

NICOLAI HARTMANN'S INTUITIONISTIC ETHICS

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INTRODUCTION

When one tries to locate Nicolai Hartmann's philosophy within the spectrum of contemporary German philosophical thought one realizes that Hartmann does not fit neatly into any of the familiar so-called "schools of thought". Nevertheless, his philosophy bears the marks of the influence of numerous other contemporary thinkers, while at the same time remaining distinctively original.

Born of Protestant German ancestry on February 20, 1882, in Riga, Latvia, Hartmann abandoned his studies of medicine, and later philology, at Dorpat and St. Petersburg, to turn to philosophy at Marburg, where he received his degree in 1907. At Marburg Hartmann's philosophical development was directed by Hermann Cohen, the founder of the "logistic" Marburg school of Neo-Kantianism, and by Paul Haterp, another important Neo-Kantian. Hartmann's early works reflect an orientation directed toward Kant and also toward Plato--interests which he shared with his two teachers, who had both published important works about these two outstanding historical figures. In 1909 Hartmann submitted for his habilitation an extensive thesis entitled, Platos Logik des Seins.

It was not until after he had been appointed professor at Marburg, where he had served as Privat-dozent from 1909 to 1920, that Hartmann's publications appeared

to take on a markedly independent flavour. Although it may be said that many of Hartmann's subsequent publications are at least implicitly about Kant, Kantianism and in particular the logical idealism of the Marburg school suddenly became a philosophical outlook that Hartmann was to react against. This became clear in 1921 with the publication of his Grundzüge einer Metaphysik der Erkenntnis, a book whose very title suggests a reinterpretation of the Neo-Kantian understanding of the relationship between metaphysics and epistemology.

During this period it was no longer Cohen and Natorp to whom Hartmann looked for inspiration, but rather Scheler and Husserl. Although there is no indication that Hartmann ever met Husserl, an acquaintance with the latter's publications convinced Hartmann that phenomenology could prove to be a useful philosophical methodology. As we shall see, there is good reason to believe that Hartmann never quite understood some of the basic principles (for instance, the phenomenological reduction) of Husserlian phenomenology, and to classify him simply as a "phenomenologist" does as little justice to Hartmann as it does to phenomenology itself. Indeed, privately Husserl is said to have referred to Hartmann as a "dazzler" (Blender)¹ and it is not too likely that Husserl would have wished Hartmann to be considered as one of his followers.

1. H. Spiegelberg, The Phenomenological Movement, p. 352

It must have come as somewhat of a surprise to Hartmann when he discovered that while his own philosophical position was tending more and more toward "realism", in reaction to the alleged "subjectivism" and "idealism" of Harburg Neo-Kantianism, Husserl was passing, so-to-speak, in the opposite direction, adopting the notion of "transcendental subjectivity" as the fundamental thesis of his phenomenology. Indeed, it was the Husserlian theory of "immanence" which appeared to clash with Hartmann's phenomenological analysis, especially in the area of epistemology.

According to Hartmann knowledge was essentially an act of grasping an independent object, precisely, the Kantian thing-in-itself. This entails the mutual basic separation of the knower and the known. Were it not for this basic separation the laying hold of an object in the knowledge situation would not properly be designated by the term "knowledge", for there would be no "breaking through" into the transcendent realm. It is a fundamental mistake, according to Hartmann, to ignore this essential feature of knowledge as the Neo-Kantians appeared to do by claiming that in some sense the object of knowledge is "created" or "produced" by the subject in the application of the categories. This same mistake is evidently found in Husserl's "reduction to the sphere of immanence". It is true that within this sphere of immanence Husserl

reconstructed a kind of transcendence, i.e. "immanent" transcendence, to characterize the mode of being of physical objects and so forth--entities whose being is not totally exhausted in their givenness in consciousness. But this was not "transcendence" in the pregnant sense in which Hartmann understood the term. One could only wish that Hartmann had formulated a definitive statement as to what he understood by the term "transcendence", for it appears ambiguously in different contexts, often suggesting a usage which is unique to Hartmann himself.

The very least that one can discern in Hartmann's notion of "transcendence" is that objects of knowledge must have an "independent self-existence". This is as much true of physical objects, such as tables and tennis rackets, as it is of ideal objects, such as numbers and values.

It is in this tendency toward "ontologism" with respect to ideal entities that Hartmann stands closer to Scheler than to any other phenomenologist. Particularly in his Ethics does one discover the extent to which Hartmann was influenced by this man who for a time was considered to be the number two phenomenologist. That Scheler thought highly of Hartmann too is indicated by the fact that it was on Scheler's recommendation that in 1925 Hartmann was offered a position at Cologne where the former was a professor. There can be no doubt that Hartmann found the intellectual

atmosphere at Cologne more stimulating than at Marburg with Heidegger, who had arrived there in 1923, his appointment having been supported by Hartmann.¹

In Hartmann's Ethics one sees the same inclination to hypostasize values, the same predilection for a "phenomenological method" and the same objections to Kantian formalism and subjectivism as are to be found in Scheler's earlier work, Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik. But Hartmann is much more of a Platonist than Scheler about the status and structure of values. While Scheler adopts a much more moderate stance, Hartmann does not hesitate to assert that values are ideal entities (Wesenheiten) existing in an ideal realm comparable to the realm of the real world but nevertheless quite distinct. His ontological commitment leaves Hartmann just this side of a full-blown Platonic realism.

Characteristic of Hartmann's approach is the principle of the "maximum of givenness", which stands in direct opposition to the principle of Occam's razor which forbids the needless multiplication of entities admitted into one's ontology. Instead of "as few as possible" Hartmann's maxim seems to be "as many as necessary."

There are aspects of the ethical thinking of these

1. Cf. R. Weiss, "Nicolai Hartmann: a personal sketch," in Personalist, 42, p. 473.

two associates which stand in sharper contrast than the question of the ontological status of values. One important difference is reflected in the tables of value that Scheler and Hartmann erect. The highest value on Scheler's scale, that of the "holy", is entirely missing from Hartmann's theory of value. Not only this, but Scheler's favourite theory of "personalism", which also derives, in part, from his commitment to the Catholic faith, is rejected by Hartmann, who was an atheist and who argued strongly for the independence of ethics from any religious underpinnings.

In his book, Über Ressentiment und moralisches Werturteil, Scheler had attempted a strange synthesis of Christian and Nietzschean ethics, wherein he claimed that "ressentiment" was characteristic not of Christianity but rather of modern bourgeois society. Furthermore, he argued that it is in precisely those who adhere to a subjective theory of value that "ressentiment" manifests itself. The liberation from the "slave morality" comes when one is put in touch with the realm of "objective values". It is assumed that among these objective values Scheler would have us also find the Christian virtues.

Scheler's thesis earned him the epithet, "the Catholic Nietzsche", but it seems that the title is hardly justified in view of the fact that not only was Nietzsche hostile to the Christian church but he also claimed that the belief in a realm of "objective" values was a distinctive mark of

the "morality of the slave".

But Hartmann also claims to be an heir to Nietzschean philosophy, although he too reinterprets it to suit his own purposes. We shall see how in Nietzsche's doctrine of the "transvaluation of values" Hartmann sees merely the variation of valuational consciousness and not a change in the values themselves. In Hartmann's Ethics, Part II, "The Realm of Ethical Values", where he treats of the "special moral values" within the ideal realm, Hartmann attempts to reconcile the peculiar Nietzschean virtues, such as "Love of the Remotest" (Fernstenliebe) and "Radiant Virtue" (Coit's translation of Schenkende Tugend), with the Platonic, the Aristotelian, and the Christian virtues.

Such an eclectic conglomeration of virtues is not without its internal contradictions and antagonisms; "love of the remotest", for instance, conflicts with the Christian virtue of "brotherly love". But ethical life is never such a simple matter as choosing a value over against an anti-value. Ethical decision always involves weighing the claims of one value over against those of another. In fact, Hartmann tells us:

The conflict of the two values is undeniable. But to see the antinomy is one thing; positively to approve it is another. To resolve the antinomy in favour of one side is always a temptation. But it leads inevitably to a misunderstanding of the other value.¹

1. Ethics, Vol. II, p. 318.

Quite a number of the themes of the ethics of both Scheler and Hartmann are also to be found in the value theory of Franz Brentano. Brentano's "descriptive psychology" served as an inspiration to early Husserlian phenomenology as well, so his importance to Hartmann's "phenomenological" approach to ethics should not be underestimated.

Brentano's major contribution to phenomenology was his rediscovery of the Scholastic notion of "intentionality". According to Brentano, "consciousness" always stands in an "intentional" relation to something which presents itself as an "object", whether it be actual or not. Thus, there is no hearing without something heard, nor is there believing without something believed. In fact, all acts of consciousness--hoping, striving, being pleased, ect.--have their intentional objects.¹ This notion of the "intentionality" of consciousness provides the basic foundation for Husserl's analysis of the noetic and noematic aspects of meaning.

Hartmann adopts this thesis of the "intentionality" of consciousness as well, but, perhaps, of greater importance to Hartmann's ethics is Brentano's emphasis upon "intuition" and his critique of the Kantian "a priori".

Brentano denied that there were any synthetic a priori propositions. For him, all a priori propositions,

 1. Cf. Brentano's The Origin of Our Knowledge of Right and Wrong, § 19.

therefore, were analytic. But Brentano's notion of "analyticity", to be sure, was much wider than Kant's. For Brentano a proposition is analytic if it can be recognized to be apodictically evident. Clearly, on this account a number of Kant's "synthetic" a priori propositions (for instance, those of mathematics) would be reclassified as "analytic".

Furthermore, Kant's sharp division of propositions into "a priori" and "empirical" is challenged, for according to Brentano it is precisely within the empirical that the a priori is given. Brentano's doctrine, that the a priori is not merely a subjective form imposed upon the manifold but is rather something which is given in experience itself, plays an important part in Hartmann's analysis of the categories. The rejection of the claim that a priori principles are first and foremost principles of thought makes it possible for Scheler and Hartmann to develop what they call a "material a priori".

Starting from the assumption of the givenness of the a priori one is left with the task of merely "describing" the a priori structures of reality which are discovered "intuitively" by means of "eidetic intuition" (*Wesensschau*). For Hartmann this meant catching hold of "essences"--ideal entities comparable to Brentano's "irrealia" or "intentionally inexistent entities". Brentano, however, later abandoned his earlier theory of "irrealia", adopting a "reism" that

starkly contrasts with Hartmann's theory of "essences."

In his ethics Brentano declares that loving and hating may be said to be correct or incorrect in a way analogous to, but yet distinct from, the way in which judgments are said to be correct or incorrect. Emotion, like cognition, is a form of intentional relation to objects in the world. The correctness of an emotional response to an object is as objective as the correctness of a judgment, insofar as it is impossible for anyone to love correctly what anyone else hates correctly, just as it is impossible for one person to correctly judge one thing while another correctly judges its opposite.

In both cognition and emotion we find certain a priori principles which are discerned "intuitively". The value of a certain act or object is given intuitively in the process of loving or hating, much as the truth of what is judged is given in the act of judging. These are irreducible phenomena; one does not first intellectually grasp the value of something and then subsequently take up an attitude of love or hate. Apart from loving and hating and so forth there could be no intuition of value, just as apart from judgment there is no cognition of truth.

It is precisely this fact that Scheler reiterates when he speaks of Pascal's "a priori ordre du coeur, or logique du coeur". This is to counteract the excessive

intellectualization of ethics which was the outcome of the Kantian critique of practical reason.

This "emotional intuitionism" is also a major constituent in Hartmann's phenomenology of values. One intuits the structure and order within the realm of values, furthermore, only through the act of "preferring" one value or kind of value to another. The emphasis upon "preferring" as the mode of intuition of what is "better" or "worse" (or "higher" or "lower" in the scale of values) is a common feature to the ethics of Brentano, Scheler and Hartmann.

Hartmann remained at Cologne until 1931 (three years after Scheler's untimely death) when he was offered a post at the University of Berlin. Heidegger had previously been offered the post but turned it down.

In Berlin Hartmann restricted himself entirely to non-political matters--turning out page after page of manuscript, almost completely oblivious to the bombing and destruction which surrounded him, until he was forced to evacuate in 1945. The remaining five years before his death on the 9th of October, 1950 were spent teaching at the university in the small town of Göttingen.

Stanton Coit has rendered a considerable service

to the English-speaking world by translating Hartmann's Ethics, the largest single volume of Hartmann's collected works. The only other major work that has been translated into English is the considerably smaller New Ways of Ontology.

The following thesis offers an analysis of Part I of Hartmann's Ethics, "The Structure of the Ethical Phenomenon". We shall be concerned primarily to elucidate Hartmann's notion of a "material ethics of values" in contrast to the subjectivism, intellectualism and formalism of the Kantian approach. We shall also analyse the role that philosophical ethics plays in the expansion of "valuational consciousness" and the relation that such consciousness has to the "self-existent values" within Hartmann's "realm of ideal entities".

CONTEMPLATIVE AND NORMATIVE ETHICS

Historically different answers have been given as to the "practicality" of ethics. There has been considerable dispute as to whether there is any such thing as "ethical knowledge" and whether any such knowledge could effectively guide human action.

Hartmann points out that for the ancient Greeks the central question was whether virtue was knowledge and, if so, could it be taught. At least these are the questions which occupied Plato in the Protagoras and the Meno. The verdict appears to have been that indeed virtue is knowledge and can therefore be taught.

This ancient ethical doctrine is, according to Hartmann, the extreme normative conception of ethics. Not only is ethics capable of teaching what ought to happen but it is also able to determine volition and action. This view is summarized in the Socratic thesis that no one knowingly wills what is evil. Virtue is a kind of wisdom and wickedness has its roots in ignorance.

With the emergence of Christian ethics this entire thesis is thrown into question, for in the face of human frailty and the power of evil, the knowledge of moral obligation does not suffice. Christianity makes possible the conception of a morally bad will-- a will which, however informed it may be as to the right

thing to do, may still decide to act contrary to the good. Man knows what God commands of him, but nevertheless, he acts contrary to God's will.

This, Hartmann tells us, is the antithesis of the Socratic doctrine. Both viewpoints contain a fragment of the truth. For Christian ethics, although virtue is not mere knowledge, there is a knowledge which pertains to it. Given that one's volition is strong enough to will the good, one still requires the knowledge of what is the good so that one can will it. Ethics is, therefore, normative at least in idea if not in reality. The task of bringing moral obligation to light remains, although it is a purely individual matter whether one actually fulfills one's moral duty.

Although both of the above conceptions of ethics are at least partially normative, there is another view that is almost purely contemplative. Hartmann claims that this is exemplified by the philosophy of Schopenhauer.

Contained in Schopenhauer's ascetic philosophy is the doctrine that free will is merely an illusion--that the world was ruled by a thorough-going determinism. Our seemingly spontaneous activity only appears to be the result of our free will because we are insufficiently informed as to our own underlying "character" from

which our actions issue. The only sense of true freedom recognized by Schopenhauer consists in the emancipation from the slavery to the will. Through the adoption of the ascetic attitude one becomes a pure will-less subject of knowledge, rising above the plane of existence to contemplate the realm of eternal ideas.

According to Hartmann, Schopenhauer's ethics is the best example of an ethics which involves the "complete disappearance of the normative." If man's "intelligible character" ultimately determines what he does, then it is merely a matter of fortuitous coincidence if a man's actions are in accord with moral principles.

This purely "theoretical" approach to ethics Hartmann rejects on the basis of the fact that knowledge of ethical principles cannot be completely indifferent with respect to volitional decision. The Christian conception comes closest to the truth of ethical phenomena by maintaining that ethics is "normative" and "practical" while nevertheless placing restrictions upon its "practicality".

So Hartmann maintains that ethics entails a kind of knowledge. But what kind of knowledge is this? To find out Hartmann turns to Plato's Meno. It will be recalled

that the question at issue in that dialogue was whether virtue is something that can be taught or something acquired by practice or rather something that is inborn by nature. These alternatives were presumably to be taken in exclusive disjunction, but, as the dialogue shows, this need not be the case. Since it is agreed that mathematics is a subject which can be taught, the problem of exposing the false dichotomy between the inborn and the teachable proves to be somewhat simpler with respect to it than it is with respect to virtue.

The point of Hartmann's reference to the Meno is to make the connection between the Kantian conception of the "a priori" and the Platonic theory of "anamnesis". By so doing he makes it clear that he thinks moral knowledge can only be attained by "aprioristic insight" and at the same time he is hinting that what is intuited by means of this insight will have, as we shall see, the same ontological status as Platonic Ideas.

Ethics, according to Hartmann, possesses the same kind of apriority as does mathematics. It differs from mathematics only insofar as ethical principles concern commandments, norms and values. The task of philosophical ethics is to make us aware of principles which already lie latent in our valuational consciousness. Hartmann calls philosophical ethics the "midwifery of the moral consciousness."

There is no more room for "relativism" in ethics than there is in pure mathematics. Both are equally as absolute and objective. Hartmann tells us,

...the Platonic parallel of ethics with mathematics must instruct us up to this point, teaching us that there are undoubtedly spheres of Being of this order in general--which are neither real nor merely subjective--and that we, in daring to cope with this question, do not assume more than what the theory of knowledge in other departments recognizes without hesitation.¹

No doubt, however, Hartmann is assuming something that many other philosophers have strongly denied. But the peculiarities of Hartmann's ontological theory is not now our present concern.

Hartmann claims that ethics is only indirectly normative. Primarily it is the ethical principles themselves (within the ideal realm) which have the power to influence human action and attitudes. In this context Hartmann is thinking of "ethics" as a particular sort of enterprise whose task it is to increase our awareness of norms, principles and values within the ideal sphere. Ethics, therefore, serves only the limited function of assisting moral principles to become efficient in life by widening the scope of our consciousness of such principles.

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p.163.

Usually, however, such principles are already effective in human life even before the particularly reflective activity of philosophical ethics raises them into the full light of consciousness. It is for this reason that startling discoveries have rarely, if ever, been found in the field of ethical research. Such aprioristic discoveries are almost invariably second-hand. They are preceded by a primal consciousness of value which is dimly present in everyday life. However Hartmann holds out the possibility that in the future ethics may lead us to discover values which are completely lacking in moral life or which have ceased to be recognized. At that point philosophical ethics becomes normative in its fullest sense.

Hartmann tells us,

However modestly it keeps itself close to the phenomena and eschews presumptuous ideals, its essence and its principle still remains this: To be a transforming power in life. And while it can be this only in so far as it turns its attention towards values which are in real life lacking, its principle is to open the eyes, and to present to life what it teaches the eyes to see.¹

Insofar as ethics directs our attention to such ideal entities as values there is a contemplative aspect to

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 64.

it as well as a normative. Therefore, Hartmann finds a grain of truth in Schopenhauer's ethics as well as in the Platonic doctrine.

But there is an important difference which separates ethical apriorism from the a priori insight in the realm of theory. The principles of geometry, for instance, are discerned by means of aprioristic insight. Empirical reality cannot help but conform to the geometrical principles that we discover. But the values that ethics discerns, on the other hand, are not wholly contained in the actual. There are masses of un-actualized values, just as there are things in this world that are absolutely contrary to ethical principles.

It is, therefore, no mere cognitive relationship that consciousness bears to values and ethical principles, for in those cases where a value is un-actualized there is also a relation of willing. Hartmann, therefore, distinguishes between the "merely cognitive a priori" and the "demanding, commanding a priori" of ethics.

He recognizes a problem inasmuch as ethical apriorism appears to lack the criterion that theoretical apriorism possesses in experience. "In ethics", Hartmann claims, "apriorism rests wholly upon itself". Is there no way to detect a spurious moral consciousness? Does the

possibility of illusion mean that ethics is plagued with relativism and subjectivism? We shall consider Hartmann's answers to these questions in the next chapter.

THE PLURALITY OF MORALS AND UNITY OF ETHICS

The most salient factor apparently contradicting the absolute validity of any supposed insight into the realm of the ethical a priori is the de facto multiplicity of moral practices down through history and across cultures. The ethics of "an eye for an eye" ostensibly contradicts the morality of "Love thy neighbour". In the absence of an appropriate criterion it seems that ethical principles are reduced to mere whims expressing no more than the subjective preferences and prejudices of those who formulate them. Does this kind of relativism adequately express the true nature of the ethical phenomena? There are those who have claimed that it does, but Hartmann's answer is quite different.

Every "current morality" that is consistent within itself claims to represent the absolute moral truth. In its essence ethics is not a matter of mere individual taste. If one claims to be under the moral obligation to perform a certain task, one is also implicitly claiming that anyone who is similarly circumstanced must also be under such an obligation. There must be some way of unifying the apparently conflicting demands of the various ethical systems. Hartmann claims, "The unity of ethics is the fundamental demand which raises its voice categorically above the plurality of morals".¹

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 74.

A comparison with science furnishes an analogy to illustrate Hartmann's point: Just as every age, Hartmann claims, has its "current truths" (which for a time, at least, "pass as truth"), so also in the same manner every age and every people has its "current morality". The objectivity of "truth" itself is not impugned by the fact that the physics of Aristotle is no longer considered to be adequate. Similarly, ethics "intends" to be objective even though the ethical principles of any "current morality" may be abandoned or modified.

The sought-for unity of ethics must be found in the objective realm to which the multiplicity of "current moralities" point. Each of these "moralities" makes a claim upon our actions and each has a tendency to set itself up as the one true morality, tyrannically usurping the claims of the others. The exclusiveness of each betrays a bias that cannot be tolerated in "pure ethics". But Hartmann claims that this biased exclusiveness is "an unavoidable consequence" as long as the unity of ethics remains hidden.

In ethics there is even more of a demand for unity than there is in strictly theoretical disciplines. Since ethics is "practical", the "unity of purpose" must be a "fundamental requirement of the moral life".¹ For in the face of a plurality of ethical commandments (corresponding to the supreme ends postulated by the different moralities)

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 70.

there must be some way of deciding which takes precedence. The unity sought for can only be the unity of a system, for only in a system can the conflicting demands of the various "moralities" be reconciled with one another. What is required is a "system of ends" and insofar as ends presuppose "values" Hartmann directs his attention to a "system of values", for it is values that constitute the foundation of ethics. The question, "What ought I to do?" is secondary to the question, "What is of value?". The fact that the latter is much broader in scope is indicated by the fact that the former question is only applicable to those situations in which the corresponding value is un-actualized; it doesn't lead to an appreciation of values already present within the real world.

It is a mistake, according to Hartmann, to assume that the unity of ethics is to be found in the notion of the "good". The fact that the various moralities have differed with respect to what they took to be good or evil is indicative, Hartmann claims, of the fact that we "do not yet know what good and evil are."

There appears to be a slight confusion of ethical and meta-ethical issues in Hartmann's account of the situation. He fails to distinguish between the question, "What do the words 'good' and 'evil' mean?" and the quite different question, "What, in actual fact, is good or evil?" Nevertheless, it is this latter question that Hartmann

primarily has in mind, although he thinks that it is impossible to know what "good" and "evil" are without first inquiring as to what particular things or values are good or evil. Consequently, we must turn our attention to the manifold of ethical experience to raise our consciousness of moral phenomena. Ethical investigation must begin with a "phenomenology of values", or what amounts to the same thing, an "axiology of morals."

Hartmann credits Nietzsche with the discovery of the vast richness to be found in ethical phenomena. The Nietzschean analysis of the "content" of good and evil opened up the "realm of values" for further investigation; however, Nietzsche's doctrine of the "transvaluation of all values" Hartmann believes to be erroneous:

In that lay hidden the idea of valuational relativism. If values permit of being revalued, they also are capable of being devalued, they permit of being manufactured and of being destroyed. They are the work of man, they are arbitrary, like thought and phantasies. If this be so, the meaning of the great discovery is again immediately annihilated at the first step;...¹

There may well be fabrication but it is a mark of true ethical values that they demonstrate a power of "resistance"²

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 85.

2. See also Scheler in "Idealismus-Realismus", Philosophischer Anzeiger II (1920), pp. 255-324. Scheler claims that the independent existence of reality is revealed primarily in the "resistance" (Widerständigkeit) encountered in our active, spontaneous, volitional life.

once they take hold of valuational consciousness. They do not allow us to "re-value" them at any mere arbitrary wish.

This is Hartmann's thought; however, it appears that his argument is not entirely convincing. One would hope that Hartmann could furnish us with a more adequate criterion by which to discriminate between mere fabrications resulting from pathological affection and the genuine consciousness of real value. We shall return to this question later in the chapter.

While philosophers like Nietzsche may be thanked for raising our consciousness of the realm of values, the "primary discovery" of values seldom occurs within philosophical ethics. Hartmann has already suggested that values are effective in moral life long before philosophy re-discovers them and articulates their content and structure.

Our consciousness of the ideal realm of value is limited. There are, Hartmann tells us, nameless masses of value (Aristotle's "anonymous virtues") which are effective in our lives in spite of the fact that we lack the words and concepts in which to express them. While some of these are subsequently exposed to the light of consciousness (by means of a sort of "anamnesis"), others are forgotten and gradually cease to motivate our lives.

But the change in our consciousness of values does

not indicate a change in the values themselves. "In the revolution of the ethos," as Hartmann expresses it, "the values themselves do not shift."¹

Consciousness, for Hartmann, is like a "circle of light" which is projected upon the "ideal plane of values". This circle may expand or contract, but as it "wanders about" on the ideal plane new values come into its focus just as older values drop out. Historical epochs can be measured and differentiated on the basis of a people's collective consciousness of the spotlighted values.

"The inmost kernel of the moral life, the self-development of the ethos, is identical with the primary discovery of values."² It is clear that Hartmann thinks that this discovery is by and large the collective accomplishment of a people or nation. But there is a special role reserved for the individual--for the one whom Hartmann designates "the champion of ideas".

These "champions of ideas" are the great ethical leaders like Socrates, Christ and so forth. These figures are responsive to the elemental stirrings of valuational consciousness within their societies. The "ethos" of the

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 38.

2. ibid., p. 39.

crowd crystallizes in the consciousness of such an individual; he merely articulates and makes explicit what is already vaguely felt.

Hartmann expresses this, somewhat poetically by saying:

It is the genuine Platonic anamnesis on a grand scale. But the champion of ideas is the midwife of the crowd, and compels it at the fateful hour of its ethos to bring forth that which is most alive in it.¹

There is, of course, the opposite phenomenon. The champion of ideas may come before the time is ripe for this collective "discovery" of value. In spite of the genuineness of his moral truth, such an individual may not strike a responsive chord amongst the crowd. The seeds of his ideas do not fall upon fertile soil.

Hartmann thinks that it is a confirmation of the validity of a discovery when the values discerned by the champion of ideas find favourable reception in the crowd. Why is it, he asks, that the ethos of the crowd doesn't split up into as many parts as there are individual people.

There is only one answer. At the point to which all, because of the same need and yearning, must direct their gaze there lies only one value; as

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 91.

they contemplate the given situation they are not free to imagine at will different norms of good and evil. There exists only the one norm which corresponds to the question that confronts them; there is only one which gives an answer capable of being comprehended. This is the sought-for court of decision. No other can take its place.¹

Apart from the fact that what Hartmann describes here bears striking resemblances to the "morality of the herd," there is much that is objectionable about this view. Only the fact that Hartmann published his Ethics in 1926, long before the rise of Hitler, saves him from the accusation that his doctrine of the "champion of ideas and the crowd" is an apologetic for German National Socialism.² For nothing in his doctrine is incompatible with the allegation that the "virtues" and "values" promulgated by Hitler and his gang were genuine.

The role that philosophy has played in the development of the "ethos" is relatively minor when compared with the importance of the "champion of ideas". Hartmann points out that only very rarely is the champion of ideas also a philosopher. Philosophy usually consists in reflection

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 92.

2. The translator of the English edition of Ethics tells us that Hartmann began writing this work while he was a soldier in the trenches of the Russian front in 1916, during the First World War.

upon principles that are already known; rarely does it ever discover anything new. Ethics usually only attempts to give systematic structure to values and principles of which we are already aware.

But there is another kind of ethics whose primary concern is to widen the scope of valuational consciousness by bringing new values to light. We may designate it as "prospective" ethics to distinguish it from "retrospective" ethics which merely attempts to systematize what is already known.

In marked contrast to the contemporary British approach to ethics and value theory Hartmann stresses the "normative" aspect of ethics. Ethics should play a vital part in our lives; its teachings should have the capacity to move us. No doubt he believes that his own work offers a contribution to this direction of thought.

In any event, ethics is bound to be a different kind of investigation than, for instance, epistemology. In both domains, it is true, we search for "principles", and there is, Hartmann tells us, "ethical" as well as "theoretical" experience. But whereas the "categories" are principles that the world of experience necessarily conforms to, "values" do not exert the same kind of compulsion. They may be actualized but they can also be un-actualized.

In the fact that values are no less valid when they are un-actualized than when they are actualized Hartmann sees a justification for assigning to them a peculiar ontological status:

Values exist independently of the degree of their fulfilment in reality. Over against the real they signify only a claim, an Ought-to-Be, no inevitable necessity, no real compulsion. What they are in Idea subsists in its own right beyond real Being and Not-Being.¹

But if they are not always to be found in the "real" world how is it possible for us to become conscious of them? Ethical values may be exemplified in human conduct but we must already have knowledge of them beforehand in order to determine whether such conduct accords with them or violates them.

No mere "empirical" approach will suffice for it is impossible to know whether in the given conduct of a man values are actualized or not. On the contrary, Hartmann finds the primary datum of ethics within the "primary consciousness of good and evil itself".

It is real, is capable of being experienced, and yet in its essence not empirical. For even the primary consciousness of value is an aprioristic consciousness. We may, therefore, with a certain right speak here of

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 98.

an "aprioristic factum."¹

Essentially this "primary consciousness of value" is the same thing as Scheler's "emotional a priori". The value present within the "real" world is not discerned by any dispassionate intellectual consciousness of the empirically given. Values are only given through loving, hating, preferring and so forth. Consciousness of value is, so to speak, "sui generis".

Not everyone is conscious of every moral value, just as not everyone has insight into every mathematical proposition. But where anyone does have a real valuational consciousness, this is in him a direct witness to the value itself. The value itself therefore can be discerned by its presence in consciousness. This reality does not need to be further sought for. It reveals the principle immediately.²

But this once again raises the question as to the genuineness of the consciousness of value. Hartmann must supply some criterion to discriminate between true aprioristic insight and the prejudices of the fanatic. Hartmann does have an answer to this problem but it is not very satisfactory.

He admits that there is such a thing as the "falsification" of the phenomena but he claims that

 1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 101.
 2. ibid., p. 102.

"ordinarily they are genuine, and are based upon a genuine sense of values".¹

In other areas requiring a priori insight it is also possible to make mistakes but it is the task of the teacher to train our perception of the phenomena. Accordingly, it is the "business of the ethicist to scent out falsification."²

Quite surprisingly Hartmann tells us that "the criterion of the genuine and spurious is nothing else than the primary consciousness of value itself."³

Hartmann neglects to observe that in other areas of so-called "a priori" knowledge such as logic and mathematics aprioristic intuition is also supplemented by deduction and proof. We do not claim that mathematical insights are valid simply because our consciousness of truth is "usually" genuine. In these areas consistency and non-contradiction serve as the standard against which the genuineness of our insight is tested.

 1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 103.
 2. ibid., p. 103.
 3. ibid., p. 103.

KANTIAN ETHICS

There is, perhaps, no better way to illustrate the important features of Hartmann's "material ethics of values" than to compare it with Kantian ethics. In many respects the two theories are similar--both emphasize the apriority of ethical principles--but the differences are no less profound. In turning to Hartmann's critique of Kantian ethics one should keep in mind that it was only against the background of Kantian theory that Hartmann came to develop his own philosophical position--not only in ethics but also in epistemology. The criticisms he directs against Kantian ethics--subjectivism, formalism and intellectualism--could well be generalized to apply to the shortcomings of the Kantian approach as a whole. We shall discuss each of these attacks in turn.

Hartmann grants the validity of Kant's insight that the moral worth of an action cannot reside in its consequences, nor even in the specific outward manifestations of an act, but rather must be found in the inward "disposition" (Gesinnung) or attitude of the will. Our actions have moral worth only insofar as they reflect the basic moral tenor of our noumenal selves. It comes down to a question of ultimate purposes and intentions.

But insofar as one is acting "purposively" there

must be certain "ends" to which one is aiming, whether these be happiness, self-realization or what have you. Furthermore, while these ends may not in themselves contain specifically moral value, they must each possess a value of some kind, otherwise there would be nothing to be striven for and they would lose their character as ends. On the basis of such an analysis, one might suppose, Kant is led to the notion of a "system of ends" and even of a "summum bonum" in which "happiness" is apportioned in accordance to "worthiness for happiness".

But one must observe that however desirable such ends as "happiness" may be the value which they possess, according to Kant, can only be non-moral. Moral value must be given a different analysis for if the moral law were determined by such objective factors as "happiness" then the "will" would be determined "heteronomously". And if the "will" receives its determination from beyond itself in this way, then there is no freedom and hence, no morality.

The Kantian solution is that "practical reason" must give its law to itself--must be autonomous--in order to preserve the essential requirement of moral freedom. The moral value of an action, therefore, cannot lie behind the end, as something to be striven for, but, on the contrary, must be found in a specific aspect of volition itself.

Such an outlook occasions a reversal in the relation of the Ought to volition, Hartmann tells us. Neither the Ought nor the value which stands behind moral obligation can determine volition; volition must determine the Ought. Moral principles can only be the result of the rational self-legislation of a volitional subject.

Hartmann claims that the inherent subjectivism in this view is characteristic of the "general trend" of Kantian philosophy as a whole. The result of Kant's "Copernican turn" was to shift the focus of attention away from the realm of objects as they are in themselves to the subjective realm of appearances. No longer were we to suppose that our knowledge must conform to objects; on the contrary, objects were claimed to conform to our knowledge.

Typical of the Kantian approach in epistemology is that the brunt of the problem falls on the two "faculties" of representation (sensibility and understanding) of the knowing subject. Even if Kant can meet the charge that his early theory was too heavily infected with "faculty" psychology, it remains a fact that he placed a disproportionate amount of emphasis upon the "synthetic activity" of the knowing subject.

Accompanying this emphasis upon "synthesis" was the

presupposition that what is really given in experience is nothing more than a "disordered chaos". In fact, the so-called "objects" of experience only attain their "objectivity" (and this is a very ambiguous notion in Kantian philosophy) as a result of the transcendental synthesis of this chaotic givenness.

For cognition the empirically given, according to Kant, consists of sensations; for volition it is comprised of drives and inclinations. Principles in accordance to which this givenness assumes some form are contributed by the "transcendental subject". Because such principles are not derived from the empirical world we are able to avoid Humeian skepticism; we avoid empirical relativism by falling into transcendental apriorism. In each case the a priori principles through which the manifold of experience achieves its synthetic unity are added by reason. It is significant that the "will" which is normally opposed to "reason" as a separate "faculty" is identified by Kant with "practical reason" itself.

For Hartmann the fundamentally correct discovery that principles must be given an a priori foundation was falsified by Kant by the presupposition that if such principles cannot be derived from empirical reality then they must emanate from "reason." For Kant, the "apriority" of

principles was apparently explained in terms of its supposed origin in reason.

The Kantian "categories", therefore, are not at all to be understood as ontological structures of Being, rather they are to be regarded as "pure concepts of the understanding." Likewise, ethical principles cannot be a function of objective values which are independent of the volitional subject; on the contrary, in order to avoid "heteronomy of the will" (which supposedly would negate freedom) the "categorical imperative" must issue from the volitional subject as a result of his "self-legislation".

But Hartmann claims that the identification of the "a priori" with that which has its origin in reason is a fundamental error. The necessity attributable to the laws of geometry, for example, is undoubtedly objective and has nothing to do with any functions of consciousness. Similarly, while the law of universal causality can not be deduced from any given instance, it is a mistake to suggest that it is purely a mental construct. Likewise, the categorical imperative and the values which underlie it are objective and this objectivity is quite independent of the degree to which the values are actualized in real life.

Hartmann believes that Kant's misunderstanding of

the objectivity of what is discerned a priori was occasioned by the prejudice that only the "empirical"--that which is given through sense--can be validly objective. Not only did this prejudice result in a totally erroneous portrayal of ethics, it was also responsible for psychologism in logical theory, wherein the laws of logic were misconstrued as "forms of thought" instead of universal structures of Being.

In fact, Hartmann tells us, all those disciplines whose objects are ideal, e.g., the theory of categories, ethics, aesthetics, logic, etc., are misrepresented by subjectivism. It is not hard to see the strong contrast of this with Hartmann's theory of the "sphere of ideal objects--which in Platonism was already discovered and was theoretically constructed as a self-existing sphere".¹

All that is really required by Hartmann's aprioristic ethics is that ethical principles should not find their origin in "naturalistic objectivity", that is, insight into essences can be objective without having to depend for this objectivity upon the realm of contingent facts that are the concern of the natural sciences.

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 164.

designated "a priori". The essence of the "good", Kant supposes, must therefore be found in a purely formal quality of the will.

Hartmann acknowledges that Kant has made a contribution of "permanent value" to ethics by his radical rejection of empiricism in ethics and by his strictures against casuistry, wherein specific moral commandments are determined to meet the contingencies of empirically given situations. Nor does Kant err by entirely excluding material content from the formulation of the "categorical imperative", for explicit mention of the "maxims" of one's actions shows that the "matter" of the will is at least assigned a place. Hartmann correctly observes that, "An imperative which did not command anything as to content would be empty, therefore in reality not an imperative at all."¹ But Kant does not make this mistake.

Where Kant is mistaken, however, is in his refusal to admit that anything "a priori" could be found in the "material" element at all. It is the same error in his ethics as is to be found in his epistemology. In Kant's

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 167.

first Critique it is assumed that "matter" is simply given by the senses, whereas the "categories" or "pure concepts of the understanding" constitute the "form" which is imposed on this matter by the knowing subject. So thoroughgoing is Kant's identification of the "a priori" with the "formal" that even space and time are not said to be essential structures of the world, but are rather merely "forms of intuition".

Likewise in ethics, the moral worth of an action is to be assessed on the basis of purely formal qualities of the will (i.e., in accordance with the principles of autonomy and universalizability) to the complete exclusion of the "emotional" dimension of volition. We, therefore, read:

if, in other words, we try to determine duties by beginning with the matter of the will, the END, rather than with the form of the will, the LAW, as our basis--then we shall indeed have no METAPHYSICAL FIRST PRINCIPLES of the doctrine of virtue; for feeling, no matter by what it is aroused, always belongs to the order of NATURE.¹

The whole pattern of this thought emanates from a faulty interpretation of the relationship of matter to form

1. Cf. Kant's The Doctrine of Virtue, p. 33. (A translation by Mary J. Gregor of Kant's Metaphysik der Sitten, Part II, Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Tugendlehre.)

whereby these terms are set in antithesis to one another (much as Kant also opposes sensibility and understanding), rather than being seen as purely "relative" terms. Hartmann tells us that

everything formed can again be regarded as matter of a higher formation, and that in the same way every specific matter can be conceived as formed out of lower material elements. At best, absolute matter and absolute form can be accepted in this progression merely as the extremes. And it is exactly the extremes which definitely fall outside of reflective and conceptual interpretation.¹

Material principles, therefore, differ only in scope from formal principles. Thus, for instance, the a priori necessity of the laws of Euclidean geometry is not negated with the discovery of alternate geometries (in which the parallel postulate is replaced), although limits are placed upon its sphere of applicability. In relation to a "formal" geometry, wherein the principles common to all of the specific geometries would be summarized, Euclidean geometry would be seen as merely a special case, and to that extent it could be said to be "material". Principles which hold only within Euclidean geometry may be called "material"

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 168.

principles in contrast to principles of wider scope. This would not mean, however, that they were any less a priori.

Hartmann underlines Scheler's point that the opposition "a priori"- "a posteriori" has nothing to do with the opposition "formal"- "material"; such dichotomies cut across one another, for there can be a "material a priori" as well as a "formal a priori". On the other hand, Hartmann's critique amounts to a rejection of the notion of a purely "formal a priori", since such an a priori could specify nothing with respect to "content" and would therefore be no more than an empty abstraction. Perhaps the "apriorism" of so-called "formal" logic approaches most closely this abstraction of the purely formal, but even here there is some content, for the law of non-contradiction supposedly expresses essential features of "discourse" if not essential characteristics of reality itself.

One might almost be tempted to say that the "a priori", whether it be "formal" or "material", is extracted from the given, rather than imposed upon it, but such a mode of expression lends itself too readily to a confusion of the "a priori" with the "empirical" (e.g., the laws of nature) and neglects the special kind of intuition required to discern a priori structures. We shall concern ourselves with such "intuition" in the following chapter, but now we must turn our attention to the third criticism Hartmann offers of Kantian ethics--

intellectualism.

The problem of "intellectualism" in Kantian philosophy, Hartmann believes, is very closely tied to both Kant's "subjectivism" and his "formalism". If the subjectivism is removed, the formalism loses its underpinning; if formalism is undercut, then it need no longer be the function of the intellect to impose form upon alien matter. The source of this nest of difficulties is to be found in Kant's fundamental distinction of sensibility and understanding and its subsequent identification with the a posteriori-a priori distinction. In regard to our present problem these distinctions are marked by the contrast between intuition and thinking.

The whole of Kantian philosophy, Hartmann tell us, is dominated by the prejudice in favour of thought and judgment. We meet it in epistemology with its emphasis upon the "pure concepts of the understanding." We find it in ethics where the "will" is identified with "practical reason". The subject matter of Kant's three Critiques is determined by the question, "How are certain judgments a priori possible?" Aprioristic knowledge, Kant assumes, must concern only understanding, reason and judgment; on the other hand, sense-perception and intuitive objectivity can only afford us aposterioristic knowledge.

This prejudice in favour of thought and judgment

is accompanied by an underestimation of the content of the phenomenal object given in unreflective experience. Hartmann claims that the object of sense-perception already contains "an abundance of aprioristic elements--at least a whole series of Kantian categories, but in truth still much besides,"¹ even before the synthesizing activity of thinking and making judgments begins. What is given in intuitive unreflective experience is not isolated colours, sounds, etc., nor is it a perspectival side of a physical object, but rather the physical object itself as well as "goods" and "persons". The former types of "objects" can only be brought to consciousness by means of an artificial abstractive procedure. There can be no question of ordinary experience having to be "constructed" out of such elements.

Likewise, Kant was mistaken in reducing "affective" perception to the level of the sensations of pleasure and pain. Such sensations stand on the same level as the so-called "sense-data"; they can only be brought to light by means of a peculiar abstractive procedure. Contrary to Kant's contention, a "materially" determined will need not be one that is motivated solely by the anticipation of

 1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 172.

pleasure and the avoidance of pain. The sensations of pleasure and pain are something entirely secondary to the immediate givenness of desired "goods" and the values which they possess. The recognition of the intuitive givenness of such material elements as "values" clears the way for the deformatization of the a priori, whereby the objectivity of ends and values is no longer assumed to be a function of thinking and judgment.

In fact, Hartmann effects a complete reversal of the Kantian thesis that the a priori concerns thinking and judgment instead of intuition. He claims,

a priori knowledge is inherently intuitive; and the judgment, into the form of which it can be cast when we afterwards extract and isolate it, is in comparison with it something derivative, something external and indifferent which does not change anything in the insight itself.¹

Kant had failed to get to the heart of the matter by taking "synthetic a priori judgments" as his starting point. As a consequence he was led to assume that every complex perception of an object must be the result of the synthesizing activity of thinking, wherein judgments are formed.

For Kant "judgment" entails the subsumption of the

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 175.

particular under the universal; it is the "faculty of thinking the particular as contained under the universal", whether this universal be a rule, principle or law.

Hant's ethics attempts to formulate explicitly the principle or law in accordance with which actions are to be judged as either "moral" or "immoral". The intellectual recognition of the validity of the moral law arouses a feeling of respect which subsequently becomes an incentive to moral action. Such a "feeling" totally differs from the non-moral feelings of sensible desire, since it is a product of the "intellectual" realm and not of the realm of "nature". If this were not so, then "moral" feeling would itself be pathological; heteronomy of the will would be the inevitable result and freedom would be impossible.

But this interpretation of moral life, according to Hartmann, is highly misleading. In actual fact there is "as little of such a subsuming function of judgment" in our concrete moral life "as there is in the natural concrete knowledge of things."¹ Again, the emphasis is placed upon the "intuitive" rather than the "reflective" aspects of experience. Hartmann does not set moral feeling

 1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 176.

against sensible feeling as Kant does. There is therefore no need for any feeling of respect to be mediated by means of judgment.

The apprehension of the values inherent in ethical reality is essentially intuitive. Not only do we intuit desired "goods" and the values they possess, but we also can immediately intuit the a priori structural relationships amongst the values. It is precisely by means of desiring, loving, hating, etc. that such intuitively given contents are discerned. One does not wait until a reflective judgment is formulated and then adopt an attitude with respect to its content. For only through the emotional involvement with the world is value originally given.

This means that, for Hartmann, the purely cognitive a priori, whereby essential categorial structures of experience are discerned, is supplemented by an emotional a priori, which discerns values and their structures. The aprioristic element pervades our emotional involvement with reality no less than it permeates our intellectual cognition of the world. Philosophical ethics may be required to make the content of the emotional a priori accessible to reflective consciousness and conceptual understanding. But the primary fact of ethical reality is the "primal consciousness of value" which is a part of everyday living. Hartmann

asserts that

ethics as a science is the logical work of making explicit this implicitly given aprioristic factor and setting upon it the seal of concepts and formulae.¹

The role of ethics, therefore, is merely to complement the primordial valuational involvement already present in life. Although as we have seen, Hartmann hopes that philosophical ethics can be used as a tool to facilitate the discovery of values of which we are only vaguely conscious.

One consequence of Hartmann's deformalization of the a priori is that the burden of the a priori is shifted away from the explicit formulation of the moral law in the Kantian "categorical imperative" to the realm of objective values. The consciousness of moral obligation is essentially dependent upon the awareness of objective values and the extent to which they are already realized in the real world. This shift of emphasis is reflected by Hartmann's rejection of the Kantian "formal ethics of duty" and the adoption of a "material ethics of values".

We must now turn to the values themselves and inquire as to what kind of ontological status they have and how

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 170.

they are related to valuational consciousness.

THE ESSENCE OF ETHICAL VALUES

We have seen how Hartmann has made use of the Platonic notion of "anamnesis" by means of which the realm of values is opened up to consciousness. We must now take a closer look at this "ideal ethical sphere" to determine the nature of its relationship to reality.

According to Hartmann, values are "essences". It is not a new theory that Hartmann is propounding here--the idea that there is another realm of being than that of "existence", he claims, is found in Plato's world of the "forms", in Aristotle's "eidos", and also in the Scholastics' realm of "essentia"--but in modern times the theory has fallen into disrepute. Thanks to "phenomenology" the realm of essence "has again come into recognition with relative purity."¹

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 183. It should be noted, however, that the "realm of essence" discovered by Husserl does not share the full-blown "Platonic realism" that characterizes Hartmann's theory. In fact, it was against those who interpreted his Logical Investigations in this way that Husserl directed the following remarks:

"It has ever and anon been a special cause of offence that as "Platonizing realists" we set up Ideas or Essence as objects, and ascribe to them as to other objects true Being, and also correlatively the capacity to be grasped through intuition, just as in the case of empirical realities. We here disregard that, alas! most frequent type of superficial reader who foists on the author his own wholly alien conceptions, and then has no difficulty in reading absurdities into the author's statements." (Ideas, Chapter 2, Section 22.) Scheler's theory tends to resemble Hartmann's, but the latter's sweeping reference to "Phenomenology" overlooks the cleavages within the movement.

But of the various representations of the notion of "essence" the Platonic, according to Hartmann, stands closest to the truth. Plato's "Idea" is said to be "that 'through which' everything participating in it is just as it is." Values have precisely the status of "Platonic Ideas"; it is through their "participation" in a value that things are as they are--namely valuable. Expressed in other words, this simply means that values are "essences".

As we have seen, Hartmann is equally opposed both to "naturalism" and "subjectivism" in ethics. Values are not constituents of the real world any more than they are mere "inventions" of an evaluating subject. They exist apart from reality, although real events, persons and acts may be said to "participate" in them. While Hartmann never clarifies what he means to express by the difficult Platonic notion of "participation", he does tell us that "the Platonic notion of "beholding" well fits that which material ethics designates as the "sensing of value," that which is embodied in acts of preference, of approval, of conviction."¹ This is the "emotional a priori intuition" of which we have already spoken.

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 135.

Whatever the relationship of "participation" may be, it is clear that for Hartmann values are quite independent of things that are valuable, i.e., "goods".¹ Yet, on the other hand, they are not entirely cut off from reality, for it is only through their relations to values that things acquire the status of "goods". Hartmann expresses this unilateral dependence of "goods" upon "values" (in Kantian terminology) by saying that values are "conditions of the possibility" of goods. A "good", by its very constitution, points to a value which it possesses and in virtue of which the thing becomes a good in the first place.

The attempt to explain the worth of a "good" by any means other than through the appeal to a value can only lead one around in a circle. One might claim, "This is good because it is good for that other thing," but then the further question arises as to why the latter itself is good. So long as one remains within the "sphere of goods" there can be no answer that doesn't beg a further question.

A related point is made by G. E. Moore in his "open question" argument; the attempt to spell out the "goodness"

 1. Hartmann slurs Scheler's distinction between "goods" (which are "thinglike" unities of value-qualities) and "valuable things". For Scheler, goods and things have the "same originality of givenness"; the former are not founded upon the latter--that is, something need not first be a thing before it becomes a good. Cf. Scheler's Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values, Chapter I, pp. 20-22.

of a thing in terms of certain natural qualities that it possesses raises the further question as to why (or whether) something with just those qualities is good. Hartmann is equally strong in his rejection of "ethical naturalism".

A vicious infinite regress can be avoided only if, in our explanation of the worth of a good, we come to a point where we no longer appeal to empirical reality (the sphere of goods) but rather call attention to the value by means of which the thing in question is converted into a "good". Our consciousness is thereby elevated to the realm of Platonic "essences".

It is no mere "empirical" discovery that "goods" are related to "values" in this way; nor is it by means of "induction" that we establish this connection. The apriority of our knowledge of values consists in this: that a value is the "prius" of a good. Without values there would be no goods; values are the "condition of the possibility" of goods. The discernment of a value must precede the experience of a thing as a "good". The value is, so to speak, a pre-given "standard" against which the worth of things can be measured. Values may be "exemplified" in goods but they cannot be empirically "derived" from goods.

There is a further way in which the apriority of value consciousness is made manifest. We have just seen

how Hartmann has established the independence and apriority of values with respect to objects of value. We must now see how he establishes their apriority with respect to the appraisement of value of the evaluating subject. Hartmann tells us:

Nothing is ever loved, striven for, yearned after, except for the sake of some value immediately discerned (or felt). But, conversely, never is loving, striving, yearning presupposed in the case of a thing that is of value, or in the case of the value itself which is inherent in the thing. That this relationship is irreversible lies in the very constitution of acting, loving, desiring, striving. It is essentially a one-sided dependence.¹

Hartmann rejects the notion that it is through the various "acts" of appraisement of value that objects acquire the values they possess. It is part of the "constitution" of these acts that the values must already be given.

Furthermore, there is nothing that attests to the apriority of value consciousness more than the fact that values can be "striven for" in just those cases in which the values are not yet exemplified in the objects of experience. The knowledge of values must, therefore, precede

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 389.

the experience of things possessing value within empirical reality. Values may also stand out clearly even when the empirical world directly contravenes them, as, for instance, when we discover the essence of justice by seeing someone being treated unfairly.

But although Hartmann thinks that the preceding arguments have established the apriority of the knowledge of values, he does not think that he has thereby proved their absoluteness. It may be that, in spite of what has been said thus far, the appraisalment of value remains something "purely subjective and arbitrary"--the result of subjective biases and prejudices. If this were the case then ethics would be infected with "relativism". The "absoluteness of values", therefore, requires a separate proof. This amounts to establishing the "objective validity" of what has been discerned through "a priori intuition".

It is important to realize that for Hartmann "apriority" and "absoluteness" are two different things, for even if values should turn out not to be absolute this would not change the fact that they remain the "condition of the possibility" of all appraisalment of value and the standard against which the worth of a good is assessed. However, in this case we would only be entitled to speak of a "subjective apriority".

There are certain affinities between the problem

before us at this point and Kant's task of establishing the "objective validity" of the categories. Hartmann claims that even in the a priori of theoretical knowledge there is the "suspicion" that what is discerned is merely "subjective" and "arbitrary". Kant's solution, as we know, was to construct a "transcendental deduction" of the categories.

According to Hartmann, Kant's proof consists of "the exposition of the relation of the categories to objects of another order, to a posterioristic objects."¹ It is because the actual world must inevitably conform to the categories that the objectivity of the latter is secured. But such a deduction is not possible in the domain of ethics, simply because the actual world, as often as not, fails to accord with the principles (i.e., the values) that have been discerned a priori.

One would assume that the impossibility of a "transcendental deduction" of values would imperil the attempt to establish the absoluteness of values. But by a strange twist of thought Hartmann turns the argument

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 190.

inside-out and claims, surprisingly enough, that:

The apriority of values is even more unconditional, more absolute, than that of the theoretical categories. And it is so for this reason: that non-agreement with the empirically given is no criterion which could be cited against the validity of valuations. The apriority of values floats, as it were, in the air. The whole responsibility for the legitimacy and objectivity of the standard of values falls upon the distinctively aprioristic vision of values --that is, in the last resort, upon the sense of value.¹

Thus, by means of a kind of intellectual "sleight of hand" Hartmann has under-cut a potential argument against the "objectivity" of values by turning it into an argument for this very "objectivity". It would be ludicrous to suggest that this "tour de force" constitutes a proof of the absoluteness and objectivity of values and Hartmann does not claim this. But it is interesting to note that the passage cited above suggests that Hartmann's notion of "objectivity" entails more than mere fact that ethical judgments which are valid for one person are also valid for all. For to speak of a "distinctively aprioristic vision of values" demands that there must be something

 1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 192. (My emphasis.)

that is, in some sense, "seen". And if what is "seen" is not a constituent of empirical reality, then there must exist some other realm of Being wherein such "objects" could subsist.

We shall become increasingly aware of the fact that Hartmann's ethics is essentially dependent upon his "ontological" thesis that Being is divided into two basic realms: the "real" and the "ideal". (In addition there are the two subsidiary realms of "logic" and "knowledge", but essentially Hartmann has a two-world theory.) Values belong (along with mathematical entities and other general essences) to the "ideal sphere" and, accordingly, their objectivity is dependent upon the successful vindication of this realm of being as a whole. This is why the agreement or non-agreement of values with empirical "reality" cannot stand as a criterion for their objectivity or absoluteness.

Although "values", according to Hartmann, belong to the "ideal realm", "goods" which possess these values are only to be found in the "real". But we should not unduly restrict the scope of our inquiry into valuational phenomena by concerning ourselves exclusively with values in their relations to "valuable things" or "goods", for there are many other things to be found within "reality" which "participate" in values.

Hartmann tells us that there are many acts "of a

practical nature" which aim at "goods". We have already discussed how "striving" and "loving" can be directed towards "things of value" (goods) and how values constitute the "conditions of the possibility" of both the "acts" and the "goods" to which they are directed. But Hartmann claims that:

The higher, the distinctively moral, phenomena consist of acts of another kind; they are related to values of another sort, to moral values proper. Values are not only conditions of the possibility of goods, but are also conditions of all ethical phenomena in general.¹

Since the "distinctively moral" values cannot inhere in mere "things of value" we therefore broaden our perspective to include "deeds", "dispositions" and "persons". Primordially it is within "persons" that moral values are exemplified in "ethical reality"; such values may be called "virtues". Values are therefore also "conditions of the possibility" of "moral personality".

In striving to actualize moral values within our own lives, Hartmann tells us, we see ourselves "set over against an Idea of personality"--our "empirical" self is judged on the basis of an insight into the "ideal realm"

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 122.

wherein we discover ourselves as we "ideally" ought to be.

The ego finds itself split into an empirical and a moral, an aprioristic, ego. And the empirical bows down before the aprioristic, acknowledges its right to rule and bears the guilt which the other imputes, as an oppressive consciousness....The moral man sees this his morally super-empirical essence, his inner determination, his Idea, to be his own proper Self. In accordance with its intentions he tries to live, that is, to form his empirical being.¹

As much as Hartmann eschews the Kantian analysis of morality, one cannot help notice that the above analysis, which distinguishes the "empirical" from the "aprioristic" self, bears unmistakable resemblances to Kant's distinction between the "sensible" and "intelligible" realms. But whereas Kant may be interpreted to mean that it is merely a question of "standpoints"--that the "phenomena-noumena" distinction does not require a duplication of the world itself²--no such possibility is open to Hartmann's theory. Hartmann rejects the distinction between "appearances" and "things-in-themselves" only to set up his own much more rigid distinction between the "real" and the "ideal".

We learn also that the so-called "voice of con-

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 199.

2. Cf. H. J. Paton, The Categorical Imperative, pp. 226-27.

science" presupposes a pre-existent realm of values. Indeed, Hartmann calls it "a basic form of the primal consciousness of value"¹. Sometimes misinterpreted as the "Voice of God in man", Hartmann (the atheist) says "it really is the influence of a "higher" power, a voice from another world--from the ideal world of values."² It may well be a mistake to base ethics upon religion, for as Hartmann claims this would deny morality to the non-believer; but one may well question whether Hartmann is justified in replacing God with an ontologized realm of Platonic essences. How much progress has really been made?

In any event, it is Hartmann's claim that values are "an existent prins" of conscience as much as of "goods" or any of the other phenomena within "ethical reality". Values, then, are the "condition of the possibility" of conscience.

There is one further question that concerns the absoluteness and objectivity of values. Is it not true that for everything that is of value there must exist someone "for" whom the thing has value? The relatedness

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 201.

2. ibid., p. 201.

of "goods" to a subject who values them even seems to be an essential property of "goods" as such. Foodstuffs, for instance, would have no value if there were not beings who needed to eat. But does this reference to a "subject" mean that we are once again threatened with "subjectivism" and "relativism"?

For Hartmann, the fact that "goods" have value only for someone that values them does not mean that the hope of attaining objectivity and absoluteness has been dashed. He distinguishes between the relatedness of "goods" to an evaluating "subject" and the relativity of the values themselves. Although it may well be that in order for something to be a good there must be someone who values it, it is not the case that a person can alter the fact that one thing is "good for him" and another is "bad for him". Of course, one may think that something is a "good" without it actually being a "good".

Something becomes a "good" for someone only by means of its "participation" in a value. The "relationality" on the existential level of the "real" world does not touch the "absoluteness" of the self-existent values in the "ideal realm". As Hartmann puts it: "the existence of the goods

for me depends upon the independent existence of the values of the goods. It is included in the nature of the goods."¹

When we move to the higher values--specifically, the moral ones--there is even less of a suggestion of relativity, for at this level even the "relatedness" to a subject (for the most part) drops out. Hartmann claims that every moral value is also a goods-value indirectly; but the specifically "moral" value, for instance, of "trust" or "fidelity" does not inhere in the fact that such virtues are of any use to anyone or are regarded as "good things" by those to whom these values are exercised.

Hartmann claims that the ancient doctrine which classified "virtues" under "goods" overlooked the fact that their moral worth was sui generis and that only incidentally did the moral values of disposition also possess the character of goods.

We must not forget that moral virtues are exercised between persons; without someone who trusts and someone else who is trusted there would be no occasion for "trust" to become manifest. But the moral worth of trust is quite independent of its exemplification. It is the same with

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 209.

the other moral virtues, as well. Dispositions and relations such as trust, fidelity, love and so forth are not to be identified with the "value" that they possess. The former are simply ontological structures within the real world. All relatedness to a subject is exhausted at the level of these structures. But the "value" that such structures possess remains free of all such relativity. It does not spring from the actual state of affairs within the "real" world, but rather, comes from another source, providing the standard against which such structures are measured.

Let us underline this point once more. Trust is a specific relation between two persons; it can be described quite generally and belongs to the realm of "ethical reality". One's description of it as an objective phenomenon can be quite complete even if one omits to mention that such a relation also possesses a value. The "value" of such a relation as trust, however, belongs to the realm of "ideal entities" and is quite independent and distinct from the relational structures in which it inheres. Although it may be within our power to create or destroy such relational structures as trust or fidelity within the "real" world of temporal phenomena, it is not possible for us to create, destroy or alter the "value" that such relations would have if they were to become actual.

Hartmann claims:

Whatever in its mode of being is not relative to a subject, whatever confronts a thinking subject as independent and immovable, whatever sets up before him a self-subsistent regularity and energy of its own which the subject can grasp or miss but cannot get rid of, that has for him the character of self-existence.¹

In theoretical philosophy there are two basic kinds of "self-existence"--"real self-existence" and "ideal self-existence". These, naturally enough, correspond with the two fundamental realms of being. "Real self-existence" belongs to all things and events, to everything which exists within the temporal sequence of the "real" world. "Ideal self-existence" belongs to the objects of logical and mathematical inquiry, and in general to essences of every kind which may be discerned through a priori intuition. Hartmann asserts that:

Between the two subsists an essential relationship which is profoundly characteristic of the whole realm of Being and of the knowledge of Being: the structure of ideal self-existence reappears in that of the real--not indeed without a remainder and not exhaustive of the latter, but in so far that the aprioristic knowledge of ideal Being at the same time constitutes an inner foundation for all knowledge of the real. So far as it reaches, aprioristic knowledge of reality rests upon this partial agreement of the ideal and real structure of Being.²

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 213.

2. ibid., p. 220.

In practical philosophy "real self-existence" belongs to "ethical reality", embracing the whole realm of "goods" as well as "real disposition", "real moral conduct", the consciousness of guilt, the feeling of responsibility, and so on. In short, all those phenomena whose existence presupposes values are said to have "real self-existence." But values themselves do not possess "real self-existence"; their self-existence is only "ideal".

Hartmann claims that the "ethical ideal sphere" is organically connected with the "theoretical ideal sphere"; it forms a "continuation" of the realm containing logical and mathematical entities as well as all the other pure essences. Therefore, the "ideal sphere" is quite heterogeneous in content--the "aesthetical ideal sphere" also forms a part--while at the same time it remains a unity. Knowledge of this realm can only be aprioristic.

It is a mistake, Hartmann thinks, to suppose that Being is identical with "actuality". Such an identification entails the denial of the entire "ideal sphere" of essences. If "self-existence" is denied to such entities as mathematical and logical objects, then one is naturally led to suppose that they must be constructions or inventions of the human mind. Hartmann points to Husserl's famous critique of "psychologism" which rescued logic and mathematics from the subjectivistic prejudice that they pertained to the

"psychology of thinking" and established them as "objective sciences". It is clear that Hartmann hopes to accomplish the same thing for ethics.

His solution to the difficulty consists in showing that "ideal self-existence"--the existence of objects quite independent of a knowing subject--can no more be doubted than can "real self-existence". Such things as "ideal" and "real" self-existence, we are told, do not permit of definition; each must simply be taken as a fact. But the one essential feature that belongs to self-existent objects is that they are "independent of consciousness".

But how can we know that ideal objects and their structural relations are really objective and self-existent? Hartmann's answer, it must be said, leaves something to be desired:

If anyone objects that affirmation is poor evidence, that a man who dreams, or one who is deceived, or who is in error, also believes that the object he beholds is self-existent, the answer is: from a dream there is an awakening, as there is from error and illusion, but from logical and mathematical insight there is no awaking.¹

Presumably the same argument would be offered in the case

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 223.

of aprioristic intuition into the realm of values. But Hartmann's "argument" merely amounts to a restatement of the problem. Here Hartmann is at his "dogmatic worst". He tells us that "the 'belief' in ideal self-existence stands entirely on the same level as belief in real self-existence."¹ And since nobody can seriously doubt the "real" self-existence of physical objects and so forth within the "real" world, we should not worry ourselves by trying to prove the "ideal" self-existence of mathematical relations or values.

Hartmann claims:

Whoever, therefore, doubts ideal self-existence must also doubt real self-existence. The universal skepticism to which this leads can never indeed be entirely exterminated. But it floats in the air. It is the most precarious of all hypotheses. And as it goes counter to natural comprehension, the burden of proof rests with it.²

It is not entirely clear that "natural comprehension" does run counter to the doubt concerning the "self-existence" of values. Indeed, the tendency to "ontologize" such entities seems to be a peculiarity of Hartmann's approach. There are many theorists who are ready to deny his thesis about

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 224.

2. ibid., p. 224.

"ideal" self-existence, although, one would suppose, they are in agreement with him about the self-existence of the constituents of the so-called "real" world.

One may observe that the notion of "ideal self-existence" stands at the very foundation of Hartmann's "ethical objectivism". It is to be regretted that he did not furnish us with a more adequate analysis and justification of such a basic constituent of his ethical theory, for such a fundamental weakness threatens the entire edifice.

Hartmann does provide us with one vague criterion to account for what he calls the "gnoseological meaning of ideal self-existence":

...no ideal object of a priori insight can be displaced by the subject or made dependent upon him. It offers the same absolute resistance to the will of the subject as any real object of perception. And this resistance "is" its objectivity.

We have already observed that Hartmann's appeal to "resistance" forms an essential part of his critique of valuational relativism (which results from Nietzsche's "transvaluation of values"). But in the absence of any further explanation of the notion, it is difficult to see in "resistance" anything

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 224. (My emphasis.)

more than a mere metaphor. Certainly, Hartmann's analysis of "objectivity", as he presents it in his Ethics, is incomplete, to say the least. But it is also fraught with metaphysical presuppositions borrowed from other areas of his systematic philosophy which may be highly unique but are utterly un-phenomenological.

The assumption of the "ideal self-existence" of values would be innocuous enough if one merely intended to reflect the common-place notion that ethical principles must be objective, in the sense that what holds for one person must also hold for all. A generous interpretation of Hartmann's ethics would regard such phrases as "ideal self-existence", "realm of values", etc. as merely figures of speech denoting aspects of ethical "phenomena". One would, perhaps, not have to assume that Hartmann really believed that there existed a "transcendent" realm inhabited by such entities as the number twelve or the "value" of fidelity.

But on the face of the evidence such an interpretation is impossible. For Hartmann clearly states:

The principle that values have an ideal self-existence has a striking significance for ethics. It affirms more than the mere apriority of valuational discernment and the absoluteness of discerned values. It affirms that there is a realm of values

subsisting for itself, a genuine kosmos noetos which exists beyond reality just as much as beyond consciousness--an ethical ideal sphere, not manufactured, invented or dreamed, but actually existing and capable of being grasped in the phenomenon of the feeling for values...¹

His commitment to an "ideal realm" of Platonic essences is, therefore, uncompromisingly univocal. It is remarkable that Hartmann, who had introduced the notion of "ideal self-existence" merely to explain the "apriority of valuational discernment" and the "absoluteness of the discerned values" --as a sort of "explanatory hypothesis",--should now think that the existence of a "genuine kosmos noetos" is thereby confirmed. He is arguing from the effect to the cause without ever questioning whether there might possibly be some other "hypothesis" that is also capable of explaining the "absoluteness of values". Or might it be that the so-called "phenomenon of resistance" is really only an illusion and that "relativism", after all, expresses the true state of affairs in value theory and ethics?

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 226.

CONCLUSION

Although there are aspects of Hartmann's analysis of "ethical phenomena" that are both interesting and insightful, one must conclude that on the whole his ethics remains unconvincing. There are numerous minor flaws that trouble Hartmann's ethics, but the basic standpoint--intuitive ethical realism--seems to be mistaken.

Like many other forms of "ethical intuitionism" Hartmann's ethics places too much emphasis upon direct intuitive insight. Either one sees the phenomenon to which Hartmann is pointing or one doesn't. Much of what Hartmann has to say takes the form of apparent dogmatic pronouncements with little supporting argumentation. One is faced with the dilemma of either accepting his thesis or rejecting it wholesale.

If it is true, as Hartmann claims, that Kantian ethics errs by being too "intellectualistic", by placing too much emphasis upon "thinking" and discursive argumentation, then it may be said that Hartmann's own theory errs in precisely the opposite direction by over-emphasizing the "intuitive" element. We recall that Hartmann claims that aprioristic knowledge is "inherently intuitive". But what happens when one person's "intuitions" come into conflict with those of another? Hartmann's analysis leaves little scope for rational ethical dispute. Furthermore, in one's own moral

life when it is a question of fulfilling one prima facie obligation only by violating another (as, for instance, when one tells a lie in order to help a friend in need) it is not always intuitively clear which value should predominate. To be sure, there must also be an "intuitive" element in ethical decision-making, but it is to be expected that one's choice should be backed up by some "rational" justification. It is not enough simply to say that one value is correctly "preferred" to another because it is higher on the ideal "scale of values". But this is what Hartmann's theory must claim.

The problems of Hartmann's ethical "intuitionism" are further complicated by making "emotion" the vehicle by means of which the intuition is grasped. The "primal consciousness of value" is not a dispassionate reflective assessment of the worth of an object. Nor is the Platonic "beholding" of the values themselves purely intellectual. The ranking of the values within the "ideal sphere" is discerned by means of the act of "preference".

We have already seen that the so-called "voice of conscience" is for Hartmann "a basic form of the primal consciousness of value". He denies that it is the "voice of God", yet he still claims that it is a voice "from another world". But the postulation of an "ideal" world which exists

on the other side of reality would seem rather gratuitous if some other explanation could be found for the origin of "conscience". And indeed, alternate explanations are not far to seek. Countless psychological accounts, from the Freudian "super-ego" to behaviouristic reinforcement schedules, are capable of explaining the feelings of aversion and desire that constitute the phenomenon of "conscience." There is no need to postulate an "emotional intuition" into a realm of ideal entities to explain the feeling of compunction.

What would be of value, however, is some criterion by means of which rationally justifiable emotions could be distinguished from mere phobias and passions. Something like this distinction is reflected in Kant's differentiation of the "moral feeling of respect" (which presupposes the prior consciousness of the moral law) from mere "sensible feeling". Moral feeling can be justified by appealing to the moral law, whereas sensible feeling is merely pathological and can be explained in terms of physiology and psychological conditioning. But by running "moral" and "sensible" feeling together Hartmann obliterates a valid distinction. Furthermore, it would seem that whenever any feeling whatsoever is present Hartmann is forced to say that there is also a primal consciousness of a genuine value within the "ideal" realm. He does admit that there is such a thing as "falsification"

of value consciousness (i.e., one value may mistakenly be thought to be "higher" in the value scale than another, etc.) but he offers us no criterion of the genuine and spurious other than "the primary consciousness of value itself."¹

Hartmann claims that not everyone is conscious of every moral value. It seems also that on his account not everyone is capable of having direct intuitive insight into the realm of values. One should remember that according to Hartmann the "ideal ethical sphere" forms a continuation of the sphere which also contains the ideal entities of mathematics and aesthetics. Just as it is the case that not everyone is capable of attaining an intuitive grasp of the higher branches of pure mathematics, so also in ethics people will differ in their ability to discern value essences and the relations amongst them.

Furthermore, given that there will, therefore, be varying degrees of ethical comprehension, those who are not capable of extensive ethical insight (on a direct intuitive level) will simply have to accept "on faith" the advice of the so-called ethical "experts", much as one trusts the calculations of a mathematician or a logician. But although

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 103.

such trust may be justifiable in mathematics, it must be absolutely excluded in ethics if moral responsibility is to have any meaning. Such blind acceptance of moral advice amounts to a classic example of the kind of "heteronomy" of the will that Kant has argued convincingly against.

There is a further limitation to Hartmann's analogy between ethical and mathematical insight. Mathematical or logical proofs attempt to found certain propositions (theorems) upon other propositions (axioms) whose truth is taken to be self-evident. They proceed by means of easily intuitable steps guided by the principle of non-contradiction. Intuitive mathematical insight is complemented by a highly formalised discursive structure. But Hartmann's intuitionistic ethics with its ideal values displays nothing comparable to this type of structure. Values are either grasped in a single intuition or they are not grasped at all. There is nothing analogous to the principle of non-contradiction, in Hartmann's ethics, to test the validity of one's insight into the realm of values.

The assumption of a "realm of self-existent values", which is quite distinct from the actual world, leads to an unnecessary duplication of entities. No one doubts that justice, fidelity, love and so forth are to be found in the real world in which we live (along with injustice, infidelity

and hate). But by a series of unwarranted transitions Hartmann starts talking about the moral value of justice, fidelity, trust, etc. Finally, he claims to be talking about the moral value called "justice", "fidelity", etc., claiming that such things are "ideal objects". We are left with a "real" world containing such things as justice, fidelity and love which are nothing more than "ontological structures" which are in themselves devoid of any evaluative content. Then in order to explain how value comes about in the "real" world Hartmann has to introduce another realm of being--the "ideal" world--containing such entities as "the value of justice" and "the value of fidelity" (but often enough he just simply calls these "ideal" entities "justice", "fidelity" etc.). Having divorced value from the "real" world, Hartmann is left with the problem of how such eternal objects as "values" come to be related to ethical "reality".

A great deal of mystification could have been avoided if Hartmann had simply paid closer attention to how expressions of the form "the value of ...x..." are actually used. It is not necessary to assume that because a definite description is used there must, therefore, be some one entity to which it refers. Nobody denies that there is a "difference" between red and green, but it would be foolish to go looking for the entity which is that difference within some ideal "realm

of differences". But by hypostasizing a Platonic "ideal realm of values" Hartmann is doing very much the same thing.

As we have seen, one of the key notions in Hartmann's discussion of the "objectivity" of values within the "ideal sphere" is that of "self-existence". Although Hartmann does not explicitly define this term, one can glean from his various comments that "self-existence" belongs to whatever confronts consciousness as something "exterior" (transcendent to consciousness, not a real part of consciousness itself and therefore not dependent upon consciousness for its continued existence). It is obvious that further clarification of the meaning of this notion should have been provided. One might, for instance, think that physical objects and their primary qualities were the only things possessing self-existence. But this is not Hartmann's meaning. On the other hand, one might suggest that those secondary (and perhaps even tertiary) qualities that are exemplified in empirical experience also possess self-existence. No doubt, Hartmann would agree, but he also want to extend the notion to cover "things" which are completely independent of the "real" world. It is in this latter group that we supposedly find numbers and values. As opposed to the former kinds of "self-existent" entities the members of this latter group are said to possess "ideal" self-existence.

Hartmann's claim that "ideal" self-existence can no more be doubted than can "real" self-existence is surely unjustifiable. Perhaps I cannot seriously doubt that there is a hand in front of my eyes, but if I have never "beheld" one of Hartmann's Platonic entities then there seems to be little justification for the claim that they exist. The "burden of proof" rests with Hartmann, and not with the skeptic.¹

Even the phenomenon of "resistance" that Hartmann alludes to is not capable of furnishing a criterion of objectivity for Hartmann's ideal self-existent values. He claims that ideal entities "resist" being made dependent upon a subject and that this "resistance" is their objectivity. Although the thought is far from clear, he seems to mean that values cannot be created, destroyed or altered by a mere wish of the person who is conscious of them. (The so-called "revaluation of values" does not exist.) But the same might be said of delusions and hallucinations which seem nonetheless real to those who experience them. Therefore, Hartmann has not entirely succeeded in closing the door on

1. Ethics, Vol. I, p. 227.

ethical relativism.

In conclusion it must be said that while Hartmann's Ethics stands out as the most extensive analysis of ethical phenomena to be found within the European tradition, it is far from being the best. Nor would it be advisable to recommend Hartmann's work as a particularly good example of the "phenomenological" approach.

One must admit that Hartmann does make extensive use of the phenomenological procedure known as "eidetic reduction". By means of this reduction essences are abstracted from those entities in which they inhere. For Hartmann this entails the separation of the "essential" from the merely "accidental". This reduction from mere particular facts to general essences is obviously involved in his analysis of the relation of "goods" to the "values" which constitute their "conditions of possibility". Furthermore, Hartmann's notion of the Platonic "beholding" of values has certain broad affinities with the well-known (and much criticized) phenomenological "intuition of essences" (Wesensschau). But it is not the case that phenomenology as a whole is characterized by the kind of hypostatization of essences that one finds in Hartmann's theory.

Finally, there are indications that Hartmann had

only a superficial understanding of Husserlian phenomenology, for he speaks of phenomenology as a RETURN to the "natural attitude", whereas for Husserl the function of the "phenomenological reduction" was to radically alter this attitude so as to reduce oneself to the "sphere of immanence", to the sphere of what is actually given in experience. Surely Husserl would have claimed that Hartmann's "ideal realm of values" was merely a hypothetical construct which would fall within the "brackets" of the phenomenological "epoché", for in no sense can we say that such a realm is actually given.

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of Hartmann's place and significance in contemporary
German philosophical thought, in addition to reviews
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- 1954 Philosophische Gespräche, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck &
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Klugheit und Weisheit, 1933 and Der Wahrheits-
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B. REVIEWS, ARTICLES AND BOOKS CONCERNING HARTMANN'S ETHICS

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C. REVIEWS, ARTICLES AND BOOKS CONCERNING OTHER ASPECTS OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF NICOLAI HARTMANN

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