then this has to be because of the presence or absence of this property. If it is the non-existent object that is better, then adding the property 'non-existence' to the other object (putting it out of existence) should make it better than an otherwise similar object lacking this property (existing). But if it's better, it should exist, and so we should bring it back into existence. We are now locked in a paradox, generated, of course, by trying to

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23. Op.cit.

24. Op.cit.

25. See, e.g., Hare (1952), op. cit. p 80f.

treat existence/non-existence as a distinguishing and evaluatively relevant property of a thing.

It may be that this account makes an error reminiscent of classical negation: that is, of ambivalently positing an epistemic negative. One way of modifying the account, then, might be to compare two epistemic positives by making the contrast at the predicate, rather than subject, level of analysis, in this way avoiding falling off our epistemic field. Another way of putting this is to suggest that we should compare two objects which differ only in having or lacking the object of evaluation as a property or part (this constructed into toggling predicates), in such a way that the 'lacking' side of the contrast remains epistemically positive. We might, for example, compare some state of affairs, or some more general object embracing or having the object of evaluation as a property, with some state of affairs, or some more general object lacking it.

However, now our evaluation is radically transformed: its object is different. An evaluation of something with and without some property or part is not an evaluation of the property or part, but of the thing with and without the property or part. Another way of putting this is to say that the subject of the evaluative proposition remains the background field over which the having/lacking predicates toggle. Further, it is just not plausible that if some, say, property, makes a thing better than the thing would be without it, that that property is always thereby good. We can't even say that the thing having the property is good on these grounds<sup>26</sup>.

Further, the 'lacking' predicate may embrace a disjunctive set of possibilities, **some** of which can be better, and **some worse** than the 'having' side of the predicative toggle, and which will therefore fail to consistently dichotomously divide the predication possibilities over the *better than* scalar field. This problem is best revealed when the purported<sup>27</sup> object of evaluation is an element in some state of affairs, and the 'existence/non-existence' evaluative comparison is construed as being made between states of affairs differing only in the having or lacking of this element. For example, say that we wanted to express the goodness (positive sign) of receiving a 'B' for a paper by saying that the state of affairs where **one receives a 'B'** is *better than* the state of affairs where **one does not receive a**

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26. A property that makes a thing better than the thing would be without it is an all-else-equal better-maker; this will be explained in Chapter 3., Section ii.

27. As I earlier argued, the true objects of evaluation here are the states of affairs.

'B'. But the state of affairs 'not receiving a 'B'' not only includes receiving an 'F', but also, disjunctively, receiving an 'A'. Clearly the goodness of receiving a 'B' should not imply that receiving a 'B' is better than receiving an 'A'<sup>28</sup>.

In this case, the chosen having/lacking contrast ('receiving a B/not receiving a B') does not consistently preserve the ordering relations between the partition that it makes over the background evaluative epistemic field. The problem results from attempting to make the good/bad contrast at the wrong level of analysis. The good/bad contrast involves a **global** value discrimination on the field, not just any value discrimination available on the field. Objects in signed categories on *better than* fields can differ evaluatively between themselves: good objects can be better and worse than each other (and similarly for bad objects). The contrast between some object in one of the signed categories of the scale and its toggle negation (everything else on the field) is hardly ever going to coincide with the contrast between subfields generated by a di- or trichotomous global partition of the scale (although an example of one partition where there will be this coincidence is 'the best versus the rest'). And it is this partition which preserves the ordering relations between the categories, and so precludes some comparison objects (disjuncts in a disjunctive toggle negation) being better, and some worse than, the primary object of evaluation. In short, the 'B/~B' contrast does not divide the evaluative epistemic field at the (axiologically prescriptive) 'joints'.

The object of evaluation should take the subject position in evaluative propositions, and predicates attributing goodness, and not-goodness (which can include 'indifference'), or goodness and badness, should toggle mutually exclusively and exhaustively across the evaluative epistemic field. Where this is so, it is perfectly true that a good thing is better than objects in **toggle negations of the category 'good'**, that is, it is better than all of the objects in both the 'indifferent' and 'bad' categories on that field. It is better than everything in the complementary areas of the field (that is, that is not also in the 'good' area). If this is so, then by comparison with objects in these complementary areas, and relative to the posited goodness of the background field of objects, objects in the 'good' field should

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28. Note that both 'A' and 'B' are 'positive' grades, and 'F' is a 'negative' grade. The point of this example is that both 'A' and 'F' are (disjunctively) negations of (inconsistent with) 'B' and of each other, and yet differ markedly between themselves with respect to their evaluative relations with 'B' (one is better, one is worse). Trying to make a *better than* comparison between 'B' and 'its negation', then (in this case, the disjunction  $A \vee C \vee F$ ), fails to express the relevant evaluative distinctions.

exist, and by comparison with these objects, objects in the complementary areas are not such that they should exist. The 'negation' against which a good thing is better, then, is not that thing's non-existence, and nor is it the toggle negation of **that thing**, but rather, it is the toggle negation of the category 'good' on the background field di- or trichotomously divided by good and not-good (which can comprise 'indifference' and 'bad', or just 'bad').

### **b) Chisholm and Sosa: Better Than Indifferent**

Chisholm and Sosa (op. cit. p 245) also reject the principle (among others) that 'p is good iff p is better than not-p' (for intrinsic goodness and betterness). They argue that things (states of affairs) can be better than their negations, but still not be good. Instead, they argue (p 246) that a state of affairs is indifferent iff it is the same in value as its negation and good iff it is preferable to a state of affairs that is indifferent. For Chisholm and Sosa, X 'has the same value as' Y when X is not better than Y and Y is not better than X.

Now, again, this account of the axiological toggle can be interpreted as expressing the relations between mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories on a scalar *better than* field. The middle category, 'indifference', is neither better nor worse than its toggle negation (its 'contradictory' or complement) on the field ('good' and 'bad', conjoined). Further, the only category that is better than this category is the 'good' category.

In addition, it can be seen that their account, also, draws upon the idea that the good should be. Equality, or 'sameness of value', is a relation that can obtain for any degree of value whatsoever, large or small. A very, very bad thing can nevertheless have a very, very bad negation (so that we have a forced choice between two evils). Examples are standard in moral philosophy, usually designed to force a confrontation between deontological and consequentialist moral considerations. These might, for example, involve scenarios where a choice must be made between horrific (and deontologically prohibited) cruelty to some innocent, and terrible (consequentially prohibited) effects upon others. If an object is equal in value to its negation because both are very, very bad, how can it be 'indifferent'? What is in fact indifferent is which of these options comes to be. It is the alternative 'X or ~X' that is indifferent on their account, not X, and not ~X. This amounts to a negation of the 'should be' relation from both relational perspectives, that is, it is not the case

that, given X,  $\sim X$  should be, and it is not the case that, given  $\sim X$ , X should be. Nor is it the case that from either perspective, the other perspective should not be.

However, their attempt to define the 'sameness of value' of X and Y through 'X is not better than Y and Y is not better than X' is vulnerable to infinitation problems. This instruction can take us off our epistemic field, or 'switch it off' by spotlight negating the value relation altogether. Another way of putting this is to say that the 'X is not better than Y and Y is not better than X' can include incommensurate objects, while 'sameness of value' does not<sup>29</sup>. The successful use of toggle (relevant) negation over evaluative epistemic fields, just as for descriptive epistemic fields, requires that the negation of any category on the field must also be a category on the field.

The most telling problem for Chisholm and Sosa's account, however, is that it does not provide any analysis of the relations between good/bad contrasts and *better than* comparisons other than that involved in what amounts to a complicated restatement of the ordering relation between the good, indifferent, and bad categories of any scalar epistemic field. This problem has two sources: first, it arises from a failure to differentiate between orders of epistemic analysis, and secondly, it arises from a flawed semantics of negation. As I argued in Part I, Chapter 4, Section ii, these errors are often connected with each other.

Chisholm and Sosa's account, like the modified Brogan/Moore account, must be made at the appropriate level of analysis, that is, it will not work for value comparisons between particular objects on *better than* fields and 'their negations'. This error is disguised for them by a conflation of orders of analysis in their account of 'indifference'. It just is not clear how a comparison can be made between the value of an 'indifferent' object and some other object, when 'indifference' at this order of analysis is a relation between degrees of value and is not **itself** a degree of value. X and  $\sim X$ , as I earlier argued, can have any value, as long as they do not exceed each other. Comparing another object with 'indifference' at this level of analysis would be like trying to compare 'much' with 'more than equal'. It is only at the level of mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories of object that we can make sense of evaluative comparisons between categories of objects classified as 'indifferent' and those classified as belonging to the

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29. See my discussion in Chapter 2., Section ii, of 'external' and 'internal' indifference for some discussion related to this point.

complementary categories 'good' and 'bad'. This reflects a higher-order structure which places 'indifference' in *better than* relations with complementary areas of the field. These categories reciprocally position each other evaluatively on the scalar field, and so are evaluatively commensurate, whereas objects which are 'indifferent' in Chisholm and Sosa's sense need have no consistent evaluative connexions with objects which are not, or, for that matter, with other objects which are.

The identification of problems with making value comparisons between the objects of evaluation and 'their negations' plays an important role in Chisholm and Sosa's rejection of accounts of the good/bad contrast like Brogan's. However the semantics of negation that they themselves employ is flawed. It **underdetermines** evaluatively relevant comparison objects among the 'negations' of objects of evaluation, and this disguises the fact that their account only works at an order of analysis (the global 'good/indifferent/bad' contrast) that presupposes the very logical relations that they are attempting to explain.

Chisholm and Sosa (specifically, where they begin to attack the sufficiency of betterness for goodness on p 245) underdescribe, given their guiding axiological assumptions, both the primary object of evaluation and its relevant negations. Their hedonist assumptions contain **two** separately necessary and jointly sufficient conditions for goodness: the presence of pleasure, and the property of there being less displeasure than pleasure (for badness, the presence of displeasure, and the property of there being less pleasure than displeasure). It is relevant to the assessment of a given state of affairs, therefore, what amount of **both** happiness **and** unhappiness (pleasure and displeasure) is present in the state of affairs. 'No unhappy egrets', for example, underdescribes this state of affairs in this evaluative context, because we do not know from this description whether happy egrets are present. 'No unhappy egrets' does not rule this out, and yet, given Chisholm and Sosa's hedonist assumptions, we need to know whether it is so in order to evaluate it.

What obscures this underdescription is the fact that we are given enough information (in this and in converse examples) to guarantee, for example, not-goodness (e.g., 'no happy egrets' guarantees not-goodness on their assumptions) or not-badness ('no unhappy egrets' guarantees not-badness), and enough to discover all-else-equal betterness ('happy egrets' is better than 'no happy egrets',

all else being equal), which is sufficient for the point that Chisholm and Sosa are trying to make (that betterness all-else-equal doesn't guarantee goodness, and that worseness all-else-equal doesn't guarantee badness). But we are left with the false impression that we have told the whole evaluative story if we posit, for example 'no unhappy egrets', compare it to 'unhappy egrets', and note that for the first, not-badness (but not goodness) is guaranteed, and for the comparison, all-else equal betterness obtains. Of course we have not told the whole story. For a complete evaluation, we would have to know about the happy egrets as well. We would need to set before ourselves a discrete range of predicative possibilities defined by their evaluatively relevant features (omitting for simplicity numerical comparisons of happy and unhappy egrets other than those that follow from there being some or none of either): i) **happy egrets and no unhappy egrets**, which is *good*, and which is also *better than* ii) **no happy and no unhappy egrets**, which is *neither good nor bad*, and which is also *neither better nor worse than* iii) **some happy and some unhappy egrets**, (also *neither good nor bad*), with both ii) and iii) being *better than* **no happy egrets and unhappy egrets**, which is *bad*.

My point is that the state of affairs where there are 'no unhappy egrets', when this fuller range of possibilities is acknowledged, includes both (disjunctively) the state of affairs where there are 'happy egrets and no unhappy egrets' (good) and that where there are 'no happy and no unhappy egrets' (neither good nor bad) and these have different values. It is misleading and inaccurate therefore to ascribe to it a determinate value. Similarly, the negation of the state of affairs where there are 'no unhappy egrets' includes both (disjunctively) the state of affairs where there are 'both happy and unhappy egrets' (neither good nor bad, on my simplified ordering) and the state of affairs where there are 'no happy and and some unhappy egrets' (bad). It is similarly misleading therefore to ascribe to this negation a determinate value.

The 'evaluatively relevant negation' of the primary object of evaluation must toggle across the epistemic field between categories of object that differ from each other in evaluatively relevant ways, but which have an underlying common ground which forms the basis for comparison. For states of affairs, this common ground is provided by the mutually exclusive and exhaustive descriptions under which they are judged to have the value that they have (and therefore which can be found in the 'stipulations' for having this or that value, in other words, in the criteria for goodness, badness and betterness). The case where only one property is



evaluatively relevant, and where it and its negation are disjunctively necessary, will be an extremely rare one, but will amount to a simple dichotomously divided scalar field. Most evaluations, however will involve finer-grained comparisons than this, and will therefore require comparisons between the primary object of evaluation and a disjunctive negation.

Chisholm and Sosa's conceptualisation of the relevant negation contrasts required to make good/bad comparisons is insufficiently fine-grained, as if, for example, objects in the 'good' category can only be compared to objects in 'indifference and badness' taken together. Again, using for illustration the principle that states of affairs with more pleasure than displeasure are intrinsically good, and those with more displeasure than pleasure are intrinsically bad, Chisholm and Sosa declare (p 246) that nothing is such that it is good and its negation bad, and nothing is such that it is bad and its negation good, because 'no state of affairs involving more pleasure than displeasure will be such that its negation is a state of affairs involving more displeasure than pleasure'. I do not see why this should be so. Surely the latter state of affairs is one possible (disjunctive) negation of the former, and one which is evaluatively relevant on their criteria. That is, it is a negation disjunctively with the state of affairs where there is neither more nor less pleasure than displeasure, or where there is neither pleasure nor displeasure. It is therefore, first, on the *better than* scalar field, and secondly, according to Chisholm and Sosa's own stipulations, significantly evaluatively different from other objects on the field.

We could imagine an evaluative situation where the relevant negations defining comparison objects involved very fine discriminations, such as between 'ninety-nine percent pleasure/one percent pain' right through the proportional spectrum to 'one percent pleasure/ninety percent pain'. These discriminations can be accommodated by *better than* fields, and can be organised into global toggling di- or trichotomous sub-fields, because the form of negation that we use to make discriminations on these fields is epistemically positive, and therefore can embrace disjunctive sets of epistemic positives, between which evaluative comparisons can be made.

If the evaluatively relevant negation of the primary object of evaluation is disjunctive, then the objects to be compared with the primary object must be **each** disjunct, since each of these are relevantly different ontological options, choices between which are to be guided by the evaluation. But if this is so, Chisholm and

Sosa's account of 'indifference' will fail if it is made at the wrong order of analysis. Every object except the best and worst objects are going to be neither better nor worse than every disjunct in their negations, and therefore neither better nor worse than 'their negations'. Their account of 'indifference' (and thence of goodness and badness), then, will only work for this special case (i.e., for a global partition trichotomising over 'best/neither/worst'), and will not otherwise work for toggling negations between the object and the rest of the field, for the same reasons that the Brogan/Moore account cannot work in this way. A good object is a **kind** of object. At the order of analysis where the categories 'good', 'indifferent' and 'bad' are located, Chisholm and Sosa's account will work, but trivially, because the good category is the best category and the bad category is the worst category.

These considerations limit Chisholm and Sosa's account to the order of analysis appropriate to 'good/indifferent/bad' value discriminations, discriminations which presuppose the very relations they are attempting to explain. This renders their account no more than a restatement of the evaluative relations between the categories 'good', 'indifferent' and 'bad'. The logical underpinnings of value sign, that is, the derivation of these global contrasts from a *better than* epistemic field, remains to be explained.

As I will later explain (Chapter 3), we can articulate the evaluative relations between objects on scalar *better than* fields in modal and quantificational terms that reflect the evaluatively significant structural partitions of the field (the distinctions between 'good', 'indifferent', where applicable, and 'bad'). But preliminarily, from the *better than* relations between 'good', 'indifferent' and 'bad', conceptualised as mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories on a *better than* epistemic field, we have enough information to articulate the meaning of 'sign' quantificationally. The three signs '+', '-', and 'o' are semantically mutually dependent. **Positive sign** indicates that the object is **better than every** object which **merits a different sign**. **Negative sign** indicates that the object is **worse than every** object which merits a different sign. The toggle negation of 'indifference' or 'no sign' is the disjunction of the contrary pair (e.g., 'good' and 'bad') that goes with it. Since an 'indifferent' object will not be better than **every** object which falls in **either** contrary grade, and since it will not be worse than **every** such object, this grade has **no sign**.

### c) R.M. Hare and 'Better Than Most'

R. M. Hare has in effect attempted to explain the axiological toggle through quantitative partitions of epistemic fields. Hare in *The Language of Morals*<sup>30</sup> experiments with stipulative definitions of some important value terms. Having stipulatively defined *better than* in terms of choice (p 184), Hare suggests that 'good' can be (stipulatively) defined, for example with regard to a good 'man', as 'better than men usually are' (p. 186).

The significance of the good/bad contrast derives from the significance of the axiological toggle 'should be', that it reflects. Again, Hare's attempt to define betterness (and, more generally) goodness through its practical analogue, choice, indicates that he is aware of the connexion between goodness and 'should be-ness', since the choice of an option can be loosely described as bringing that option into being. In addition, it is clear that the value contrasts between good and bad categories of object must have greater weight or significance than those between objects within those categories, if these contrasts are adequately to reflect the 'should be' toggle. This feature of the semantics of the partitioning of a *better than* scalar field concerns not so much the structural features of the field, but their significance. Hare has noticed that the good/bad contrast marks **significant** distinctions on scales of value. While good things can be better and worse than each other, they are nevertheless significantly better than things which are not good, as Timur (op.cit.) points out. Hare has tried to express this through the morally-influenced idea that being 'better than most' makes you significantly better than other people, as if people are distributed on a moral bell-curve. As I will presently argue, this won't do, but the basic idea is, again, worthwhile.

Hare's account of goodness in terms of *better than* brings out an interesting and important feature of evaluative (and general) taxonomic strategies: the role of possible objects. 'A good person is better than people usually are' is ambiguous across two interpretations: the first is to take it as reflecting an attempted structural partition of a *better than* scalar field, that is, where the 'good' area can be defined as something like 'better than most', and where 'most' proportionally quantifies across the set of objects ordered by the evaluative principle. However, if an evaluative principle is generally universally applicable (that is, if it is meant to apply

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30. Op.cit. It should be pointed out that Hare is here involved with his own concerns and is not overtly making any claims about the logical relationship of goodness to *better than*.

to anything of the relevant sort that comes along), the set of objects to be ordered by the principle is the set of **all possible objects** of a certain kind. This set is therefore infinitely large, and cannot be divided into proportions in such a way that any given object can be located in any particular segment of the scalar field by reference to those proportions. But this locating is just what sign **can** do.

An analogous problem can be found from number. The sign of a number is defined with reference to zero (it is positive if it is greater than zero and negative if less than zero). Numbers, like objects located on a value scale, are members of an ordered series. Via zero, sign gives crude information about a number's position *vis a vis* the number scale. We may describe this position as 'the top half' or 'the bottom half', but this description can be quite misleading. We are **not**, in saying this, saying that half of the numbers fall below zero and half fall above it, because, in the infinite set of numbers, an equal number of, for example, integers, falls above and below **any** number in the series. We are, when referring to 'halves' and so on, referring to the **scale**, not **what is ordered by** the scale. So, just as it is unhelpful, if I want to know whether a number is positive or negative (or zero), to tell me that it is larger than most, it is unhelpful, if I want to know whether an object is good, to tell me that it is better than most. The number of possible objects located at any given point on a value scale has no bearing on the position of that point *vis a vis* the scale, and hence has no bearing on sign.

To account for sign in value scales, we need something that does the same job as zero on the number scale. If this is to be conceived as a midpoint, it must be understood that proportions ('halves' and so on) are of the scale, not among the objects ordered by the scale.

A second interpretation of the claim 'A good person is better than people usually are' takes the claim to be the content of an evaluative principle. This is not in contradiction with the thesis that I am defending. This claim, as an evaluative principle, can comply with the formal requirements for evaluative criteria that I later advocate. However, it is worth examining, again, in order to bring out the role of possible objects as comparison objects in evaluation.

'What people usually are like' is central to the descriptive content<sup>31</sup> of this principle and any ensuing value judgements. But evaluative principles, like descriptive taxonomic principles, define epistemic fields that are meant to accommodate anything of the relevant sort that comes along. They should therefore be viewed as in principle ranking all possible objects of the kind in question (this in practice is of course limited by descriptive knowledge, including speculative descriptive knowledge, and hence also by imagination, attention and so on). This is how we are able to use value judgements to make improvements upon the way things actually are. It is often the case that a possible object or state of affairs is much better than those which exist, and our knowledge that this is so guides the judgement that we should try to bring that possibility into being. We would not be able to do this if possible objects were not embraced within our comparative value judgements.

If this is so, a standard for all possible people is, in this principle, being based on the qualities of a subset: the usual attributes of actual people. The usual objection to this standard is that it could be that actual people have always happened to be very nasty indeed. In such a circumstance, we are forced by the evaluative principle to hold quite mediocre people to be good and we cannot say that such people are bad, no matter how nasty they are. This is counterintuitive. We should in fact be able to say in these circumstances that even people who are better than average are bad without contradicting ourselves. And we can, because in doing so we are comparing the miserable actual set with much better **possible** people, using a standard that is in some senses independent of what people are actually usually like, and which takes account of what they **can** be like. I therefore suggest that 'better than usual' and similar criteria for goodness are inappropriate for evaluative principles, because they fail to take sufficient account of **possibilities** about the objects of evaluation.

There is no doubt that the usual qualities of the actual objects given us to grade can, and should, influence our standards. Anyone who has had to grade a poor batch of papers will understand this. Sometimes because of poor quality we find ourselves lowering these standards. But this lowering has to do with an influence on our judgements of **possibility**. We are revising, under the influence of a poor sample of work, our estimates of what it is possible for students in general to achieve. The

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31. Descriptive content will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

appearance of one or two excellent papers encourages us to revise our standards up again.

The standards of goodness imposed should reflect realistic possibilities for their achievement. A perfect score viewed as something that, for example, a student in principle cannot achieve, has fallen off the edge of the *better than* epistemic field and has become meaningless. But, on the other hand, an evaluative principle that is indexed to whatever qualities the actual sample happens to have, or indexed to what the world is usually like, compromises the role of evaluation in alerting us to better, if presently unusual, possibilities, and thereby in grounding practical decisions to bring these possibilities into being. Here, also, is the site of a reciprocal limiting influence from the practical domain upon a pragmatically-constrained axiological domain: we will tend to limit the seriously-considered possibilities on our *better than* fields to those which are, or which can be made to be, achievable, or which can serve as a guiding if unachievable focus for more practically-proximate ends.

This point is connected to the necessity for some qualifications to these remarks from the point of view of standards for badness. There is an asymmetry between goodness and badness that arises from the asymmetry of *better than* and of the 'should be' axiological toggle that reflects it. The 'bad' area of a *better than* field contains a category of objects that is supposed to be the first to be rejected in a hierarchical organisation of options (this will be explained further in Chapter 2, Section ii). Kant's Categorical Imperatives are 'bad'-controlled evaluative principles, and will be discussed in connexion with overridingness in Chapter 2, Section ii), and in connexion with possible political influences upon the construal of agency as avoidance of the bad in Part III, Chapter 3, Section ii). While different degrees of badness are relevant to forced choices between bad options, in general, 'standards' of badness work like a filter, selecting out whatever undermines or interferes with preconditions for goodness.

The salience of 'badness' compared to 'goodness' can vary, depending upon the epistemic practice in which the evaluative epistemic field being used has its point. Sometimes it is more important to avoid badness than to pursue goodness, and sometimes it is more important to pursue goodness than simply to avoid badness. An indicator of which is more salient is whether 'indifference' tends to be included in the 'reject' side of the field (if so, the pursuit of goodness is more salient) or in the 'accept' side of the field (if so, avoiding badness is more salient). In addition,

where avoiding badness is more salient, we will find that 'badness' controls the evaluative principle and the *better than* field that it structures, that is, that the toggling criterion for badness, the negation of which implies goodness or indifference, will govern or determine the criteria for the other categories. All of these factors stem from the fact that there are shared general preconditions for the presence or possibility of goods of many different kinds; these would include, for example, having sufficient resources to sustain life. Factors inconsistent with, or damaging to, these preconditions will tend to find their way into criteria for badness in 'bad'-controlled evaluative principles, users of which will in addition tend to prioritise avoidance of the bad. This phenomenon, then, also arises from the practical context of most evaluative practices.

In general, however, evaluative epistemic fields should be conceptualised as organising possible as well as actual objects of evaluation, although this will be pragmatically limited by the practical contexts of most evaluative epistemic activity.

*Better than* scalar fields are coextensive with descriptive fields, if, as Hare has argued, values supervene on facts<sup>32</sup>. It seems reasonable to suppose, then, that the axiological toggle (which, I have argued, is 'should be') should be underpinned by some descriptive toggle. This supposition is explored in the following Chapter.

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32. Hare's 'supervenience' describes the relation between descriptive and evaluative properties. A property 'supervenes' on another property when no change can occur in the former without a change in the latter. See Hare, *op. cit.* p 10f.

## Chapter 2. Descriptive Content and Value Opposition.

### i) Values and Facts: The Evaluative Syllogism

Many authors, beginning with Hare (1952), have held that values **supervene** on facts. I hold, in line with the context of Hare's original stipulation of the term, that they **rationally** **supervene** on facts<sup>33</sup>, that is, that facts are **grounds** for value judgements, together with evaluative principles which stipulate what facts are to bear on value judgements and in what way.

Obviously, 'values' and 'facts' mutually interact. Descriptive differences marked on epistemic fields are salient differences, and one way that they will be salient is because they are evaluatively significant. Conversely, value distinctions will be strongly influenced by existing descriptive partitions. However, 'values' and 'facts', the epistemic domains of the evaluative and the descriptive, can be generally distinguished by the general teloses of the epistemic activities in which they have their point. The descriptive domain concerns questions about what is (was, can be, might be, etc.), while the evaluative domain concerns questions about what should be (should have been, must not be etc.).

Urmson<sup>34</sup> portrays evaluation as the placing of objects of evaluation into classes, according to whether or not they meet (descriptive) criteria for belonging to each class. The important difference between **evaluative** classifying and **descriptive** classifying is that these classes, or **grades**, have an **order of merit**. This order of merit is specified in the evaluative principle and is either conveyed through the use of 'professional' grading labels (e.g., 'first class', 'good', 'bad'), or by labels for which an order of merit is specified.

Urmson has in this paper explained the creation of categories on *better than* fields utilising categories of descriptive difference between objects. It is a very simple matter to develop this idea, using the account of opposition defended in Part I, into

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33. In public epistemological contexts. Some evaluative 'knowledge' does not come from organised frameworks of judgements developed in public epistemological contexts of the kind I am modelling.

34. J. O. Urmson (1950), On Grading, *Mind*, Vol. LIX, pp145-169.



a model of the descriptive differences that must underpin good/bad contrasts, and thence of evaluative criteria for goodness and badness.

Evaluative principles define *better than* epistemic fields. In addition, they bridge the 'fact-value' gap, linking descriptive differences with evaluative differences, and therefore can be conceptualised as mapping *better than* fields onto descriptive fields. A simple way of illustrating how we utilise these principles to draw evaluative conclusions from descriptive information is to use a syllogistic inference as a schema, with the major premiss as the evaluative principle, for example:

**Whatever is P is good**<sup>35</sup>,

and the minor premiss being a particular description, for example:

**x is P,**

from which we can conclude the particular value judgement:

**x is good.**

The major premiss, or evaluative principle, specifies a link between a thing of a certain kind's<sup>36</sup> having some **property/ies** or other and its having some **value** or other, so that under that principle's auspices we can move from the **fact** of the thing's having the property/ies to its having the **value**. The evaluative principle requires justification<sup>37</sup>. Although it appears to be categorical, the evaluative principle always implies *better than* comparisons between some actual or possible objects, as does the concluding value judgement. As should be clear from the recognition that 'good' names an evaluatively ordered subfield on a *better than* field, and that evaluative principles define these fields, the major premiss or evaluative principle as represented above is elliptical, and should be completed with the following or a logical equivalent: '...and whatever is not-P is not good'.

As I explained above, the role of the evaluative principle is to specify the links between positions on a **descriptive** epistemic field and positions on a *better than* epistemic field, for example 'is P' and 'is good' in the major premiss above. The 'P' in the major premiss will therefore take the form of some description. This is

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35. This premiss is elliptical, as will later become clear.

36. This can be kinds of objects, states of affairs, events, or whatever.

37. It has to be justified to the satisfaction of participants in the public system of evaluative knowledge in which it has a place. No doubt this is constrained by empirical conservatism on the one hand, and very general synthetic *a priori* evaluative principles, on the other, analogously with epistemic choices and with justification in public systems of descriptive knowledge.

the descriptive **criterion** for the evaluated object's meriting a certain value. Following Urmson, we can view this as the criterion for the ascription of the **grading label**, in this case, 'good'<sup>38</sup>, or, to put it another way, we can view this as the specified factual grounds for the value judgement.

The minor premiss is **this description predicated of the object of evaluation**. Value terms have, according to Hare<sup>39</sup>, a 'descriptive meaning', and while this meaning is not substitutable for the value judgement or the value term itself (a version of the naturalist fallacy) it is closely connected to the standard in virtue of which the value judgement is made. What I wish to call the **descriptive content** of a value judgement is similar to this 'descriptive meaning'. Where the major premiss or evaluative principle is widely agreed-upon, imposed (e.g. by powerful interest groups), or stipulated (e.g. in dog shows), the descriptions it contains become readily associated with the concluding value judgement. However, this 'association' is just that, an association. While there may be necessary connexions between some facts and values (such as may hold for example, between pain and its badness), mistaking an association between a certain widely-made or imposed value judgement, and a description of the evaluated object, for a necessary connexion between some value and some fact obscures the suppressed evaluative principle and is the source of naturalist errors<sup>40</sup>.

The phenomenon of descriptions being associated with certain value judgements reflects and arises from the underlying logical connexion, via the evaluative principle, between descriptions and value judgements for any particular evaluation. Recall that any evaluative principle elliptically implies criteria for the complementary areas of the *better than* field (i.e., good and bad, or good, indifferent and bad). This field, defined by a given evaluative principle, is coextensive with some descriptive field, which I will later argue is dichotomised using contradictory descriptive

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38. Note again, however, that I am concerned with the use of 'good' as the paradigmatic positively signed grading label (so that all objects meriting positively signed grading labels are also 'good'). This contrasts the grading label 'good' with 'bad' and 'indifferent' only. This usage is therefore 'generic' (for positive value), and different from the 'professional grading label' usage described by Urmson, where 'good' can be just one in a series of positive grading labels.

39. Hare, *op.cit.*, see e.g. pp 118-25.

40. There may also be necessary connexions between high-order (or very general) 'fact' claims of a special kind and similarly general value claims in high-order synthetic *a priori* evaluative principles. An example is the 'fact' of an artifact's having a certain function, which I would argue is necessarily connected to the value claim that its fulfilling that function efficiently has positive value (a value which can be overridden by other disvalues such as the object itself's being a bad sort of object). These would play a role in the justifications of lower order evaluative principles, which assert a connexion between a description of an object and its having a certain value.

predicates. If this is so (keeping our negations relevant), we can move from the value conclusion (that x is good) and the evaluative principle (that whatever is P is good, and whatever is not-P is not good) to the descriptive minor premiss (that x is P). What I wish to call the **descriptive content** of a value judgement is the descriptive claim implied by the value judgement together with the evaluative principle used for that value judgement<sup>41</sup>.

This syllogistic schema should be envisaged as representing only one element in the complicated structure that would properly schematise ordinary everyday evaluative reasoning. The conclusions of these inferences are true, if they are true, only relative to the truth of the premisses, and the major premiss is true, when it's true, in a mysterious sort of way. What is mysterious about it is that it can be true, but **overridden** by another evaluative principle.

An overridingness relation between principles reflect the hierarchical arrangement of the epistemic fields that they define<sup>42</sup>. It is meant to guarantee the **relevance** of the **scope** of the field being used to the evaluative judgement being made. Because of this, the above 'x is good', for example, might not be the end of the story in a piece of evaluative reasoning. This syllogistic inference might conclude that x is good, but another relevant inference might conclude that x is bad, or indifferent, requiring us to return to the different evaluative principles generating these different conclusions (to the different *better than* fields defined by these principles) and order them by overridingness. This must be done in order to achieve a final, overall conclusion.

If values supervene on facts, then descriptive distinctions underpin all evaluative distinctions, including that between good and bad. It seems reasonable to suppose

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41. A lot of the time the claim (specified in the minor premiss) which satisfies the 'descriptive' criterion (specified in the major premiss) is actually a value claim, for example in the principle 'A good pen should write well'. The claims which satisfy these criteria are themselves then the products of evaluative reasoning, relying on prior descriptive judgements and evaluative principles. Most evaluations in my view are the result of layers of evaluation like this. Where this is the case, that is, where the claim that satisfies the criterion is itself evaluative, the descriptive claim implied by the concluding value judgement and the evaluative principle, i.e., its descriptive content, will be the descriptive content of the value claim that satisfies the criterion. So, for this example, it will be the descriptive content of 'This pen writes well'.

42. Overridingness is a relation between 'nested' *better than* fields, ordering the principles or rules that define those fields by something like 'better to obey', or 'better to use'. Epistemological obligations, permissions and prohibitions arise from signing these orderings. Overridingness is examined in Chapter 2, Section ii.

that if evaluative concepts exhibit certain mutual logical relations, then these mutual relations will be reflected in the logic of the descriptive contents of the value judgements utilising these categories. I have argued that 'good', 'bad', and sometimes 'indifference' are mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories on the *better than* field, expressing 'should be' (coinciding with 'good') as an axiological toggle. These relations are echoed in the relations between descriptive partitions of that descriptive epistemic field that is coextensive with any evaluative epistemic field.

## ii) The Subvenient Opposition of Descriptive Content.

### a) The Axiarchism of Dichotomous Taxonomy

The documentation of dichotomous taxonomies was once a popular anthropological practice, and this is reflected in G.E.R. Lloyd's interest in what he calls comparative evidence on oppositional classification from 'primitive societies' (p 31) in his book, 'Polarity and Analogy' (op.cit.). A defining characteristic of these dichotomous taxonomies (see examples below) is that there is an organising dichotomy (e.g., 'kamakra'/ 'atukmakra', or 'inner/outer' area of the village) which seems to toggle over a descriptive epistemic field, but where there is no descriptive relationship between this descriptive toggle and the objects allocated to either side of it. For example, land animals can be classified on the 'water' side of a land/water master opposition (see G.E.R. Lloyd, op. cit., p 34<sup>43</sup>). However, it seems to be the case that everything allocated to one side is a member of a pair, the other member of which is allocated to the other side.

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<sup>43</sup>This is cited by G.E.R. Lloyd to E.W. Gifford, writing on the Miwok of North America. In 'Miwok Moieties', *University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology*, 12, 4, Berkeley, California, 1916, pp 139-94.

## Dichotomous Classification Schemes<sup>44</sup>.

### 1. Eastern Timbira (South America)<sup>45</sup>

<i>kamakra</i>	<i>atukmakra</i>
(central plaza)	(people in outer areas)
east	west
sun	moon
day	night
dry season	rainy season
fire	firewood
earth	water
red colour	black colour

### 2. Amboyna (Indonesia)<sup>47</sup>

(Dichotomy based upon spatial division of village)

left	right
female	male
coast/sea	land/mountainside
below	above
earth	heaven/sky
spiritual	worldly
downwards	upwards
peel	pith
exterior	interior
behind	in front
west	east
younger brother	older brother
new	old

### 3. Meru of Kenya<sup>46</sup>

left	right
south	north
black clans	white clans
night	day
co-wife	first wife
junior	senior
subordinate age	dominant age
woman/child	man
inferior	superior
west	east
sunset	sunrise
darkness	light
religious	political
predecessors	successors
younger	older
black man	white man
honey-collecting	cultivation

G.E.R. Lloyd claims that the one constant in the immense variety of oppositional taxonomic categorisations is their connexion with 'religious' and 'spiritual

<sup>44</sup>Reproduced from Lloyd (op. cit., pp 32-33).

<sup>45</sup>Cited by Lloyd (p 32) to C. Nimuendaju, *The Eastern Timbira*, transl and edited by R.H. Lowie (University of California Publications in American Archaeology and Ethnology, 41, Berkeley, California, 1946, pp 84ff..

<sup>46</sup>Cited to R. Needham, *The Left Hand of the Mugwe, Africa* (1960), pp 20-33.

<sup>47</sup>Lloyd cites this to J.M. van der Kroef, 'Dualism and Symbolic Antithesis in Indonesian Society', *American Anthropologist*, LVI (1954), 847-62..

distinctions', and cites the work of Robert Hertz<sup>48</sup>, who investigated the associations between handedness and value (right usually being viewed as superior to left). Lloyd reports that Hertz mentions other oppositions like 'light/dark', 'day/night', 'sky/earth', 'male/female' in this context, and that Hertz goes on to apply Durkheim's 'sacred/profane' contrast<sup>49</sup> in order to claim that these oppositions mark significant 'symbolic' religious or spiritual contrasts. However, it is much simpler to interpret these more generally as **value** contrasts. The role of value is especially evident, for example, in the Yin/Yang opposition of Ancient Chinese thought. There, according to Lloyd, 'Yang is regarded as noble, Yin as common, so that on the one hand joy, wealth, honour, celebrity, love, profit and so on are considered as belonging to Yang, while on the other such things as sorrow, poverty, misery, bitterness, ignominy, rejection and loss belong to Yin' (p 35). Although Lloyd follows Hertz in describing these taxonomies as 'means of conveying what are ... highly abstract religious concepts' (p 38) the characterisation as religious of the frameworks in which various value claims may be embedded does not detract from their more general character as value claims.

Lloyd, noting that 'the usual' values can be inverted (in the Ancient Chinese Yin/Yang system, for example, left, unusually, is held superior) claims that this 'is itself good evidence of the part played by social, as opposed to physiological, factors in determining the attitude to right and left.' (p 39) and that this possibility of inversion 'illustrates the *arbitrary* element in the symbolic associations which these opposites acquire.' (p 39). But if 'social' factors are involved, why is the 'element' (the 'symbolic associations', or values) thought by him to be **arbitrary**? The actual contents of specific value claims will need to be explained by the historical circumstances in which they have evolved, but value claims, just like other beliefs, are systematically epistemically organised. If they are not; that is, if they are not organised hierarchically on epistemic fields utilising structures which express relevant similarity and difference; they will not be able to be readily communicated, understood and remembered, and they will not 'take' in a public knowledge-system. Guided by an understanding of the logic of value<sup>50</sup> therefore, we can employ both empirical study and logic to understand the reasons for the

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<sup>48</sup>'La Preeminence de la main droite: etude sur la polarite religieuse', trans. R. and C. Needham in Death and the Right Hand (London, 1960), pp 89-113 and 155-60.

<sup>49</sup>The 'sacred/profane' contrast will be discussed in more detail in Part III, especially in Chapter 2, Section i.

<sup>50</sup>An example of such a principle is that the same thing cannot be both good and bad in the same respect at the same time, that, in other words, 'good' and 'bad' are contraries.

particular value positions of, say, left and right in a given culture. It could be that in ancient Chinese culture the goodness of south (compared to north) predominated over the more usual relative strength of the sides of the body in the following way: it underpinned a valorisation of that bodily orientation in which one faces south, and thereby created an associative link between the left side of the body and the good direction, east. To investigate this, we would need to investigate surrounding practices, for example, we might ask how much importance was given to 'facing', in particular, to facing south, in that culture, whether or not this figured in important ceremonies, or in certain prohibitions, for example, and so on. This method relies on the insight that there will be strong associations between same-sign categories, something that Lloyd notes on pp 31-40, reporting that it is:

...a recurrent characteristic of dualist conceptions in primitive thought, namely the tendency to correlate or identify the members of different pairs of opposites. ... (W)e find that pairs of opposites are also correlated even when there is no manifest connection between them, as for example, when east is identified with right, or evil or female with left. (p 40).

These value claims may or may not be made within some religious framework. Religion is, among other things, a species of 'high' value theory, and other value theories can drive oppositional taxonomic systems just as well. It is also worth noting here that what passes for religion may instead be a very worldly arrangement of beliefs designed to reinforce and reproduce the power position of some privileged group. Claims that what is good is good because God or some gods decree it, together with associated obligations and prohibitions, are only a species of value or practical claims - that species in which religious reasons are given as justifications for the claims.

While such taxonomies may appear to be **descriptively** arbitrary, then, they may yet not be arbitrary. This may be because the classifications are in part **axiarchic** in the sense explained in Part I, Chapter 3., Sect. iv, that is, the classifications invert the supervenience relation between description and evaluation, because the evaluative domain is thought to explain the descriptive domain (and this is no doubt strongly influenced by the identification between power and value judgements that we find in religious metaphysics). These descriptive classifications, then, may be organised on the basis of a dichotomous good/bad contrasts, upon which significant descriptive distinctions are thought to supervene.

The Meru of Kenya (see above) placed political power over religious authority, and the Indonesians of Amboyna placed the worldly above the spiritual. If the religious and spiritual can occur on the wrong or inferior side of dichotomous classifications, then while they may explain the guiding axiarchism of the classifications, they are not the most basic explanatory principles of the classifications; that principle is the more general framework of the value contrast itself: what is held good, and what is held bad in relation to it.

The notion that these taxonomies contain 'symbolic' elements, then, has to be given some content more general than the religious or spiritual. We can explain the symbolism involved in these axiarchic taxonomies by looking at the context of their construction from descriptive and evaluative epistemic fields in public epistemological contexts, that is as part of some public knowledge-system. There is a kind of symbolism, more accurately described as a reflection or manifestation, present in any specific good/bad pair which is part of a dichotomous classification of this kind. The relation between the pair can represent the good/bad contrast itself, and all that it means for human choice. If the system of classification is an overtly social object (taught systematically to children, encoded in songs and ceremonies, etc.) then the good/bad contrast represented in the particular pair of objects will be contextualised as overtly social, with all that that means for choices made by human beings specifically as members of social groups, and especially as subject to power relations in those groups (as we will see in Part III).

It is true that the descriptive contrasts made in these classifications will have had a special significance in cultures which used them, but if the structural features of (e.g., the logical relations between) value judgements are ignored in the socially-contextualised account given of them, axiarchic dichotomous classifications will be misread as irrational or even superstitious, with attendant unavoidable explanatory opacity, when in fact they are transparently exhibit epistemological structure.

In axiarchic dichotomous classification schemes, we could say that instead of an evaluative epistemic field supervening upon a descriptive field, a descriptive field is made to supervene on an evaluative field (no doubt under the influence of a religious metaphysics). Recognition that there is an epistemology of value, with a legitimate place in human epistemological practices, is able to reveal the system in an apparently 'arbitrary' and mysterious epistemic phenomenon. Similarly, this



recognition allows us to reveal the system in our construction and communication of evaluative experience, aided by our use of basic epistemic strategies and tools.

### b) Value Dichotomy

Good and bad are, in their paradigmatic use at least, contraries of each other. Whatever is good under some evaluative principle is not bad under that principle, and whatever is bad under some evaluative principle is not good under that principle. This can be illustrated by an investigation of how evaluative principles contradict each other. If I say, for example, that economic growth is good, and you say that it's bad, we prima facie disagree. It is as if I have said that it is night and you have said that it is day. Now it may be that we share our evaluative principles, but disagree on the facts. Or it may be that our evaluative principles are different. My evaluative principle may be

**A: Whatever is conducive to my financial well-being is good, and yours may be**

**B: Whatever is a threat to the environment is bad.**

Let us set out in more detail the contradiction that underlies the disagreement:

1. (A) Whatever is conducive to my financial well-being is good.
2. Economic growth is conducive to my financial well-being<sup>51</sup>.

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C. (A).Economic growth is good.

1. (B) Whatever is a threat to the environment is bad.
2. Economic growth is a threat to the environment.

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C. (B) Economic growth is bad.

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51. Again, note that 'conducive' and 'well being' are value expressions. It is very difficult to find simple and plausible examples of value judgements that do not draw on criteria which have evaluative elements. This, as I have argued, is not inconsistent with my thesis but merely illustrates the layered complexity of our everyday value judgements. Reiterating, the descriptive content of the value conclusion of this syllogism devolves back to the descriptive content of the value judgement that 'Economic growth is conducive to my financial well-being', the minor premiss.

If evaluative principles **A** and **B** are both true, and neither overrides the other, then economic growth is both good and bad, which cannot be the case under one evaluative principle. Either at least one of the principles is false, or one overrides the other. In other words, the two principles **contradict** each other, and therefore cannot be conjoined into one complex evaluative principle.

What is going on here is analogous to two descriptive principles **X** and **Y**:

**X**: Whatever time falls between 6 pm and 6 am shall be classified as night.

**Y**: Whatever time falls between sunrise and sunset shall be classified as day.

Given the fact that a time can fall between 6pm and 6am, and so be 'night' on principle **X**, and yet at the same time, fall between sunrise and sunset, and so be 'day' on principle **Y**, for example, where the time falls after 6pm and before sunset, principles **X** and **Y** contradict each other. They together can generate a contradiction: that the one time is both night and day. They therefore cannot be conjoined into one coherent classification scheme: either one must be rejected, or one held to override the other (one can imagine various reasons for classifying night and day by **X** rather than **Y**, or vice versa, for instance **X** might be useful in the North Pole in winter or whatever. In the North Pole you might want to say **X** overrides **Y** as a useful descriptive classifying principle, whereas in more congenial latitudes, **Y** overrides **X**).

What drives the contradiction in the descriptive ('night' and 'day') example is twofold: first, the fact that 'night' and 'day' are, as ordinarily used, like 'good' and 'bad' in being at least each other's contraries, and so cannot be applied to the same object at the same time, in the same respect, etc. If you want to say that there are times when it's neither day nor night, then (as I explain in the next Section) such times fill the same logical space as does 'indifference' in evaluative principles, that is, as the toggle negation of 'good' and 'bad' when they are (within-field) contraries and not contradictories. **The two principles X and Y are elliptical.** Because 'night' and 'day' are (within-field) contraries, a classification scheme for 'night' implies a classification scheme for 'day' and vice versa. **Similarly, the two evaluative principles A and B are elliptical: an evaluative standard for 'good' implies an evaluative standard for 'bad' and vice versa.**

The other source of the contradiction, for both the evaluative disagreement and the descriptive example, is the fact that it was possible for both of the descriptions implied by the contrary categories to be at the same time true of an object. Such possibilities should, at least in standard epistemological applications, be ruled out by evaluative principles, and therefore such principles should conform to constraints on the logical relationships between the evaluative criteria which they specify. These principles, in other words, should utilise toggling descriptive and evaluative predicatives. This will generate descriptive opposites that match the evaluative opposites on the *better than* epistemic field.

Although the kinds of descriptive opposition underpinning an evaluative opposition may be asymmetrically dichotomous, they will have a strong tendency to exhibit scalar characteristics that match the scalar characteristics of *better than*. This claim connects with my account of 'semantic' opposition at the end of Part I, and will be explained further in Chapter 3, Section iv.

### c) Value Trichotomy and Indifference

Where the descriptions under which a thing belongs to one of the signed categories on a *better than* field are both mutually exclusive and exhaustive (for example, in the principle 'Whatever is beneficial to the environment is good, and whatever is not beneficial to the environment is not good'), there are only two, opposite, categories (for example, 'good' and 'bad'). These are each other's toggle negations, and 'not good' here means 'bad'. But it is easy to see how to explain the **unsigned** or middle category, (e.g., 'indifference') where it appears.

'Indifference' appears on a scale where the mutually exclusive descriptions are not exhaustive of the epistemic field, that is, where **both** can be false of the object of evaluation.

As Brogan (1919<sup>52</sup>) points out, there are two types of indifference: The first is where the object does not fall on the value field at all (i.e., is not an object of the kind to which the evaluative principle is applicable). With this kind of indifference, the object is not only neither good nor bad (according to the principle) but also neither **better** nor **worse** than any object on the field, according to that principle

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52. Op. Cit.

(it is not on the field). This kind of indifference is an infinitated negative, and I will therefore call it 'external' indifference.

With the second type of indifference, on the other hand, the object again has neither positive nor negative value, but it is also **better than** objects with negative value and **worse than** objects with positive value (hence belongs on the field). I will therefore call this 'internal' indifference.

When oppositely signed evaluative terms in a principle and the descriptions their applications imply are exhaustive (when they are 'contradictories'), only **external** indifference is possible. When they are not exhaustive (when they are within-field 'contraries'), however, that is, when the *better than* field is trichotomously divided, an object is **internally** indifferent when i) the evaluative principle is applicable to it, and when ii) each of the descriptive claims that would be implied by the application of each of the oppositely signed contraries are **both false** of that object. This is the source of the **unsigned** category on the value scale, 'indifference'. For example, in the principle 'Whatever is beneficial to the environment is good, and whatever is a threat to the environment is bad', there is a third possibility, that is, where the object is neither beneficial nor harmful to the environment. In this case, 'not good' means 'indifferent **or** bad', and this object belongs in neither the good nor the bad category; it is (internally) 'indifferent'.

#### d) Preserving the Ordering Relation

The descriptive toggle linking descriptive opposition to evaluative opposition must preserve the ordering relation between the resulting categories. The use of a toggle preserving ordering relations for a global partition of a scale, or scalar epistemic field, is exemplified by the using of the freezing point of water as a toggle to subcategorise a temperature scale. We can unpack this toggle a little in order to exhibit the similarities. The idea is that things which are warmer than freezing point are also thereby warmer than everything else on the scale, including that category of things which can be described as **not** warmer than freezing point. Further, we can use the toggle negation of the relation 'warmer than', i.e., 'colder than', to reciprocally determine freezing point as an 'indifferent' dividing point on the scale, because things which are colder than freezing point are thereby also colder than everything else on the scale, that is, everything which is **not** colder than freezing point.

Toggles which preserve ordering relations trade upon two epistemic tools: first, toggle negation with respect to some pair of mutually exclusive and exhaustive predicates (e.g., 'is warmer than freezing'/'is not warmer than freezing') and secondly, quantification over objects in ordering relations (e.g., 'every object which is warmer than freezing is warmer than every object which is not warmer than freezing'). Reciprocal determinations (generating an indifferent 'midpoint') rely additionally upon the maximally different toggle negation (the inversion) of the ordering relation (in this case, 'colder than'). For example, 'is colder than freezing'/'is not colder than freezing' can be used to reciprocally determine a neutral partition on the scale ('freezing point'). Because *better than* is an ordering relation, this strategy is required in order to forge a value-descriptive toggle globally di- or trichotomising descriptive and supervenient evaluative epistemic fields.

'Better' and 'worse' are relational opposites (like knowledge and ignorance<sup>53</sup>); they undo each other, and constitute a toggle affirmation/negation contrast over the same relation. This relational toggle negation is utilised in the forging of value-descriptive links (in other words, the construction of evaluative criteria) by being linked to toggle negations of descriptive predicates. In other words, the 'better/worse' contrast is linked to a 'has/lacks' contrast in the construction of a better-maker (and a corresponding worse-maker).

A modal operation upon this basic strategy generates the criterion for the global contrast. While some properties will make things better or worse, all else equal, other evaluatively significant properties also affect their value. The relationship between good-making criteria and ordinary better-making criteria is hierarchical, constituting a lexical ordering of the weight of different descriptive differences with respect to value significance. This relative weight is what makes the global partition of a *better than* field evaluatively non-arbitrary.

The descriptive toggling criterion for the global contrast, then, must override all other particular value comparisons on the field. Meeting a criterion for goodness must always guarantee that an object is better than anything on the field that fails to meet it, irrespective of what other value-enhancing or reducing properties the compared objects may have. Meeting this criterion will, in other words, be

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53. For a discussion of these, see Part I, Chapter 2, Section v.

**necessarily better-making** of an object on the value field, **by comparison with anything on the field that fails to meet it**. The contrast between 'necessarily better than' and 'not (necessarily better than)' can toggle, and a reciprocal determination using 'worse than' can generate an 'indifferent' category. This is how we 'sign' a value scale.

The issue of the order of logical priority between the categorical ('good' or 'bad') and the comparative ('better than') is misguidedly constructed. From the arguments in Part I, it should be clear that global dichotomous contrasts over scalar epistemic fields and finer-grained dichotomous contrasts on microfields (e.g., a microfield that comprises only two adjacent points on the scale) are structurally identical, so that, for example, the good/bad contrast just is a global *better than* relation between the subfields of a dichotomously divided scalar epistemic field. Further, and conversely, any dichotomous division of a microfield, including a microfield that incorporates only two adjacent positions upon a scale, is structurally identical with a global contrast; the *better than* relation between the positions is therefore also indistinguishable from a good/bad contrast.

The adjacent scalar positions standing in a *better than* relation to each other are scaling fractals to the 'good' and 'bad' areas of a global contrast. Good/bad, therefore, stands to *better than* as relata to relation, and they are **correlative** opposites. It is true, however, that something more is being said of something called 'good' than that it is better than something else. This can be brought out by directly comparing the relata on a two-point microfield with the global relata 'good' and 'bad'. A good/bad contrast is **general to particular** *better than* relata. xxx We might want to construe particular *better than* relations as logically prior to any global classification of them<sup>54</sup>; if so, then the particular *better than* relation is in **this** sense logically prior to the good/bad contrast.

In the following chapter, we will see that the relations between the good/bad contrast and *better than* can be further articulated through a logical account of the criteria for goodness, badness and betterness.

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54. Although I don't think that this is necessarily so. It is possible in my view to draw a global contrast and from the criterion used deduce criteria for particular *better than* comparisons within each dichotomous category. In such a case, the general is epistemically prior to the particular, and the good/bad contrast is epistemically prior to better than comparisons within each partition of the field. It should be also kept in mind (cf. Part I, Chapter 3, Section iii) that, as Sapir (op. cit.) points out, logical, psychological and linguistic primacies can come apart.

As I argued in Part 1., the point of oppositionally structured epistemic fields is to provide coordinates for mapping significant differences among objects on the field. A *better than* field, in ordering a potentially infinitely large set of actual and possible objects of a certain sort by *better than*, is unwieldy. The value of an object can only be conveyed by comparison to other objects on the field, and there are a potentially infinite number of such objects ordered on the field, and potentially at least, an infinite number of places on the field. The good/bad contrast places an object in relevant evaluative comparison with the entire field, providing a framework for comparison not with some specific other object in the set ordered but with the entire set. That is, it telescopes the *better than* comparison into a relation between subfields, summarising multiple micro contrasts on the field in a global contrast between subfields to provide a general framework for accept/reject choices.

#### e) Hierarchical Good/Bad Scales and Overridingness.

A signed *better than* ordering, that is, one that utilises a good/bad contrast, fits in to a hierarchical epistemic arrangement. The background field is 'value spotlight'; that is, is posited as good for the purposes of expressing the goodness of subcategories upon it. We can move freely between these levels of analysis, spotlighting some subfield and dichotomously dividing it (recursively focusing upon and dividing our epistemic field over and over). Expressed in scalar terms, we can subdivide both the good and bad areas of a scale into their own good and bad areas, without contradiction, as long as the levels of analysis are not conflated.

Kant argued that moral imperatives are unconditioned ('categorical' imperatives). That is, they legitimately engage the will independently of the conditions (such as experiencing some inclination) that are required to engage other kinds of practical principles ('hypothetical' imperatives)<sup>55</sup>. If some principle is called up only by certain circumstances, and another principle steadily applies through all circumstances, then the latter principle must override the former (i.e., on those occasions where the former is called up; this is what it is for the latter to continue to apply). One principle applies always, and the other applies only sometimes: this should indicate that overridingness has something to do with scope.

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55. See *The Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, esp. pp 36-45. In *The Moral Law*, translation and commentary by H. J. Paton, London: Hutchinson, 1948, pp 76-80.

Overridingness is an ordering relation between hierarchically arranged epistemic fields, and reflects epistemic relations between **perspective scopes**. It concerns a general logical imperative to proceed through 'nested' (hierarchically ordered) epistemic fields, dichotomised into accept/reject subfields, in an order of priority that respects their scope. This means that we should proceed by rejecting first the 'reject' side of the field which has the most encompassing scope, then by rejecting the recursively partitioned 'reject' side of the 'accept' side of that field, and so on. This is simply a matter of relevance and efficiency: the 'reject' subfield of greatest scope is least relevant to our choices and should be rejected first.

The idea that the moral imperatives are overriding, pioneered by R.M. Hare<sup>56</sup> (who was explicitly concerned to accommodate and incorporate elements of Kant's moral philosophy in his own account of the moral), arises from the negative formulation of Kant's Categorical Imperatives: they are 'rejection' principles meant to rule out wrong acts. They are overriding because they define (for Kant) the most global relevant epistemic value field for practical decision-making (an epistemic field representing the practical worths of all morally capable beings), and map the most global 'rejection' imperatives for practical reason. These progressive rejections are the reverse reading of an ordering of priority for selection, which proceeds from the finest epistemic field to the most global. The ordered sequences of priority of rejection and of priority of selection are the two inverse sides of the overridingness relation.

However, Hare misinterprets overridingness as concerning actual influence upon choice, and is notoriously forced to the counterintuitive position that a 'fanatic's' wicked but in fact 'overriding' principles count as moral principles for that agent. He then cannot explain why those principles ought not be obeyed by that agent. Overridingness does not concern actual influence upon choice except derivatively, through the general influence of the epistemic strategies and tools that we are using upon our thinking. It is an epistemic rule expressing the relevance semantics of hierarchically organised epistemic fields. The overridingness of the moral for practical reasoning is, from an epistemic point of view, simply an instance of these semantics. Arguments that overridingness is definitive of the moral simply express

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56. See, e.g., R.M. Hare (1981), *Moral Thinking, its Levels, Method and Point*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.



the claim that moral decisions are the limiting case, in terms of **scope**, of fields of evaluatively relevant consideration for practical decisions. The moral error of the fanatic lies in omitting objects from his or her ultimate value field that should be there, for example the value of other beings, or of beings in some despised category.

In Part III, Chapter 1, Section i, I will argue that the overridingness of the moral, as an epistemic rule of practical decision-making, is implicated, through its influence upon human choice, in strategies of persuasion employed by power-groups in public-epistemological contexts.

Finally, 'nested' value fields ordered by overridingness comprise a hierarchical arrangement of evaluative information, in which a hierarchical descriptive arrangement is embedded. But mistakes, especially involving the conflation both of orders of analysis, and of evaluative with descriptive classifications, are easily made, especially in certain power contexts. As we will see in Part III, Chapter 3, Section i, this particular form of evaluative epistemic arrangement underpins some extremely important ideological phenomena.

### Chapter 3. The Logic of Evaluative Criteria.

#### i) Some Unhappy Egrets

Intrinsic value, according to Chisholm and Sosa, is value had by a thing 'considered by itself and as if alone' (p 244), '...in itself or ... as an end' (p 244)<sup>57</sup>. It turns out, however, that the kind of value they describe relies in part on value **comparisons**, that is, between the primary object of evaluation and 'its negation' (and, as I have already argued in Chapter 1, Section iv, their semantics of negation compromises their account). They also appear ambivalent, however, about what it is that has the intrinsic value on the hedonist assumption/s that they employ for illustrative purposes. First, they stipulate that **pleasure** is intrinsically good and **displeasure** is intrinsically bad. Then, 'more exactly' (p 244), that it is **states of affairs containing pleasure and displeasure** that are intrinsically good and bad. Further, that it is not just the **presence** of pleasure or displeasure in these states of affairs that makes these states of affairs intrinsically good and bad, but rather the **proportion of pleasure to displeasure** that they contain, that is, more pleasure than displeasure for intrinsic goodness and more displeasure than pleasure for intrinsic badness.

Now while these may be mutually consistent stipulations about intrinsic goodness and badness, they are nevertheless **different** stipulations, and, further, they are **not** consistent with Chisholm and Sosa's final stipulation that 'pleasure is the **only** thing that is intrinsically good and displeasure the **only** thing that is intrinsically bad' (p 244, my emphasis). A positive proportion of pleasure to displeasure is not itself pleasure. Further, a **state of affairs** containing more pleasure than displeasure is not itself pleasure. These distinctions may appear unimportant, but they confuse i) the **object of evaluation** on the one hand, and **those properties in virtue of which it has the value that it has** on the other hand, and ii) the **value of an object** on the one hand, and the **value that the**

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57. A value which, according to them, nevertheless depends upon rating universes 'a plus', and hence on the value of these universes. In my view, intrinsic goodness is a concept that derives from a synthetic *a priori* evaluative principle that is analogous both to the principle that every event has a cause from descriptive reasoning, and to the means-end principle from practical reasoning, viz, that value is transmitted from objects to their necessary (usually causal) conditions, all else equal. The intrinsic/extrinsic distinction, then, differentiates inherent from derived value, and has its place in the justification of value claims (it concerns the direction of justification). This distinction does not bear on the mapping of those claims onto epistemic fields defined by evaluative principles, and so my account should be neutral across extrinsic and intrinsic value.

**object contributes to some larger or more general thing, of which it is a part**, on the other hand. Failures of clarity reflect, as I earlier argued, a conflation of orders of analysis of evaluative epistemic fields, as well as compromising their account as an account of intrinsic value. They also compromise these authors' account of the logical relations between goodness, badness and betterness, when it is interpreted at the level of the logical relations between criteria for value.

In the course of rejecting the principle that a thing which is better than its negation must be, in virtue of that, good, Chisholm and Sosa argue that a given state of affairs, that in which there are **no unhappy egrets**, is not intrinsically good even though it is better than its negation (apparently the state of affairs in which there are **unhappy egrets**, although this is not specified) because 'it would (not) rate any possible universe', or 'the universe', 'a plus' (p 245). This plus rating requires not just the lack of displeasure, but the presence of pleasure. Chisholm and Sosa think that this follows from the original stipulation that only pleasure is intrinsically good and/or that only a proportion of more pleasure than displeasure is intrinsically good. In fact it follows from a slightly different sort of stipulation. It should now be plain that it is not pleasure which is intrinsically good, and it is not even a positive pleasure/displeasure ratio which is intrinsically good on Chisholm and Sosa's assumptions. Rather, the pleasure/displeasure ratio is a **criterion** for the classification of a state of affairs as intrinsically good<sup>58</sup>. A positive pleasure/displeasure ratio is intrinsically good-making of states of affairs. A negative pleasure/displeasure proportion is intrinsically bad-making of states of affairs. These criteria can be thought of as **sufficient conditions** for goodness and badness, for belonging to the 'good' and 'bad' subfields of the *better than* field. It follows from the nature of this criterion that the presence of pleasure is a necessary condition for goodness and the presence of displeasure is a necessary condition for badness. Neither, of course, are sufficient. The real hedonist assumptions, then, are that pleasure is necessary for goodness in states of affairs, with a positive pleasure/displeasure ratio being sufficient; and that displeasure is necessary for badness in states of affairs, with a negative pleasure/displeasure ratio sufficient. Note that these criteria would partition a *better than* scale mutually exclusively and exhaustively into good, indifferent and bad categories.

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58. The error of confusing concepts with criteria is examined by R. Harre (1964) in *Concepts and Criteria, Mind*, Vol 73, J1, pp 353-360. See especially p 353.

Significantly, Chisholm and Sosa choose for the illustrative hedonist contents for the value concepts **polar scalar opposites**: positive and negative pleasure/displeasure proportions as well as the polar scalar opposites pleasure and displeasure themselves. The comparative amounts of pleasure and displeasure, as well as pleasure and displeasure themselves, on the basis of which these ordered opposite labels are attributed, are both properties which can be had in degrees; which transform first into 'empty' negations and then into each other with increasing or decreasing degrees; and which are contraries. Such opposites uniquely make possible the slide from stipulations for goodness and badness to stipulations for betterness and worseness that Chisholm and Sosa now effect. The choice of pleasure and displeasure to illustrate goodness and badness is not therefore insignificant, and obscures the general direction of the logical relations between goodness, badness and betterness. It also obscures the relations between the criteria for goodness, indifference and badness. From Chisholm and Sosa's assumptions, it appears as if goodness and badness can be prior to betterness, and that what is better-making can somehow follow from what is good- and bad-making (see p 244, "given our hedonistic assumptions..." etc.). In fact, as we will later see, it usually works the other way around. Further, it appears to them as if the criteria for goodness and badness can be logically independent of one another (since 'the negation' of pleasure is not displeasure, and vice versa). However, this view is an artifact, as we have seen, of a flawed semantics of negation. In fact, these criteria, since they are polar scalar opposites, are logically mutually dependent.

On p 245, the concept of betterness as it relates to goodness and badness is applied in a way which is forecast by earlier remarks on p 244. Chisholm and Sosa assume that the absence of displeasure, while not sufficient for goodness, nevertheless makes a state of affairs intrinsically better than a state of affairs which contains displeasure. Chisholm and Sosa clearly think that displeasure (given their hedonistic assumptions) is intrinsically worse-making of states of affairs compared to its lack, and that pleasure is intrinsically better-making compared to its lack, and that this follows from their original hedonist assumptions.

A better-making criterion is a property which makes a thing (here, a state of affairs) better than something which lacks it, all else being equal (this will be examined in the following Section). If pleasure, by itself not sufficient for goodness (hence not a good-making criterion) is nevertheless better-making, then a state of affairs with it will be better than one without it, all else equal, so a state of affairs containing, for

example, pleasure and no displeasure will be better than one containing neither pleasure nor displeasure. And if displeasure is worse-making, then a state of affairs containing displeasure and no pleasure will be worse than one containing neither pleasure nor displeasure.

There is, then, a set of stipulations (of evaluative criteria), the logical coherence of which provides the source of the plausibility of Chisholm and Sosa's actual stipulations (about intrinsic value). A positive pleasure/displeasure proportion is good-making of states of affairs, a negative proportion is bad-making, and pleasure and displeasure are first, necessary conditions for goodness and badness respectively, and second, better-making and worse-making of states of affairs respectively. This set of stipulations (although they do not see this) gives us the beginnings of an answer to the question of the logical relationships between criteria for goodness, badness and betterness.

## ii) Betterness

Stipulations of criteria for goodness, badness, and sometimes, indifference, and possibly for subcategories (grades) within these, make up the **evaluative principle** defining the structure of a *better than* epistemic field<sup>59</sup>. If there are logical constraints on these criteria that follow from the logical relations between good, bad and *better than*, these constraints should provide a prescriptive logical model for evaluative principles.

In an evaluative principle, we stipulate properties (constructed into toggling predicates) which evaluatively distinguish such objects. Beginning with some descriptive epistemic field, then, the most basic form this stipulation takes is that in which **we specify that some property makes all possible objects on the field *better than* those object would be without it, all else equal**. It follows from the relational opposition of 'better' and 'worse' that objects lacking the property (as expressed in a toggling predicate) will be worse than objects having it, all else equal. The evaluative principle can now order all possible objects of the kind in question on a *better than* scalar field, the limits of which are worst and best possible, and which has as many distinguishable points or degrees as the

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59. What the criteria should be is part of what is negotiated or imposed in public systems of evaluative knowledge.

distinguishing property, or **criterion**, allows (e.g., for one toggling criterion, there can be only two).

This approach is similar to the traditional (Brogan/Moore) solution to the good/bad contrast, but applied at the level of **criteria for the value of an object**, not the object itself. This use of evaluative comparison with negations removes the problem of evaluating non-existent objects as non-existent objects. There is no problem with comparing an object with a certain property to that object without it; the object of evaluation is never posited as non-existent<sup>60</sup>. Further steps are required before we arrive at the good/bad contrast, but it is at this level that find the seeds of the Brogan/Moore insight that to account for sign we must combine the comparative **better than** with the **exclusive disjunction is/is not**. This disjunction is the foundation of the possibility of signing.

The basic evaluatively relevant property I will call a *ceteris paribus* **better-making characteristic**. It can be defined as follows:

**For any two objects on an epistemic field which differ only in the having/not having of P, if the object which has P is always *better than* the object which has  $\sim P$ , under some evaluative principle for things on that field, then P is a *ceteris paribus* better-making characteristic under that principle<sup>61</sup>.**

### iii) Goodness

The good/bad contrast is constructed<sup>62</sup> using a **modal** operation upon *better than*.. Instead of stipulating that a property makes an object on an epistemic field better, all-else-equal, than anything on the field which lacks it, we stipulate that the property makes an object on the field **necessarily** better than anything on the field which lacks it, that is, better than anything on the field which lacks it, irrespective

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60. Note, however, that this implies that necessary properties, i.e., those pertaining to the existence of, or defining, things, or kinds cannot be criteria for the value of those things or kinds **as what they are**, at least for this kind of evaluation. Degree of **expression** of these properties could, however, be criteria for something's value as a thing of that kind. I think that this detail might be able to be developed into an account of the kind of absolute (i.e., non-comparative) value that underpins certain deontological constraints, however this matter is beyond the scope of the present work.

61. '*Ceteris paribus* worse-making' can be defined along the same lines, reversing the evaluative ordering of the objects.

62. Not all *better than* fields have to be signed, of course.

of what other evaluatively relevant properties the objects may have or differ in. Having this property will then be a **sufficient condition** for belonging to the positive grade ('good') on a signed *better than* field.

I will call the necessarily better-making property (expressed in propositions as a predicate), or the sufficient condition for belonging to the positive grade on a signed scale, the **good-making description**. It can be defined as follows:

**X is the *good-making description*, under some evaluative principle for an epistemic field, if and only if an object on that field, which satisfies X, is, under that principle, *necessarily better than any* object on that field which does not satisfy X<sup>63</sup>.**

The satisfying of the good-making description is sufficient for an object on an epistemic field to be good under the evaluative principle for objects on that field. Satisfying this description makes an object, according to the principle, better than anything of that kind which fails to satisfy it, **irrespective** of what other properties the objects may have and differ in. A necessarily better-making 'property' (or description) is on my account a **good-making property**, and will normally be a compound criterion. By '**necessarily better**', I do not mean that the evaluative principle is necessarily true, or that the object is necessarily good, or whatever, but rather that, **given** the truth, or **relative to the truth** of the evaluative principle, the object with the property is better than one lacking it, **irrespective** of what other properties the objects may have or differ in. The modality here merely reflects the criterion's having highest position in a hierarchy (a lexical ordering) of evaluative criteria by weight, or **overridingness**. This reflects that certain properties are central or crucial to a thing's value, usually as a thing of its kind, and that a logical procedure has been developed by us to accommodate this.

The stipulation of a necessarily better-making criterion amounts to the **forging of a link between the evaluative toggle and a descriptive toggle** (and, epistemically, between should be/not[should be], and affirm/deny) for some epistemic field of objects.

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63. And similarly X is the bad-making description if the object satisfying X is thereby *necessarily worse than any* object which fails to satisfy X.

The overriding criteria that I am describing figure in many ordinary evaluations: they are, for example, those 'pass/fail' criteria which we, consciously or unconsciously, employ in our choices. An example of a 'fail' criterion that most of us would employ when purchasing a car, for example, would ordinarily be 'doesn't go'; another might be 'unsafe'. For pens, again, a 'fail' criterion will be 'doesn't work'. These 'fail' criteria, as I will later argue, have toggle negations which are 'pass' criteria, and are normally conjuncts in a complex evaluative principle which mark the borderline between what to accept and what to reject, prior to other evaluative discriminations. Because of the evaluative 'should be' toggle, which is expressed as 'accept/reject' in choice, it is unusual for there to be many discriminations in the 'fail' part of the scale, as we find in our assignment-grading scales.

But logically, what the necessarily better- or worse-making criterion does is tell us that the object meeting it is guaranteed to be better (or worse) than one failing to meet it, summarising or compacting for us, in an **evaluative kind**, many particular evaluative decisions.

The following is an example of an evaluative ordering that utilises both necessarily better-making and all-else-equal better-making properties as criteria for position on a *better than* field. 'A', 'B', '~A' and '~B' stand for these criteria. The field might comprise, e.g., pens. 'A' is a necessarily better-making property (this might be, for example, 'black', if you prefer black ink) and 'B' is an all-else-equal better-making property (for example 'fine point'):

(> = better than)

$$\underbrace{(A \& B) > (A \& \sim B)}_{(+)} > \underbrace{(\sim A \& B) > (\sim A \& \sim B)}_{(-)}$$

The categories with A are in the positive area of the field, and the categories with ~A are in the negative area. Those with B are better than those with ~B, within the positive and negative areas of the field. In the next section I will discuss and explain the symmetrical quality of the distribution of criteria in such orderings.



#### iv) Intensifiers

Some signed evaluative orderings have more than three grades, which must be characterised as distinctions **within** the positive and negative areas of the scale. Since such grades are distinctions within the positive and negative areas of the scale, other kinds of evaluative criteria than 'good-' and 'bad-' making criteria must distinguish these grades. One such property is the *ceteris paribus* better-making characteristic.

But take the following evaluative ordering, for example:

$$\underbrace{A \& \sim B}_{\text{'a'}} > \underbrace{A \& B}_{\text{'b'}} > \underbrace{\sim A \& B}_{\text{'c'}} > \underbrace{\sim A \& \sim B}_{\text{'d'}}$$

This ordering cannot be analysed solely in terms of good-making and/or *ceteris paribus* better-making descriptions and characteristics. All grades which have A are better than grades which have  $\sim A$ . A is therefore a good-making description (and vice-versa for  $\sim A$ ). However, what is B? Since grade 'a', which has  $\sim B$ , is better than grade 'b', which has B, B is not a *ceteris paribus* better-making characteristic. And neither is  $\sim B$  a *ceteris paribus* better-making characteristic, since grade 'c', which has B, is better than grade 'd', which has  $\sim B$ . Neither, then, for the same reasons, is B a good-making description.

$\sim B$  makes good things better and bad things worse. It is an '**intensifying**' characteristic, because it has no evaluative significance without the presence of the good-making and bad-making descriptions upon which it operates. Examples of this kind of operation upon good- and bad-making descriptions appear to cluster around the exercise of free will, as intensifying the positive or negative value of actions. This is perhaps more commonly exemplified in the opposite form, by **mitigating** characteristics such as intoxication or mental illness.

Further elaborations of the kinds of relations between values expressed in the logic of evaluative criteria would include '**gestalt**' effects, i.e., values arising from the presence of properties which together endow an object with a value that is greater than the sum of the values endowed by each individual property. However, apart

from noting that any account of evaluative criteria would have to be able to handle these and other complications, I will not further discuss them here.

#### v) Mirror Image ('Semantic') Opposition

*Ceteris paribus* better-making characteristics are properties which make a thing better, under some evaluative principle for an epistemic field, **all else being equal**. The criterion for goodness, however, makes a thing better, under some evaluative principle for an epistemic field, than **anything** on the field which lacks them, no matter what other properties the objects may have. Failing to meet this criterion puts the object in a contrary, and therefore worse grade. Similarly, failing to meet the criterion for the negative category puts the object in a contrary, and therefore better grade.

In addition, however, because better and worse are relational negations of each other, in constructing, e.g., a necessarily better-making criterion from compounds of better-making criteria, we are logically constrained in our stipulation of criteria for other parts of the scale. These will pattern out into 'mirror image', or semantic opposites.

These sub-properties which are also *ceteris paribus* better-making can also be understood to be separately **necessary conditions for goodness**<sup>64</sup> (together making up the sufficient condition for goodness which I have called the 'good-making description' and which I have also described as the necessarily better-making criterion). I will call the necessary conditions for goodness **good-making conditions**. They can be defined as follows:

***x* is a *good-making condition* under some evaluative principle for an epistemic field if and only if i) no object on the field lacking *x* meets the *good-making description* under that principle and ii) *x* is a *ceteris paribus better-making characteristic*<sup>65</sup>.**

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64. Where we do not construct our good-making descriptions from conjunctions of better-makers, the result should be treated as evaluatively indivisible, and there will be a dichotomous opposition with no symmetry of content of the form  $X/\sim X$ .

65. And the bad-making conditions can of course be analogously defined.

Now recall the 'playlist' example from the end of Part 1, Chapter 4. John and Mary are now both choosing playlists from a 'field' of two records, A and B, each with a positive and a negative side. John and Mary are not permitted to play more than one side from each record; nor can they play any side more than once. But instead of stipulating that all of the positive sides are longer than all of the negative sides, with all positive and all negative sides the same length, let's stipulate that the positive sides are each better than the negative sides, and that they are each better in the same degree, that the positive sides are equal in value and so are the negative sides. Obviously, a signed *better than* ordering of the possible playlists will be as follows (with negative sides marked with a negation operator):

$$\underbrace{(A \& B)}_{(+)} > \underbrace{[(A \& \sim B) \vee (\sim A \& B)]}_{(0)} > \underbrace{(\sim A \& \sim B)}_{(-)}$$

The playlists can represent grades on a scale of merit, with their components representing criteria for belonging to the grades. Each criterion is by itself better-or-worse-making (e.g., A is by itself better-making,  $\sim A$  is by itself worse-making). The good-making description is (A & B), and the good-making conditions are separately, A and B. But why is the bad-making description ( $\sim A \& \sim B$ )? This is because the bad-making description must guarantee that the object is worse than any other object on the field, so **each** of the good-making conditions, that is, A, and B, are ruled out as conditions for belonging in the **bottom** category, or **worst** set. Having either of these would make the object better than something else on the field (something lacking both). In fact, this means that the negations of all good-making conditions for being in the top category make up the compound criterion for being in the bottom category, the necessarily worse-making criterion. Objects which have some, but not all, such conditions belong (in this example<sup>64</sup>) in a middle, unsigned category, indifference. The criteria for the negative grade is the conjunction of the negations of the criteria for the positive grade. From these considerations we can make an important generalisation:

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64. In this example, the toggle naturally falls at the 'joints' A & B and  $\sim A \& \sim B$ ; other orderings may not be so accommodating. The generalisations that I make in this section should not be viewed as unbreakable rules, but as epistemic templates that we will tend to use to structure scalar epistemic fields for ease of manipulation.

For any pair of signed value categories<sup>67</sup> under some evaluative principle for things of a certain kind, the *bad-making description* should be the *conjunction of the negations of the good-making conditions* and the *good-making description* should be the *conjunction of the negations of the bad-making conditions*.

Further:

The conjunction of the negations of the good-making and bad-making descriptions should be the criterion for the 'indifferent' grade, where there is one.

The scale is therefore descriptively laterally inverted across the middle, unsigned category; the criteria for belonging to each of the signed categories are mirror-images of each other; this is 'semantic' opposition. Symmetrical descriptive distinctions are, as I argued in Part 1., an important strategy for compacting information on epistemic fields (information which can be unpacked using the negation toggle) especially if pairs of opposite segments on the field can be spotlighted using Routley et al's \* operator or similar<sup>68</sup> and then switched through using toggle negation.

Value opposition arises out of a **modal** operation upon *better than*. The basic *better/worse* function applied at the level of the affirmation or negation of a toggling descriptive predicate generates better/worse-making characteristics and comparative position on the value scale. A *necessarily better/worse* function applied at this

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67. ...as distinct from the unsigned category, 'indifference'.

68. I don't pretend to follow the formal contents of the 1983 paper 'Semantical Foundations for Value Theory (op. cit.), but I note that \* features in the following way: If  $b < c$  then  $c^* < b^*$ . We could take the subfield \*P to be the opposite subfield of P in some field S, so that \* acts like a toggle negation over opposite subfields, which on *better than* fields, then also must invert the *better than* relation between those opposites. My 'toggle' negation is a more general version of \*, switching through complementary subfields which need not be semantic opposites. Recall that for trichotomously divided fields, toggle negation will switch us into the disjunction of the two complementary fields. To determinately switch into one or the other we have to negate both of the subfields complementary to it. Toggle negation has the advantage of being able to switch us into non-oppositional contraries on the field (e.g., 'indifference'). It's not clear to me whether \* does this - perhaps all that is needed is something like  $*(P \vee *P)$ . This would require us to construe 'indifference' as the opposite of the extreme categories conjoined, which is consistent with some unusual forms ('golden mean' forms) of value-oppositional construction.

level generates good- and bad-making descriptions and therefore value sign, and value opposition.

**Any signed evaluative ordering**, no matter how many grades there are (better-making and other sorts of evaluatively relevant properties, which are discussed below, can make distinctions within the signed categories), can be telescoped into **three** basic grades (or two where indifference is not possible): **positivity** or goodness, **negativity** or badness, and **no sign** or indifference<sup>69</sup>.

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69. The disjunction of the criteria for each positive sub-grade will elicit the criterion for positivity, and similarly for the negative grades.

## Conclusion

The account of the epistemic structures of evaluative reasoning defended in this Part is not meant to provide a complete account of evaluation, or even of evaluative reasoning. It is highly selective, and amenable to a considerable degree of elaboration and qualification. However, the epistemic structures and tools that I have described are identifiably present in, and explanatory of, important structural features of the politically-inflected oppositional phenomena that will be the subject of analysis in Part III of this work. If I have described, both in Parts I and II of this work, legitimate epistemological strategies and tools, and if these manifest in illegitimate (misleading, harmful) epistemological materials (e.g., concepts, and rules expressing relations between them) in public epistemological contexts, then we have the beginnings of an explanation of the persuasiveness of these phenomena, and the beginnings of an account of the large-scale ideological manipulation of the active intelligences of human beings.