

## Prescriptivism and Wrongness\*

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The central function of moral judgements is, according to Hare's prescriptivism, to guide choice and action. When we admit that moral judgements have such an action-guiding function, then we must also admit that there is a logical connection between assenting to moral judgements and actions. Hare's contention concerning wrong acts could be stated as being that if one makes a moral judgement that 'X is wrong' or 'X ought not to be done', the statement is, when used typically and sincerely agreed and when it is possible for him not to do X, equivalent to agreeing with the imperative: 'Let me not do X!' Then, how is it possible for someone to prescribe to himself to do X which he sincerely judges as wrong or evil? This theoretical difficulty in explaining moral weakness is, it is said, peculiar to prescriptivism (hence it is sometimes called Hare's paradox.)<sup>1</sup>

But if one, on the other hand, becomes an amoralist, refraining from making moral judgement at all, he must do wrong acts or evil things at the cost of not being in the sphere of moral arguments. Accordingly, from the prescriptivist viewpoint, the wrong act is done either by the person in the moral weakness with his moral judgement not to do it, or by the amoralist without moral judgement (with exceptions of what Hare calls fanatics, satanists and nihilists.)<sup>2</sup> In either case there is a kind of discrepancy between the judgement and the act.

How, then are we to think on the relation between those acts and moral judgements when wrong acts are being done? To shed some lights on this relation, I hope to make clearer what it means for an action to be wrong from the viewpoint of the action which, when one confronts a serious moral question, is alternative to the alleged wrong action. It is also my hope to make clear, by thus explaining the structure of the rightness and wrongness of the action, how we should judge the amoralist's acts and at the same time what is the difference between amoralists and immoralists.

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### 1. The 'Ought/Ought Not' Dichotomy

It is when we are in the *critical situation* that we confront the serious moral problem and ask 'What ought I to do?' And the question in this critical situation: 'What ought I to do?' can be reduced to the more qualified question: 'Which ought I to choose among the alternatives available in the situation?' What must be noticed here is that the actor or chooser is the person who is to prescribe to do one of the alternatives but not the bystander who only observes the acts of someone from detached third party viewpoint. The possible alternatives may be many and we, confronting two alternatives, often try to search another possible way. The alternatives that are decisive, however, can be always reduced to two, because if actions possible in the given situation are A, B, C..., then we can choose at first either A or non-A (i.e. B, C..., including only not to do A), and, if non-A, then either B or non-B and so forth. If we, in asking the moral question: 'Which ought I to choose?' confront the two decisive alternatives, then the judgement we expect as an acceptable and typical answer is expressed so that the one alternative is what ought to be done, the other alternative what ought not to be done. It is, I think, to indicate such an alternative situation that Hare presents us with what he calls the 'ought/ought not' dichotomy (*MT* p.184).

Let us take up examples from *Moral Thinking* (henceforth *MT*) (2.1): a person has made a promise to take his children for a picnic and then a lifelong friend who turns up with his wife from abroad wants to be shown round the colleges. Then he ought to keep his promise to his children and at the same time he ought to show his friend the colleges. And if, in this moral conflict, taking his friend round the colleges overrides keeping his promise to his children, then what he ought not to do in these alternatives is to take his children for picnic. 'In general', Hare says, 'it seems that we think that, if I ought to do A, and doing B would preclude my doing A, I ought not to do B' (*MT* p.27). But what ought he to do if it did not happen that his friend turned up and if the person no longer wanted to take his children for picnic (that is, his desire to keep his promise become weakened)? Then, in this alternative, surely he ought to keep his promise. In this alternative there arises between prescriptions a kind of conflict that has, as Hare suggests (cf. *MT* p.60), quite close affinities with above mentioned moral conflict.

The very same acts, then, of keeping promise with one's children turns in one situation to be what ought not to be done and, in another situation, what ought to be done. And it is the alternative action to the alleged action which turns the situation into quite a different one and which makes the alleged action either doing what one ought to do or what one ought not to do. One would not be necessarily mistaken if one interpret Hare's assertion in the above way; 'What ought to be done' he says, 'on any theory including the utilitarian, depends on the alternatives to doing it.' (*MT* p.142, cf. p.42, p.95.)<sup>3</sup>

What is decisive in this context is that the alternatives open to a person in the situation are, as L. Bergström says, 'incompatible in pairs or mutually exclusive'<sup>4</sup>; the alternative prescriptions are mutually conflicting in case of the kind of weakness of will that is given above. Thus, if we call the action which ought to be done *right* and that which ought not to be done *wrong*, this, I hope, is not quite contrary to our linguistic conventions. Then, one and the same action of keeping promise turns out to be right in the one alterna-

tive, wrong in the other alternative. The rightness or wrongness of the action depends on the alternative action. If the action is right, the alternative action to it is wrong and *vice versa*. It is, therefore, possible to go further and claim that what makes the right act right is, in this sense, the wrongness of the alternative act to it and *vice versa*. And this structure of mutual dependency of rightness and wrongness has, paradoxically enough, to do with the fact that one action is incompatible with the alternative action.<sup>5</sup> This mutually dependent and incompatible character of the rightness and wrongness of action is, I think, originates from the conflicts of prescriptions. It is conflicts of prescriptions that make serious moral problems in real life: 'Which ought I to choose?' With this rather rough sketch, relying on our linguistic observations (and on our linguistic intuitions when the concepts are expressed in the Japanese language) of the structure of the rightness and wrongness, I will go on examining, as far as necessary for the later arguments, Hare's method of moral reasoning in *Freedom and Reason* (henceforth *FR*) and in *MT*. Let us first, in order to examine the method in *FR*, take up the creditor case (*FR* 6.3) as an example; A owes money to B, and the law permits to exact their debts by putting their debtors into prison. B's moral question is: 'Ought I to imprison A in order to exact my debt?' It must be noticed here that unless B had not the inclination to exact his money, the question would not have arisen. If he asks whether he can universalize his original prescription to exact his money, he can get an answer by means of putting himself on the debtor's shoes.

In order to put himself on the debtor's shoes, B can suppose that there is C who lent him money and who is in the same position to B as B is to A in the relevant respects apart from the individual difference (i.e. the B/A relation is the same as the C/B relation.) Thus he is able to test his prescription whether it is universalizable or not. There can be two prescriptions that are logically the same: 'Let me (B) imprison A' and 'Let C imprison me (B)'. It seems that B must either refuse or accept the two prescriptions; there seems, accordingly, to be only two ways possible for B: either he refuses both and act rightly or becomes a fanatic accepting both. Surely it cannot logically be the case that B accepts the one prescription: 'Let me (B) imprison A' and refuses the other prescription: 'Let C imprison me (B)'. But this logically impossible case was brought into practice, as is seen in the Bible from which the story originates. What, then, does it mean that the case is logically inconsistent and impossible? That to accept the original prescription: 'Let me imprison A' is logically inconsistent with refusing the supposed prescription: 'Let C imprison me' means that the original prescription is contrary to the supposition. That the original prescription goes against the supposition generated from the demand for universality means that it is un-universalizable (or contra-universalizable). Thus, if we can admit that the wrongness of act consists in such logical inconsistency, that is, in the *un-universalizability* of the prescription, then we can judge the act by B as wrong when he accepts the original prescription: 'Let me imprison A' (On the other hand, if B, rejecting the original, un-universalizable prescription, accepts the supposed prescription: 'Let me not imprison A' which is the alternative to the un-universalizable prescription, then we can admit his prescription as being universalizable, his act as right.)

Let us next, in order to examine Hare's method of moral reasoning in *MT*, take up the creditor case as an example instead of the car-bicycle case in *MT* (ch.6) (so that we can

readily compare both methods in *FR* and in *MT*), and argue as follows: B has the preference to exact his money by imprisoning A. And if B has full knowledge of A's preferences, B acquired preferences equal to those which he would acquire, were he in A's situation (B would acquire the preference not to be imprisoned); and these are the preferences which conflict with his original preference or prescription. So B has an intrapersonal conflict of prescriptions. Here what matters is the intensity of preferences. Let us consider that the original preference of B to exact money is weaker than the imagined preference not to be put into prison: if the position were reverted (A becomes the creditor, B the debtor), then B would have the preference not to be imprisoned and at the same time would be able to acquire the weaker preference to exact his money. In both situations their universal properties are the same, only two roles being exchanged. So in both cases we can get the same conclusion: the creditor ought not to put the debtor into prison. Thus what is universalizable is the stronger preference or prescription.

Now if B, prescribing to himself the weaker preference to exact money, imprisons A, this prescription cannot be universalizable, because he would, were he in the victim's position, refuse the same prescription; B must, were he the debtor, refuse the stronger preference which he has acquired, that is, the preference not to be imprisoned. This cannot be logically possible, because his original prescription to imprison the debtor and his imagined prescription not to be imprisoned, were he the debtor, are inconsistent. Here also, as we saw above, the weaker preference is not only non-universalizable but is *un-universalizable*, because it is against the supposition generated from the demand for universality.

The brief sketch on Hare's methods in *FR* and *MT* is, I hope, enough to make us realize that both methods coincide well with each other: the universalizability of preferences is tested in *FR*; and in *MT* the strength of preferences is compared, because it is the stronger preference that is universalizable. If we only take notice of the intensity of preferences, then the preferences can be put in the order of intensity so that we may think that the difference between the preferences is only quantitative, that is, just the matter of degree; the stronger one will win and acquire the status of morality, the weaker one being only non-moral. That, however, is not enough to explain the wrongness of act, because the explanation has left behind the alternatives; — those alternatives in which the serious moral question arose; we are here not in the situation where we can suitably choose by a flip of coin. The difference between preferences is, therefore, reduced to a qualitative difference, that between universalizable and un-universalizable preferences; it is, in this sense, not the matter of degree at all, because the two preferences are conflicting and incompatible. Since we are here left with two alternative prescriptions inconsistent with each other, if the one is universalizable the other must be un-universalizable. The wrongness of acts consists in the fact that the weaker preference is un-universalizable. This is what Hare does not make sufficiently clear in his writings as far as I read. And this 'universalizability/un-universalizability' dichotomy coincides well, I hope, with our language intuitions as we mentioned earlier.

## 2. A Case of the Weakness of Will

In *FR* 5.9, Hare gives a list of main types of weakness of will, although he admits that the lists might not be exhaustive. (He takes up, in *MT*, one type of weakness of will as an expansion of the case where one departs from what is 'the rigour of pure prescriptive universality' (p.58). To argue on this type as a model is, I think, enough for my purpose to become clearer on the problem of wrongness.)

Hare's main concern in *FR* is, it seems, the judgements of the backslider — the moral judgements that are to have universalizable prescriptions. If we, however, notice the situation when the judgements are being made by the person in the moral weakness, we realize that he must be in the kind of conflict between two alternative prescriptions, and that he must seriously be asking, which way ought I to choose? Two or more courses of actions are, given opportunity and possibility, open to him. And if he thinks that he ought not to be doing something which he is doing, then that which he is prescribing *in practice* must be something which he is doing. So, in general, if one makes moral judgements that 'X is wrong' or 'X ought not to be done' while he is, in practice, doing X, then what he is prescribing is (in spite of his moral judgement that is to have universal prescriptivity) to do X, — X that is not universalizable. Here arises a gap between the prescriber and the observer who judges.

Hare's solution of the problem of weakness of will in *MT* is, by contrast, based on his 'two-tier theory', a theory on which he solves brilliantly many other moral problems. His division of two levels of the moral thinking makes it possible that the *prima facie* moral principles are open to being overridden by other, non-moral prescriptions as well as by other principles. 'What happens' he continues, 'when I decide that I ought not to disappoint my Australian friend of his tour of Oxford has quite close affinities with what happens when I decide to break one in order not to disappoint my own appetites.' Here what overrides the *prima facie* principle is, Hare argues, the 'non-moral' prescription (*MT* p.60).

But when we call the prescription 'non-moral', does it occur that the action realized according to this prescription is 'non-moral' as well? As was argued earlier, when we confront conflicts between two prescriptions, one prescription is what ought to be done and the alternative course is what ought not to be done: that is, what is wrong. So the prescription that is, in the serious moral question, alternative to the moral prescription must, I think, be called 'wrong' or 'evil', not 'non-moral', although it may well be called 'non-moral' in other situations. It is the person in the weakness of will who confronts the serious alternatives and who calls his own action 'wrong' or 'evil', not 'non-moral'. (Therefore, however thorough one's list of the types of weakness of will may be, and however closely one may examine the moral judgements with would-be universalizable prescriptions, the wrongness of the actions cannot be made apparent, because what is wrong is the un-universalizable prescription which he accepts and which is not noticeable here.)

Wrongness is the term of universal prohibition;<sup>6</sup> and if we assent that X is wrong, we are prescribing not to do X. But in the case of the weakness of will, though one judges that X is wrong, one is nevertheless prescribing to do X. Hence a paradox. That is to say, if we call an action 'wrong' or 'evil', the action being judged as 'what ought not to be done',

then we are assenting, by the logic of prescriptivism, to the imperative: 'Let me not do it!' But there is, in the term 'un-universalizable' itself, nothing prescriptive in particular. There is, therefore, nothing paradoxical when one accepts the singular prescription that happens to be un-universalizable; we must, however, do so only at the cost of separating the prescriber within us from the observer within us.

When someone, confronting the conflicting alternative prescriptions, accepts the un-universalizable prescription, he thinks that it is un-universalizable. Here, the prescriber is not the observer, not one who judges the alleged prescription as either universalizable or not universalizable; and the observer, who judges the alternative prescription as universalizable, therefore as right, is not really accepting the prescription, though he may psychologically be unable to discard it. This separation of the prescriber and the observer may be one version of 'the metaphor of divided personality' which has been imprinted in our common speech when we talk about the weakness of will (c. *FR* p.81). (If the actor, in this case, thinks critically enough to acquire the rival preferences that he would, were he in the position of the victim of his act, acquire, and if two preferences are compared intra-personally, then the universalizable preference is that which is the stronger. So, as far as he thinks critically enough, he will accept the universalizable prescription. There is no such cases as that in which the universalizable prescription is weaker than the un-universalizable one. If he does not accept it, it is because he has not acquired the preference of his victims; and his position is, in this respect, almost the same as that of the amoralist, except that he admits the 'ought/ought not' dichotomy.)

In *FR* Hare observes and analyses the judgements of the backslider mainly from, it seems, the viewpoint of the detached third party; here the standpoint of the prescriber is not very clearly seen. In *MT*, by contrast, the prescriptions of the actor are examined and the singular prescription of the actor which is accepted in practice is called the 'non-moral' prescription from the viewpoint of the prescriber. In this respect the viewpoint of the author is shifted from the third party in *FR* who only analyses the 'off-colour' or quasi moral judgements which the backslider failed to prescribe in practice, to the standpoint of the prescriber in *MT*. But if the prescription of the backslider is called 'non-moral' as it is in *MT*, then the person who calls so must be no other person than the actor who only prescribes. But, then, the view point of the actor who calls his own act 'wrong' or 'evil' is not apparent (unless he judges that his act is wrong, it cannot be the case of weakness of will.) So, we must, in order to explain the case of weakness of will, take the viewpoint of the observer, in addition to the standpoint of the prescriber: the alleged prescription that the backslider commits in practice and which the backslider may call 'non-moral' must, as it is inconsistent with the universalizable prescription alternative to it, be wrong when seen from the viewpoint of the observer within the actor.

### 3. Amoralism

If one becomes an amoralist, he may do evil things at the cost of not being in the sphere of moral argument. But as long as he refrains from making moral judgement, he cannot analyse his moral words, nor argue on his moral judgements. 'Amoralist' as is de-

fined by Hare would mean the person whose moral judgement is beyond the language analysis. Hare, however, argues that his amoralist can be a very evil person, calling him 'immoral egoist' or 'talented devil' (*MT* 11.4). If an amoralist is the person who has escaped moral sphere into the singular 'non-moral' prescription, who has gone outside of moral sphere, how can we call him 'immoral' or 'evil', and his act 'wrong'? Here arises a kind of paradox, which has some affinities with the paradox we found in the moral weakness; it is this question that I want to answer in what follows.

Returning to the creditor case: if the creditor B, refraining from making moral judgement, imprisons the debtor A, then, his act may be judged as wrong or evil (provided that B's imagined preference not to be imprisoned is stronger than his original preference to exact his debt.) But who judges at all that his act wrong or evil? It must be we the writers and the readers of ethics (originally the evangelical writers and readers). We are, placed in a position like that of an impartial spectator, free to judge the morality of an amoralist's act, though he may refrain from moral judgement. When an act is to be called 'wrong' or 'evil' and as far as the judgement is used as an evaluative or prescriptive one, that is, as a judgement that has an action guiding function, the alternative actions are open to the typical situation in which the alleged judgement is made. And when someone judges the act of an amoralist as 'wrong', that someone must, I think, be able to let the actor confront a kind of alternatives. Now we as the third person can make Hare's amoralist confront the question that is generated by the demand for universality, can make him confront the question in order to ascertain that he cannot avoid becoming a 'consistent amoralist' (*FR* 6.6, *MT* 10.7,8). If we can do this, why can we not test him by making him confront the same kind of question, a question which makes it possible to discern the right act and the wrong one? If B in the creditor case does not owe any debt to C, then B, not universalizing his prescription, may not be ready to use imagination. Let us, then, imagine that C (who is B's master in the original parable) is able to perform a trick on B, and say 'you may not know it, but your late father owed a considerable lot of money to me, a debt which you had to inherit and of which I have evidence.' The purpose of this manoeuvre, different from the case where B imagines himself as being C in order to enquire into the critical moral principle universalizing his prescription (*FR* 6.4), is to bring out, when he escapes from moral judgement, the nature of the morality of his act, to bring out, that is, by judging it from the standpoint of the third party. The manoeuvre is somewhat the same kind of trick as Hare performed on the fanatical Nazi and the racialist to make them put on their victim's shoes (cf. *FR* 9.4, 11.4). Now even if B, not seeking for universal prescription, escapes into amorality, we, the third party, can judge freely that his act is wrong when he rejects to be imprisoned by C for his debt. (If the supposition that we made in order to introduce the logically consistent relation is only supposition that could be annulled by the real prescription, then, the role of the supposition is, I think, a paradigm, a litmus paper by which the morality of acts could be tested.)

As far as the amoralist only prescribes without moral judgement, he has, unlike the person in the moral weakness, not got the role of the observer within him who sincerely judges his prescription. Instead, the third party judges his act from outside. Here also, as in the case of the moral weakness, is the cleavage between the prescriber and the observer,

each being a different person in this case. Thus the case of moral weakness and the case of amorality can be explained in a parallel way. The gap which, as I said earlier concerning the case of moral weakness and amorality, lies between the act and the judgement could be explained as the gap between the prescriber and the observer, —the observer within the actor (in the case of weakness of will) or the third party observer (in the case of amorality). As argued so far, the acts of amoralist turned out wrong or evil to the eyes of the third party observer; his prescription is un-universalizable in the alternative situation imaginarily supposed by our manoeuvre. If his prescription, however, is un-universalizable, his position is not consistent from the viewpoint of the universalist third party, although he may claim that he is free from the demand of universality.

The manoeuvre we took in order to discern the wrongness of the amoralist's acts from right ones, was taken to let him confront the alternatives. But there is, I think, one possibility for him not to reject the alleged imaginary prescription; that is the case where he is quite indifferent to both prescriptions (i.e. his original and imaginary ones) and thus gets rid of the rigidity of the alternatives. This, then, is the position different from that we have so far argued.

Hare admits, it is true, that, in arguing the amoralist position in the creditor case, B can say that it is morally indifferent whether B and C exercise their legal rights to imprison their debtors (*FR* p.102). This amoralist position turns out, by our manoeuvre, to be un-universalizable. For the position 'leaves it open to B and C', he continues, 'to do what they like in the matter; and we may suppose that, though B himself would like to have this freedom, he will unwillingly allow it to C. It is as unlikely that he will permit C to put him (B) into prison as that he will prescribe it' (*FR* p.102, cf. *MT* p.112). It is this attitude of B's that we call immoral because of its un-universalizability.

Hare's amoralist position, however, raises one more problem when he writes as follows: 'if B were a completely apathetic person, who literally did not mind what happened to himself or to anybody else, the argument would not touch him' (*FR* p.92). He also writes, in arguing wrongness of the act, that there is no way of escaping universal prescription beside amorality and fanaticism, 'which consists in my saying that if I were in that situation, *I should not mind the act being done*' (italic mine).<sup>7</sup> It is this position (unless it is fanaticism) that is different from the immoral position above mentioned.

This position may indeed be extremely rare, because such people may not exist unless psychologically abnormal. But his position is, I think, logically not impossible. Hare himself does not deny that 'there may be people who can sincerely say that very little matters to them, or even almost nothing.'<sup>8</sup>

When the amoralist is quite indifferent to both alternative prescriptions above mentioned and in this way gets rid of the alternatives, then his position cannot be said to be 'immoral', but I don't know how to call his position otherwise than *non-moral*; his prescription, having got rid of the 'universal/un-universal' dichotomy, *non-universalizable*.<sup>9</sup> The only one possibility we can conceive of for the creditor B to escape the arena of morality even from the viewpoint of the third party is, I think, that he becomes indifferent to the prescription 'Let C imprison me!' admitting that it really does not make any difference whether C imprisons him or not. He can neither accept nor reject the alleged prescription;

for if he accepts or rejects, his position can be judged as such and such.<sup>10</sup> Though such a person could hardly be met in practice, the act committed from this position must be distinguished from evil or wrong act.

#### 4. Amoralists and Immoralists

When someone is prescribing universally, and when his action, therefore, is right, the observer within him agrees with the prescriber. There is no gap between his act and his judgement; the universal prescriber may, in this case, be an ideal observer, as Hare seems to suggest (cf. *MT* p.44).<sup>11</sup> But when one's act is wrong, there is a kind of discrepancy between the prescriber and the observer; that is to say, the observer, whether he may be the actor or the third party, does not follow or agree with the prescriber.

Concerning the case of weakness of will, Hare admits in *FR* that although there would, 'if moral judgements were not prescriptive', 'be no problem about moral weakness; but there is a problem; therefore they are prescriptive. In fact, the argument from moral weakness is very much of a two-edged weapon in the hands of the descriptivist' (*FR* 5.1). Now we have explained away a case of the moral weakness by means of viewing the prescriber and the observer separately. The explanation of the moral weakness on the basis of the division between the prescriber and the observer will, I hope, synthesize both standpoints of the prescriptivist and the descriptivist; that is to say, the out-and-out prescriber only prescribes while the observer, who is a descriptivistic universalist, goes on judging the prescription as un-universalizable. This is a kind of *strain* which lies, as Hare says, 'between prescriptivity and universalizability in certain situations' (*FR* p.73). Even if we add to the prescriptivist standpoint the descriptivist position, it does not run counter to the prescriptivism of my persuasion. Hare himself admits that 'prescriptivists can well grant, and I do grant, that moral judgements have a descriptive *element* in their meaning.'<sup>12</sup>

The case of amoralism is characteristic of prescriptivism. For the prescriptivist *qua* prescriptivist cannot sincerely judge his own act as wrong or evil without committing himself to the prohibition of the act. So even when the prescriptivist is doing something that is called 'evil', he himself must be accepting only 'singular' or 'non-moral' prescription; because the actor is not, unlike the case of moral weakness, the observer at the same time. The acts of one who is called amoralist from the prescriptivist standpoint turn out to be wrong from the viewpoint of the third party who is a universalist descriptivist (unless it is what I called *non-moral* act). That is to say, as far as one stands in the out-and-out prescriptivist position, there would be no prescription accepted by him which he would judge as 'wrong' or 'evil', these terms being used to guide choice. On the contrary, when and only when one is a pure descriptivist, can he be exempted from being in the alternative situation searching the serious moral judgement that should guide his choice or conduct; then he can be free to make any kind of would-be moral judgements without full-blooded prescriptivity and call his acts wrong or evil, or what it may.

While the prescriptivist will call his position 'amoral' when something called evil act is being done by him, it must be the descriptivist universalist who calls the alleged act wrong and the person immoral. It is no wonder that the descriptivists tend to use the term 'im-

moralist' instead of 'amoralist'. T.L. Carson, for example, considers it to be a fatal objection to the prescriptivism that there are individuals who are moved by anti-moral considerations. He admits that such people as he calls 'immoralists' grant the existence or validity of moral considerations but are indifferent to them.<sup>13</sup> This position, though different from the cases of moral weakness and amoralism, can be explained also as a kind of division between the observer and the prescriber. On the other hand, what Carson calls immoralist from the descriptivist viewpoint corresponds also with one whom Hare calls the satanist, one who, he argues, deliberately wants to do wrong just because it is wrong. 'Satan represents', Hare says 'all those who, in order not to be trapped in the intuitive level, think it necessary to throw over morality altogether, because they have not realized that there is a critical level.'<sup>14</sup> (I have nothing to add to his solution of the problem, based on his two-tier theory according to which the descriptivism is situated in the intuitive level. (cf. *MT* ch.4))

If we, introducing two viewpoints above mentioned, see things from the third party descriptivist standpoint, we can clearly distinguish the *non-moral* act (that which follows what I called *non-universalizable* prescription) from the wrong act. The descriptivists who judge the acts of amoralist as wrong may insist that his position cannot be consistent, that it is contrary to Hare's contention on the logical possibility of the consistent amoralist (cf. *MT* 10.8). But I think that what I call the *non-moral* act is logically possible, that this position would be logically consistent even to the eyes of the third party descriptivists. This possibility of consistent *non-moral* position would be the very last fortitude of prescriptivists against descriptivists, only if it could save the prescriptivists from falling into the 'is - ought' derivation.

We must, therefore, adopt both prescriptivist and descriptivist standpoints in order to clear up the problem of wrongness that has often been ignored by, or rather not come into the sight of, the moral philosophers. If the wrongness is to be explained, as I argued, by the division of the prescriber and the descriptivist observer, then only the prescriptivist position can, I think, solve the problem of the wrongness, because it is the division of evaluation (or prescription) from description that enables one to admit the division of the prescriber from the descriptivist observer.

#### Notes

- 1 Cf. G.W. Mortimore (ed.), *Weakness of Will*, Macmillan, 1971. Part II.
- 2 Cf. R.M. Hare, 'Satanism and Nihilism', (An unpublished paper, which he kindly showed me.)
- 3 Cf. R.M. Hare, 'Patriotism and Pacifism', *Shiso*, No. 739, Iwanami, 1986 (Published in Japanese.) p.113.
- 4 L. Bergström, 'Utilitarianism and Alternative Actions', *Nous*, 5, 1971. pp.240ff.
- 5 On these contentions I owe much to the moral theories of Kiyoshi Yasuda, Emeritus Professor at Kyoto University. Here I quote one passage from his writings which is highly relevant to our problem.  
'Value and disvalue are opposed in inconsistency and both are in opposition, denying each

other. Although both are mutually incompatible, they cannot exist without each other. Both are, therefore, relying on each other and cannot be separated. In this sense value and disvalue could be said one thing. Although "these two things (siv. good and evil) are as opposed to one another as ice is to burning coal" as Wang Yang-Ming said, they are "one thing". 'The Fundamental Problems of Ethics', *Jim bun*, No. 12, Kyoto University, 1966. p.6. (my translation.)

6 Cf. R.M. Hare, 'Wrongness and Harm', in *Essays on the Moral Concepts*, University of California Press, 1972.

7 *ibid.*, p.101.

8 R.M. Hare, 'Nothing Matters', in his *Application of Moral Philosophy*, University of Carifornia Press, 1972. p.38.

9 Hare does not, as far as I read his writings, distinguish between two concepts: 'un-universal' and 'non-universal'; 'non-universal' is used by Hare as meaning something similar to 'amoral' or 'failing to universalize'. ('Do agents have to be Moralists?' p.56. in E. Regis Jr. (ed.), *Gewirth's Ethical Rationalism*, The University of Chicago Press, 1984. Also *MT* p.56.)

10 The moral aspects of the creditor B could, if we judge them from his acts, be classified tentatively in the following three alternatives. First, in case where the creditor B cannot assent to the prescription that C imprison him (B), the alternative he confronts is whether he puts A into prison or not, according to which his act is wrong or right. Next, in the case where B assents to the prescription that C imprison him (B). Suppose he is a fanatic for whom the sanctity of property overrides other considerations. If he imprisons A, then his act would be, we must tentatively conclude, judged as right from his position; if he does not, his act must be judged as wrong.\* Suppose, further, he is a self-sacrificing person and his moral principle is that one ought not to cause any one to be imprisoned. Then, if he does not imprison A, his act is supererogatory, and if he imprison A, he may well judge his act as wrong from his criteria.

\* Cf. T. Yamauchi, 'Is Hare's Fanatic Possible?' *Bulletin of Japan Society of British Philosophy*, No. 9, 1987.

11 Also cf. R.M. Hare, 'Principles', *Aristotelian Society*, 72. 1972. p.12.

12 R.M. Hare, 'Satanism and Nihilism', p.87. Also cf. *FR* 5.2. *MT* ch.4.

13 T.L. Carson, *The Status of Morality*, D. Reidel., 1984. pp.17ff.

14 R.M. Hare, 'Satanism and Nihilism', p.90.

### 指図主義と悪 (山内友三郎)

悪の問題は指図主義にとって難問とされてきたが、本稿は指図主義によってこそ悪の問題が説明されることを証明しようとした。行為選択がなされるクリティカルな状況に注目しながら、意志の弱さとアモラリズムの問題を指図(行為)と記述(判断)の分裂として捉え直す。さらに、指図主義の見地からのアモラリストは、記述主義的観測者からみて、イモラリストとノンモラリストに分けられ、後者が「〈ある〉—〈べき〉」導出から指図主義を救うと考える。