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POLANYI'S OVERCOMING OF THE DICHOTOMY OF FACT AND VALUE

One of the most important consequences of the dominance in the modern world of the Objectivist frame of mind has been the undermining of our beliefs in values and obligations. The demand for an exact, impersonal, and wholly explicit knowledge, which is supposed to be a function of its object alone, has arisen from the success of the new scientific method, as usually understood, and from the picture of the world which that method has often been supposed to yield. On the one hand, any personal participation of the knower in his knowledge is held to corrupt it and to render it `subjective'. On the other hand, the *real* world is taken to be that known by the exact sciences of physics and chemistry: the world of matter in motion or energy and mass, and of the `primary' qualities of mass, size, shape and location. That of `secondary' qualities---of colour, smell, taste, meaning and value---is taken to be only a `phenomenon', a subjective product of `primary' qualities upon the senses and mind.

It follows from the Objectivist model of knowing and of the world that can be known, that values and obligations are merely `subjective'. They are not in or a part or an aspect of things, but are projected by us upon things. This view was most clearly articulated in the Emotivist theory of ethics, of the Logical Positivists. To say, `X is good' is never to say anything true or false about X, but only either to express one's own `merely subjective' feelings about X (i.e. to say, `I like X' or `X! Hurrah!') or to attempt to arouse such feelings in others.[1] Analytic moral philosophy moved on from Emotivist to the Prescriptivism of R.M. Hare, in which to say `X is good' is again not to state anything that can be true or false, but only to prescribe that X be done. For, says Hare, it is nonsense to think that values could inhere in things themselves.[2] The only constraint on what we can prescribe is the purely formal one that it must be `universalisable' and apply to all relevant cases. There is nothing wrong in murder, robbery and enslavement themselves. All that can be said is that one who maintains that they are not wrong must not contradict himself by saying that they are wrong when he himself is murdered, robbed or enslaved. Duties not to murder, rob nor enslave do not inhere in any `philosophical mystification' about the nature of man, but from our reluctance to allow such things to be done to us were we to be in that position.[3] Since values and obligations are totally other than and divorced from facts, and since statements about them are neither true nor false, neither verifiable nor falsifiable by reference to any facts, it follows, says Hare, that `we are free to form our own moral opinions in a much stronger sense than we are free to form our own opinions as to what the facts are'.[4] Hare makes it very clear that there are only two possibilities: `Naturalism' which equates values with some specific range of facts, such as pleasure-giving properties, or his own Prescriptivism, as a modification of Emotivism, which accepts this dichotomy of fact and value.

Hare is the representative figure of Analytic moral philosophy, and, beyond that, provides an explicit articulation of what is widely held, as a consequence of the acceptance of Objectivist assumptions: viz. that facts and values are utterly distinct, that fact is necessarily valueless, and so that values and obligations are our own creations, with no rational basis. That general position may be summed up in the

following dogmas which today are asserted and rarely argued: that fact and value are utterly distinct; that facts have no bearing on values, and vice-versa---`you can't deduce values from facts'; that description (or saying what the facts are) implies nothing about prescription and evaluation (saying what is to be done and what is good); and that metaphysics is irrelevant to ethics. The last dogma hides the definite but always tacit ontology of those who adhere to it, that the world is and can only be a realm of neutral fact.

Although Continental philosophy has produced massive studies of the structure of moral value, such as those by Max Scheler and Nicolai von Hartmann,[\[5\]](#) for the most part they have left values and duties unanchored in the world, despite Scheler's great interest in the phenomena of life, the forgotten realm between the Cartesian bifurcation of the world into mind and matter alone, and Hartmann's ontology of a world of many levels.[\[6\]](#) More influential, perhaps, has been Sartre's Existentialism, in which the empty for-itself of consciousness, which is `nothingness' or `a fold in being', stands over and against the solid and wholly determinate in-itself of things. The freedom of consciousness is radical. For values cannot be founded on *being*, since then they would be merely facts and not values, and they are revealed only to consciousness as it freely chooses or creates them, *nothing* justifies me in adopting any one value or scale of values, and my choice of values cannot have any foundation. As Hare himself recognised, Sartre's position, especially when he tried to make freedom itself a universalisable value in *Existentialism is a Humanism*, is close to his own, a fact that has been recognised by others.[\[7\]](#)

Polanyi exposed the precarious nature of the Liberalism, which from John Locke onwards, has argued from the denial of our knowledge of truth in a certain sphere to liberty of thought and action in respect of it.[\[8\]](#) That can yield only a subjective freedom of doing as one likes which destroys itself. Anglo-American Liberalism, based on nihilistic denials of truth and obligation as a result of acceptance of Objectivism, has in practice suspended its logic and accepted after all conventional restraints upon conduct. Polanyi cited the example of David Hume, who locked away his writings that ended in moral scepticism and went off to cheer himself up at backgammon. Dr Johnson said of Hume's conclusions that, if that is what he believes, then we should count our teaspoons when he calls. But outside the English-speaking world, logic has not been suspended and radicals and revolutionaries have drawn and acted upon the consequences of nihilism: that, because nothing is really good or bad in itself, then we can set at nought all scruples and traditional restraints. Moreover, unlike those who act in `bad faith' and do not admit that their notions of value and obligation are arbitrarily chosen, merely `bourgeois ideology', expressions of the *ressentiment* of the weak, or products of their class origins or childhood neuroses, the revolutionary explicitly proclaims his lack of scruple and his *honesty* in being unscrupulous. It is no good, Polanyi rightly argued, to try to counter the revolutionary with moral scepticism and the arbitrary nature of his valuations and policies. That is precisely what he admits, and it can only further undercut the claim that liberty, justice and individual rights are to be respected and preserved. Liberalism, by basing itself upon scepticism, has bred the nihilism that has defeated it.

Polanyi drew two sets of conclusions from his argument against the suspended logic of Anglo-American Liberalism, all the detail of which I have omitted. Philosophically, we need to regain the faith to acknowledge values and obligations which we cannot prove to be real by the paradigms of Objectivism, and to conceive liberty as the responsible self-surrender to those values and obligations. That is, we must

go beyond nihilism and sceptical Liberalism, and beyond all Liberalism. For liberty can be defended only if it is *not* the primary good, but one needed for the service and realisation of goods other than and higher than itself. And politically, we must give up all thoughts of a total renewal of society by a totalitarian state, accept that there will always be many imperfections in human life and institutions, and seek instead steadily to maintain and improve the traditions which we have inherited.

One part of Polanyi's philosophical alternative to sceptical Liberalism is his refutation of the dichotomy of fact and value. He points to levels of reality in which facts are necessarily valuable, or disvaluable, and description is evaluation. I propose to take up his accounts, given in Chapters 11 and 12 of *Personal Knowledge* and 'The Message of the Hungarian Revolution' in *Knowing and Being*, and to develop them a little further.

Before we come to what Polanyi himself said, let us first allow that Objectivism is right in one respect: that the world of physics and chemistry, *considered only in and by itself*, is devoid of meaning, value and obligation. It is a world simply of *things*, or the particles and energy which constitute them. If that were the entire world, then the world would be a realm of neutral and bare fact. But it cannot be the whole world, for, as Polanyi often pointed out, it does not contain the scientist that knows it. A really dead and mindless world would contain neither scientists nor their science, and would never be known, nor never known to be without value and meaning. Objectivism engages in perpetual double-think: it sets upon as a paradigm of the object of knowledge something which cannot contain mind and knowledge.

Meaning, value and obligation have being only in relation to life and mind. Now to the Objectivist, this fact renders them 'subjective' or 'relative', for it means that they are the *creations* of our minds, and are *projected* onto a world grey and neutral in itself. It is an important point of method, in this connection, to focus upon our recognition of values and disvalues in relation to others. X is beneficial or harmful to Y irrespective of *my* recognition of X's value or disvalue in that respect. Whether or not I know or care about it, lime in the soil is harmful to azaleas and rhododendrons. Living and conscious beings project, not the particular values of things, but a *field* of value and disvalues around them, so that things which otherwise have no meaning, value or disvalue, may then acquire meaning and value or disvalue. Were the world without life and mind, then nothing would be beneficial or harmful, friendly or hostile, safe or dangerous, helpful or hindering, pleasant or unpleasant, interesting or boring, true or false, relevant or irrelevant. Consider a sunset if there were no minds capable of appreciating it or a book if there were no minds that could understand it: such things would lack the very possibilities of bearing meaning and value.

Physics and chemistry, therefore, not dealing with living and conscious beings as alive or conscious, but with all things only as constituted by matter and energy, do not investigate the values or disvalues of their objects, just as the European compositor setting up a text in Sanskrit knows only the shapes of the characters and nothing of their sound or meaning. Yet, while values and disvalues form no part of their subject-matter, physics and chemistry are necessarily guided, as intelligently conducted activities, by

cognitive or intellectual values. As Polanyi argues in Chapter 6 of *Personal Knowledge*, without personal appraisals by scientists of what is interesting to science, scientific research could not begin or would lack direction. There would be only the haphazard accumulation of meaningless data. Polanyi distinguished three types of scientific value: precision, generality of application or scope of illumination, and intrinsic interest, all of which are spread unevenly over the natural sciences. Furthermore, every intellectual enquiry has to be guided by standards for sorting the true from the false, established facts from uncertain ones, interesting facts and problems from those which will tell us nothing new or significant, promising lines of enquiry from probable dead-ends, well-conducted from ill-conducted enquiry. They are what R.G. Collingwood called *criteriological* activities, ones which are not only rightly or wrongly performed, but ones of which the performers as they go along necessarily judge the success or failure of their own performances. Being trained in them includes coming to appreciate and observe the standards employed. All this Objectivism cannot recognise, for its own standard for knowledge is one in which personal employment of standards has no place and would render it all 'subjective'.

This, then, is the first breach of the fact-value dichotomy: that knowing itself involves the personal employment of standards, mostly implicitly, for judging what we know and whether we have succeeded or failed in knowing it.^[9] The world studied by physics and chemistry lacks value in and by itself. But, *as and when studied by physics and chemistry*, it thereby acquires a dimension of cognitive values, of degrees of interest to science.

With Polanyi we turn next to two levels of the world on which things and events bear values in and by themselves: life and technology. In Polanyi's ontology of tacit integration, each level of a comprehensive entity or complex performance has its own particular details which are organised by its own *principles of operation*. They leave unspecified their boundary conditions or margins, which are then specified or determined by the operational principles of the next higher level. The co-ordination of the levels is the *principle of dual control* which operates by means of the *principle of marginality*.^[10] Each level can be apprehended and comprehended only in terms of its own principles, and never by those of the levels beneath it. If we focus upon the latter and regard them in themselves, the former dissolves before us. That is how camouflage works: we see in themselves the details, of patches of colour, that are the object's surface, but lose sight of the object's shape and therefore of the physical object itself. *We have to attend from the details of the lower level and to the higher and its operational principles to grasp and understand a comprehensive entity or to perform a complex action*. That is Polanyi's constructive answer to the Reductionisms which Objectivism entails.

One consequence of this structure of tacit integration is that the next higher level is *the meaning* of the next lower. This is what Polanyi calls its *semantic aspect*. Consider a patch of colour in a painting. Its meaning lies not in itself, and if the painting is divided into its separate patches of colour, then it is destroyed and they lose their meaning. Their meaning lies in their contribution to the whole, their joint effect. Likewise that of the words of a sentence, or the details of a familiar face. We can take this a step further and say that, in certain cases, the *value* of the lower is their contribution to the higher. The value of my organs and limbs is their contribution, individual and collective, to my continued existence

generally and to my particular activities. They have a value as the necessary conditions of my embodied existence and activity in the world.

Now this value which the lower has for the higher, as its necessary conditions of existence and activity, occurs when the higher level in question is itself a sphere of values and disvalues. That is, when its own operational principles are *rules of rightness*. Rules of rightness do not merely govern, nor are used by us only to describe, the operations or organisation of the particulars of a comprehensive entity or complex performance. For they also set standards for the operations of objects of that type and are used by us as standards for evaluating their operations. The operational principles of a machine specify how a machine of that type works: that is, how it works *correctly and efficiently*. They account for the successful workings of that type of machine. They leave unexplained its failures, which are explained by events upon the lower level. Thus the laws of physics and chemistry do not explain how a calculator gives the correct answers to sums put into it. But they can explain, once from our mathematics or everyday experience we recognise that the machine is working incorrectly or not at all, just why it has gone wrong or is not working: for example, why a fuse has blown or why heat has distorted the printed circuit. [\[11\]](#)

It follows that, on such levels, description *is* evaluation. To describe this object as a 'calculator' or 'clock' or 'knife', is tacitly to evaluate it as a correctly and effectively operating machine, instrument or device of that type. This is revealed by imagining oneself asking in a shop for a calculator, and being sold one that either does not work at all or works wrongly. One rightly feels cheated. What one has been sold is not really a calculator at all, until it has been repaired. A calculator is not defined by any shape or size or other merely physical attributes it may have, but by its ability to perform certain operations, that is, to perform them *correctly*. It is a calculator only insofar as it does that. Otherwise it is meant to be a calculator, or is passed off as one, but is one that fails to perform the relevant operations. Again, one cannot describe what it is doing without evaluating its operations. To say that it is finding the square root of 198,760 is to say that it is *succeeding* in doing so, that it is doing so *correctly* and so is coming up with the *correct* result. No description in terms of its merely physical characteristics---such that electrical impulses are flowing through these parts of its circuit, or that these L.E.D.'s are lit up---tells us anything about its calculations. And if it is not working correctly or not working at all, then we have to say so explicitly unless we seek to mislead our audience. There neither is nor can be any mere description of things, and their operations, whose principles of operation are rules of rightness.

Every machine or device necessarily works rightly or wrongly, effectively or ineffectively, efficiently or inefficiently. This is the range of technical or instrumental values. Such values arise from *purposes*. Without beings that have aims and purposes, nothing has any instrumental value or obstructive disvalue. If no one seeks to go through the pass, then a landslide cannot properly be said to *block* it. If no one seeks to know the time, clocks cannot be said to be good or bad at keeping the time. When we say that the pass is blocked, we are tacitly thinking of it in reference to someone, actual or hypothetical, who does or would wish to travel through it. An obsolete machine stills works correctly or not, even though no one now uses it in that way and for the purpose for which it was designed and made. But it still embodies that purpose, and we can say that it works or doesn't work only with tacit reference to that purpose.

The particular parts of a machine or device have meaning and value with reference to the machine or device itself and the purpose for which it is designed. They are correctly or incorrectly designed and made and functioning as they enable or do not enable the machine or device to work correctly. Apart from the machine or device, they lose that meaning and value. They become simply pieces of metal, plastic or wood. Furthermore things around the machine or device acquire meanings and values and disvalues in relation to it and its operations: as necessary, irrelevant or obstructive to it and them. For example, the temperature, humidity and amount of dust of the atmosphere necessary to or disruptive of the workings of a computer.

Parallel to machines and devices are the organs and organic systems of organisms, *living machinery*. Their value, I would say, is not instrumental for they are usually not disposable nor substitutable, nor are they essentially related to purposes, as more or less consciously set aims. Their value, as mentioned above, is more intimate: it is that of necessary foundation or support. Furthermore there is a certain reciprocity: I keep my body alive as it keeps me alive. Indeed, in the case of plants there is no distinction between the plant itself and the mutual conjunction and interdependence of its parts, which is why some parts can be detached and then develop into whole plants. As living entities, organisms necessarily project a field of values and disvalues upon their environments. Things are necessarily beneficial, neutral or harmless to them, in one way or another: as nutritious, non-nutritious or toxic; safe or dangerous; healthy or unhealthy. Likewise each organism, organic system and organ is itself alive or dead, whole or injured, healthy or diseased, fertile or infertile, mature or immature or senescent.[\[12\]](#) This is the range of organic values. Physiology is the formulation of the rules of rightness for organic functioning. A solar system cannot go wrong nor operate rightly, but a heart necessarily either pumps sufficient blood around the body of the animal for the nutrients and oxygen to remain alive and to operate normally in their own way, and for waste products to be removed, or it doesn't. It can be understood only in terms of its functions within the body, its contribution to the life of the whole, and thus in terms of its correct and sufficient performance of those functions or its failure so to perform them. Similarly the whole organism can be understood only in terms of the normal operations of its type, its success or failure in maintaining itself and in reproducing. As Polanyi points out,[\[13\]](#) 'normal' here is not a merely statistical but a *normative* term. The unimpaired, fully healthy and fit specimens may be the rarest: consider human teeth before the widespread use of stannous fluoride, and indeed, even now within the whole population of the world. Again, with reference to living things and their operations or actions, description is necessarily evaluation. It is misleading simply to name a diseased or animal specimen of a species or organ to someone wholly ignorant of the species or type of organ, just as it would be to call a broken-down jalopy a 'car' or a calculator gone haywire a 'calculator'. A crippled cat is still a cat and not a snail, and a diseased liver is still a liver and not a heart. But neither can rightly perform some or all of its proper operations. Each is abnormal though perhaps not unusual.

Life then is a realm of *achievement* and not of mere processes and events. It has its own standards, standards which we must try to grasp and to employ in understanding through evaluating living beings and their functionings and actions.

We next come to the level of consciousness, at which the objects studied observe and apply, and do not

merely instantiate, rules of rightness. This is the sphere of purposes, striving, action, the use of means and finding alternative means. Animals can go wrong in their sensori-motor activities of perceiving and acting by *error* and *subjectivity*, and not just as a result of disturbances on a lower level such as injury, malformation and disease. This means that, as well as success or failure according to the principles of operation of the activities in question, there is also the animal's own standards which have to be grasped and evaluated if its performances are to be understood. For example, an animal can eat that which is not nutritious or is definitely toxic. When it does that, it is mistaken. Unlike a machine or a non-conscious organism or organ, it does not simply fail. It certainly succeeds in going through the motions of eating and digesting. But it is mistaken in eating the object in question. It implicitly takes the object to be nutritious when it isn't. Polanyi distinguishes between (merely) *subjective satisfactions*, as when a rat drinks a saccharine solution because of its sweet taste and despite its lack of nutritive value, and *reasonable error*, as when a trout is deceived into leaping for the angler's fly. The trout applies its standards for recognising flies and the fly on the angler's line appears to be a real fly, its normal prey. Besides these there is compulsive, utterly irrational activity and meaningless activity, as when a maniac devours sand or paper. The study of the activities of conscious beings has to search for their meanings, and for what is being aimed at and whether it is achieved. Thus if a sheep eats the wool off the back of another sheep, before this can be pronounced to be meaningless and so pathological, an effort has to be made to find some value in that activity for the sheep, such as providing for a deficiency of minerals in its diet. Polanyi therefore states that, with conscious and intelligent operations (even though the level of intelligence may be very low) there are four basic possibilities:[\[14\]](#)

- (1) a correct satisfaction of normal standards,
- (2) a mistaken satisfaction of normal standards,
- (3) action or perception satisfying subjective, illusory standards,
- (4) mental derangement issuing in meaningless reactions.

A non-evaluative study of animals, as required by Behaviourism, which does not imaginatively put the student in their place so that he envisages what they are implicitly trying to do and what principles or standards are guiding them, is not to be had. What Behaviourist psychology actually yields is what Polanyi elsewhere calls a 'pseudo-substitution': a new terminology, supposedly describing only movements in space, is used which is meant to replace that by which we attribute intentions to animals and people, but the new terminology is tacitly interpreted in the same way as that which it was supposed to replace.

The study of animal intelligence is therefore a two-fold evaluation: of success or failure at the performance of the details of the actions involved (e.g. performing the physical actions of eating and drinking) and of the principles or standards which the animal uses in the larger action of which these are the subsidiary details (e.g. obtaining nutrition). We can understand animal and human behaviour only by grasping the intention, or set of intentions, behind it, an intention that can vary the details to suit the exigencies of varying situations, as when a rat takes another route through its maze when its usual one is blocked or learns to move on three legs instead of four, or weaves and dodges to escape a dog. And, having grasped the intention or set of intentions, we can understand what the animal or person does in particular only as a successful or failed attempt to fulfil it. *All verbs of action are what Ryle called*

'achievement' verbs. [15] He mistakenly singled out verbs ascribing achievements of a terminus but they are only a special case. Verbs of continuing activity also ascribe achievements---`playing' and `waging' as well as Ryle's example of `winning'. *There is no mere description of conduct as there is none of the operations of machines and the functioning of organisms and organs.* To describe these is always to attribute success to the intention to try. We explicitly state that someone is trying to do X only when we do not know that he is succeeding or think that he is definitely failing. `He's trying to play *Prelude in C*' means that he is largely failing to do so---he plays too many wrong notes. Furthermore he may be satisfied that he is succeeding, and so a correct description of what he is doing would be, `He mistakenly thinks that he is playing *Prelude in C* correctly'. A Behaviourist account, which would have to specify every note played and its length, and the length of the intervals between them, not only could not be given, but would tell us nothing.

Polanyi extends his account of necessarily evaluating understanding of action and perception to the understanding of learning in animals and human beings. To understand learning we must ourselves have genuine knowledge of what another is learning. If I know no mathematics, I cannot tell if X is learning *mathematics* and not something else, nor if he is *learning* it, that is, is coming *successfully* to understand it, as opposed to either remaining ignorant or coming to misunderstand. I must be able to appraise his mathematical performances as correct or incorrect, in order to say that he has learned the formula for quadratic equations or how to integrate. Furthermore competence is not just the getting of a right answer or successful result, the error embodied in multiple-choice tests inspired by Behaviourism and its supposedly `objective' approach. Right answers can be the result of accident and sheer guessing. Above the level of elementary arithmetic, what matters in mathematics is the pupil's grasp of the right method --- slips by the way resulting in incorrect answers matter much less than failures to apply the right method even though by chance a correct result appears at the end. The four possibilities listed above become the following:

- (1) *Correct* inferences reached within a *true system*.
- (2) Erroneous conclusions arrived at within a true system (like an *error* committed by a *competent* scientist).
- (3) Conclusions arrived at by the correct use of a fallacious system. This is an *incompetent* mode of reasoning, the results of which possess *subjective validity*.
- (4) *Incoherence* and *obsessiveness* as observed in the ideation of the insane, particularly in schizophrenia. [16]

To (3) should be added the incorrect results achieved by use of a fallacious system.

Indeed, the levels of evaluation are even more complex than Polanyi indicated. There is that of the result, that of the method, that of the person's acceptance of the result, and that of his acceptance of the method. Thus X, in solving problem A could use inappropriate method B upon C, think it appropriate, come up with incorrect result D, and think that to be correct, both as following from B when applied to C, and in being the correct answer to A. Normally, when X correctly solves A and does not obviously use an inappropriate method, we do not spell all this out. But a description of what he has done, when

his performance is correct in some respects but not in others, must specify what he has done rightly and what he has done wrongly, otherwise it will be misleading. For we always tacitly ascribe success and correctness unless told otherwise. We take the normative to be normal. Our language for intentional action is always tacitly evaluative.

Consider an example from history. At the lowest level of mere chronicle, we say 'the Battle of Waterloo was fought in 1815'. Here, surely, we have a wholly 'objective', unevaluative statement of mere fact, a pure description. On the contrary, 'battle' itself signifies the successful results of intentional actions. Using 'battle' rather than 'collision' or 'massacre' ascribes an intention to fight on both sides at the very moment of the engagement, intentions successfully carried out to the extent that weapons were actually used. Even if one side had sought to avoid a battle, when caught it stood and fought, otherwise there would have been no battle at all but its surrender without a fight. And if there had been deaths, they would not have been deaths in battle but deaths as a result of unresisted slaughter --- i.e. a massacre. All this is compactly conveyed by the term 'battle', which therefore is employed as a tacit evaluation of the results of some of the intentions on each side. Moreover, the intention to fight is an intention to win, or at least, to avoid defeat. Hence *what really happened* has yet to be stated, the result, a victory for one side or a draw. 'Wellington won the battle of Waterloo' is obviously evaluative. But victory, drawn battle and defeat each varies greatly: victories can be decisive or not decisive; each can amount to the other two in time; and we have the special term, 'pyrrhic victory', to signify a victory so costly that it was as bad in its effects as a defeat. It is therefore necessary to look beyond the immediate context in order to decide *what really happened*. What really happened at Waterloo was that Napoleon's ambitions were *finally defeated*. It was a clearly decisive victory for the Allied powers and a corresponding defeat for Napoleon. That is its meaning in history, its value for the Allied powers and its disvalue for Napoleon. Hence the attention given to it by historians.[\[17\]](#)

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Notes

1. A. J. Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic* (London: Gollancz, 1936) and C. I. Stevenson, 'Emotive meaning of ethical terms' (*Mind*, NS XLVI, 1937). C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards had had already separated scientific statements, which can be true or false, from poetic ones which merely express the speaker's emotions and say nothing true or false about their ostensive subject-matter --- *The Meaning of Meaning* (London: Routledge, 10th ed. 1949), pp. 149-51. Their account of language has been very influential in the teaching of English. Its destructive consequences were brought out by C. S. Lewis in *The Abolition of Man* (Glasgow: Collins, paperback ed. 1978).

2. R. M. Hare, *The Language of Morals* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952); *Freedom and Reason* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1981); *Moral Thinking* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981). See the last, pp. 78-86, where he argues against J. L. Mackie, in *Ethics: Inventing Right and Wrong* --- a significant title!

(Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977) that it is not *false* but *nonsensical* to believe in moral properties and authoritative prescriptions.

3. *Freedom and Reason*, pp. 222-3.

4. *ibid.* p. 2.

5. M. Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics* (trans. Frings and Funk, Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973); N. Hartmann, *Ethics* (trans. Coit, London, Allen and Unwin, 3 Vols, 1933). See also J.N. Findlay, *Values and Intentions* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1961), who deals with the values of consciousness generally (but not technical and practical values).

6. N. Hartmann, *New Ways of Ontology* (trans. Kuhn, Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1953). Hartmann's depiction of the different levels of existence in the universe is similar to Polanyi's. It is more detailed, but lacks Polanyi's theory of tacit integration, and indeed, any account of how the levels are co-ordinated.

7. See, Iris Murdoch, *The Sovereignty of Good* (London: Routledge, 1970), who seeks to go beyond the picture, shared by Analytic philosophy and (Sartrean) Existentialism, of autonomous and undefined man choosing his values in a world that lacks meaning and value.

8. See 'Perils of Inconsistency' in *The Logic of Liberty* (London: Routledge, 1951); 'Beyond Nihilism' in *Knowing and Being* --- hereafter *KB* --- (London: Routledge, 1969); 'The Magic of Marxism' in *Personal Knowledge* --- hereafter *PK* --- (London: Routledge, 1958).

The suspended logic of Anglo-American Liberalism is manifested in its contemporary educational theories: Rational Autonomy in Britain, and to some extent in the USA, according to which there is no ascertainable truth in morals, politics and religion; the authoritative teaching of any such beliefs is 'indoctrination'; and so we *ought* not to teach them but to enable the young rationally to make up their own minds about these matters; and Values Clarification, in the USA, which argues more or less the same thing and produces schemes whereby the young can make clear to themselves what they already hold to be of value *whatever it is*. I have criticised the theory of Rational Autonomy, often following Polanyi, in a series of articles in *The Journal of Philosophy of Education* ---Vol. 12, 1978; Vol. 16, No. 2, 1982; Vol. 21, No. 1, 1987.

9. See further, M. Grene, *The Knower and the Known* (London: Faber, 1966), in which this theme is developed. Even Russell's 'atomic proposition', 'this is red', arises from the application of a *standard* for redness.

10. See *The Tacit Dimension* (London: Routledge, 1966), Chap. 1, where this is set out fully.

11. *PK*, Chap. 11.

12. Polanyi added morphogenesis as an achievement (*PK*, pp. 348-59). This has been disputed. Insofar as size and shape contribute to nothing else, then attainment of the typical size and shape may not be an achievement. But if the functioning of an organism or an organism requires a certain size and shape, then morphogenesis does count as an achievement.

13. *PK*, p. 139n.

14. *PK*, p. 363.

15. *The Concept of Mind* (London: Hutchinson, 1949).

16. *PK*, p. 374.

17. See further, R.G. Collingwood, *Essay on Metaphysics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), pp. 108-9, on thought as a self-criticising activity; and *The Idea of History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1946) pp. 215-6, on history as the 're-enactment' (from evidence of the 'outside' of actions) of the thinking that issued in them, and therefore as the *critical* rethinking of the agent's thought in the light of his knowledge and situation and also of the historian's own knowledge of the activity in which the agent was engaged.

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