

Chapter (XIV)

Philosophical Terms in English

Purposive Values: positive and negative purposive values are the positive and negative features contained in purposive activity ⁽¹⁾.

Selective System: is a structural process by which a unitary dynamic is channeled in such a way that it generates particular acts, dispositions, or objects (to be called " trials "), and also activates a specific selective agency (to be called the" norm "), by which some of the trials are rejected and other are incorporated into the dynamic operation of the system ⁽²⁾.

Absolute: The expression "the absolute" stands for that (supposed) unconditioned reality which is either the spiritual ground of all being or the whole of things considered as a spiritual unity. This use derives especially from "F. W. J. Schelling" and "G. W. F. Hegel", prefigured by J. G. Fichte's talk of an absolute self which lives its life through all finite persons. In English-language philosophy it is associated with the monistic idealism of such thinkers as "F. H. Bradley" and "Josiah Royce", the first distinguishing the Absolute from God, The second identifying them ⁽³⁾.

Moral Agents: Moral agents are those agents expected to meet the demands of morality. Not all agents are moral agents. Young children and Animals, being capable of performing actions, may be agents in the way that stones, Plant and cars are not. But though they are agents they are not automatically considered moral agents. For a moral agent must also be capable of conforming to at least some of the demands of morality ⁽⁴⁾.

Moral Judgment: The term moral judgment can refer to four distinguishable things.

First, the activity of thinking about whether a given object of moral assessment (be it an action, person, institution or state of affair) has a particular moral attribute, either general (such as rightness of badness) or specific (insensitivity, integrity).

Second, the state that can result from this activity: the state of judging that the object has the attribute.

Third, the content of that state: what is judged by us, rather than our judging it.

Fourth, the term can be read as commendatory, referring to a moral virtue that we might also call 'moral discernment' or 'moral wisdom'. There are three principal questions regarding moral judgment.

The first asks what kind of state the state of moral judgment is, and in particular whether this state is to be characterized, either wholly or in part, as a state of belief.

The second is concerned with the activity of moral judgment, investigating especially the role within this activity that is played by the application of rules.

The third examines the conditions under which a person is justified in making a moral judgment with a given content ⁽⁵⁾.

Moral particularism: is a broad set of views play down the role of general moral principles in moral philosophy and

practice. Particularistic stress the role of examples in moral education and of moral sensitivity or judgment in moral decision-making, as well as criticizing moral theories which advocate or rest upon general principles. It has not yet been demonstrated that particularism constitutes an importantly controversial position in moral philosophy ⁽⁶⁾.

Intuition: the meanings of intuition itself varies widely from one type of philosophy to another. The most common usages of intuition are: (1) Intuition as a unique grasp of the ideal entities which comprise the only true being (Plato). (2) Intuition as a mystical union with the Divine (Meister Eckhart). (3) Intuition as self-evident knowledge of nature or god (Spinoza). (4) Intuition as a tool of comprehending the inwardness and duration of life (Bergson). (5) Intuition as awareness of the immediate date of consciousness (Santayana). (6) Intuition as knowledge by acquaintance (Russell). (7) Intuition as a faculty of intentional consciousness (Husserl). (8) Intuition as a fund of knowledge in the sense of intellectually cumulative experiences (Dewey) ⁽⁷⁾.

Moral Realism: is the view that there are facts of the matter about which actions are right and which wrong, and about which things are good which are bad. But behind this bald statement lie a wealth of complexity. If one is a full-blown moral realist, one probably accepts the following three claims. First, moral facts are somehow special and different from other sorts of fact. Realists differ, however, about whether the sort of specialness required is compatible with taking some natural facts to be moral facts. Take, for instance, the

natural fact that if we do this action, we will have given someone the help they need. Could this be a moral fact – the same fact as the fact that we ought to do the action? Or must we think of such a natural fact as the natural 'ground' for the (quite different) moral fact that we should do it, that is, as the fact in the world that makes it true that we should act this way? Second, realists hold that moral facts are independent of any beliefs or thoughts we might have about them. What is right is not determined by what I or anybody else thinks is right. It is not even determined by what we all think is right, even if we could be got to agree. We cannot make actions right by agreeing that they are, any more than we can make bombs safe by agreeing that they are. Third, it is possible for us to make mistakes about what is right and what is wrong. No matter how carefully and honest we think about what to do, there is still no guarantee that we will come up with the right answer. So what people conscientiously decide they should do may not be the same as what they should do⁽⁸⁾.

Cognitivism: is the claim that moral attitudes are cognitive states rather than non-cognitive ones. The distinction between cognitive and non-cognitive states is not clear; the best way of drawing it is by appeal to the distinction between two directions of fit. Beliefs, which are the paradigm examples of a cognitive state, have one direction of fit; desires, which are the paradigm examples of a non-cognitive state, have the other. A belief, that is, has to fit the world; the world is given, as it were, and it is the belief's job to fit that world, to get it right⁽⁹⁾.

Self-Realization: is the idea of freedom as freedom from coercions that make our action not up to us. It is known as freedom of action. Mortimer Adler' called it the circumstantial freedom of self-realization. To indicate it depends on external circumstances. Today this negative freedom recognizes internal coercions as well, such as addictions or mental disabilities. This is the classical compatibilist definition of freedom, also known as voluntarism. It is also used by Robert Kane (10).

Causality: is the basic idea that all events have cause. When every event is caused completely by prior events and their causes, it leads to the idea of determinism. A causal chain links all events to earlier events in a limitless sequence. Theologians inconsistently imagine the chain to break with an uncaused cause (*causa aui*) which they identify with god and miracles. Quantum indeterminacy produces uncaused causes. There is still a causal chain, but it no longer permits complete predictability. Events are now merely probable, no longer certain, though the probability can be arbitrarily close to certainty. Most macroscopic events are, for practical purposes, as predictable as perfect determinism would have allowed. Nevertheless, a break in the causal chain is a requirement for free will ⁽¹¹⁾.

Consequentialism: is a theory of moral responsibility that makes moral judgment based on the consequences of an action. Moritz Schlick argued that it is acceptable to punish agents despite their lack of free will because of the beneficial effects on behavior that result. Consequentialism also describes theories of punishment that are justified because of the

consequences, e.g., the deterrence of a certain crime, as opposed to a retributivist theory, that punishes because the agent simply deserves the blame⁽¹²⁾.

Determinism: is the idea that there is but one possible future, and that is determined by the "fixed" past and the (mistakenly presumed deterministic) Laws of Nature. There are many kinds of determinism. None of them are based on sufficient evidence. Most have become mere dogmatic truths. Determinism remains a hypothesis that is very popular among philosophers, but it is entirely unjustified. Determinism is an illusion. Aware of modern quantum physics, most philosophers admit the world is in-deterministic, but they say that free will would be compatible with determinism, if determinism were true⁽¹³⁾.

Indeterminism: is the idea that some events are uncaused, specifically that they are random accidents with only probabilistic outcomes. In ancient times, Epicurus proposed that atom occasionally swerve at random, breaking the causal chain of determinism and allowing for moral responsibility. In modern physics, we now know that atoms constantly swerve, or move in-deterministically, whenever they are in the presence of other atoms. The universe is irreducibly random on the atomic scale. Law of Nature are therefore probabilistic or statistical. Although for large objects, the departure from classical laws of motion is usually entirely insignificant, in-deterministic quantum noise plays a role in the two-stage model of free will⁽¹⁴⁾.

Logical Fallacy: The Logical Fallacy is to assume that purely logical (and linguistic) analysis can yield "truths" about the world. Logical positivism was in practical terms a logical fallacy. The hundreds of papers published on Harry Frankfurt's attacks on the idea of the alternative possibilities are a prime example. Nothing is logically true of the physical world. Modal analyses using the idea of possible worlds shows that anything that is not internally contradictory can be postulated of some possible world ⁽¹⁵⁾.

Moral Luck: is Thomas Nagel's notion that since an action consequences are beyond the agent' control, randomness makes moral responsibility a matter of chance. This is often framed as the luck objection, a variation on the randomness objection since there is irreducible randomness in the universe, there are no doubt many cases where luck enters into moral situations, but not universally. Many actions are adequately determined and have reliable and predictable consequences, enough to establish the general concept of moral responsibility ⁽¹⁶⁾.

Naturalism: Is the position that Laws of Nature (assumed to be deterministic) apply to human beings and their actions, because humans are natural things, continuous with animals and other things that lack free will. The position originated with David Hume and has been developed in the moral responsibility debates by Paul Russell ⁽¹⁷⁾.

Naturalistic Fallacy: G. E. Moore in "Principia Ethica" claimed that ethics is human, not natural. So ethical claims

cannot be supported by appeals to natural properties, like pleasure or utility. Moore thinks "good" cannot be defined. It is an elemental essential property. Moore's ethical non-naturalism resembles David Hume's denial that "ought" (human ethics) can be derived from "is" nature. Note the conflict with naturalists for whom natural behaviors are moral behaviors, and "an-natural" behaviors are bad⁽¹⁸⁾.

Ethical Egoism: the view that each individual should seek as an end only his own welfare. This principle is sometime advanced as a separate intuition, sometimes on the ground that an individual's own welfare is the only thing that is ultimately valuable⁽¹⁹⁾.

Empiricism: A proposition about the sources of knowledge: that the sole source of knowledge is experience⁽²⁰⁾.

Evolutionism: This is the view that the universe and life in all of its manifestations and nature in all of their aspects are the product of development⁽²¹⁾.

Philosophical skepticism: is often associated with radical skepticism, which denies the possibility of knowledge. The school of thought traces back to antiquity, most notably in Pyrrhonism. In modern times, it was famously espoused in the "epistemological anarchism" of Paul Feyerabend and the similarly formulated relativism of a number of postmodernists. A weaker form of philosophical skepticism that evaluates knowledge in a probabilistic fashion has been endorsed by numerous philosophers and scientists. This form of skepticism

denies absolute certainty of knowledge, but holds that the evidence for certain ideas is "good enough" to act on them as if they were true, even though they may be later overturned. This is often associated with or espoused in the form of Bayesian statistics ⁽²²⁾.

Moral skepticism: Moral skepticism holds that there is no objective morality or "natural law." David Hume's "is-ought" distinction is one of the most common arguments in favor of moral skepticism. While moral skepticism is often associated with nihilism and moral relativism, moral skeptics (like Hume) may also hold that moral and ethical systems may be justified, but not by reason alone ⁽²³⁾.

Pyrrhonism: Philosophy of Skepticism derived from Pyrrho of Elis (c. 370–c. 272 bce), generally regarded as the founder of ancient Skepticism. He identified as wise men those who suspend judgment (practice epochē) and take no part in the controversy regarding the possibility of certain knowledge. He proposed the neutral position of accepting things as they appear without further analysis. Pyrrhonism profoundly influenced philosophical thought in 17th-century Europe with the republication of the Skeptical works of "Sextus" "Empiricus", who had codified Greek Skepticism about the turn of the 3rd century ce, and its force has resounded to the present day ⁽²⁴⁾.

Hypothetical Imperatives: term due to "Kant" which designates all statements of the form, "If you desire o and o, you must, should, or ought to do such and such". In such cases

the obligatoriness of the action enjoined depends on the presence in the agent of the desire mentioned ⁽²⁵⁾.

Innate Ideas: The power of understanding given in the very nature of mind. Such ideas are spoken of as a priori. Ideas which are inborn and come with the mind at birth, such as God or immortality. More generally, ideas which all men as human and rational, necessarily and universally possess ⁽²⁶⁾.

Innatism: A theory of philosophy in which ideas, or principles, are considered to be present in the mind at birth, either fully formed or requiring some additional experience for their complete formulation ⁽²⁷⁾.

Intuitionism: (1) In general: any philosophy in which intuition is appealed to as the basis of knowledge, or at least of philosophical knowledge. (2) In ethics: in the narrower traditional sense, intuitionism is view that certain actions or kinds of action may be known to be right or wrong by a direct intuition of their rightness or wrongness, without any consideration of the value of their consequences. In this sense intuitionism is opposed to utilitarian and teleological ethics, and is most recently represented by the neo-intuitionists at Oxford, H. A. Prichard, E. F. Carrigg, W. D. Ross ⁽²⁸⁾.

Freedom of Action: Freedom of Action must be carefully distinguished from Freedom of the Will. An action is said to be

free by classical compatibilists like Thomas Hobbes and David Hume if the agent is not coerced by external forces. The action may be completely determined by causal chains going back in time before the agent's birth, but they are nevertheless free in the compatibilist sense. In his essay, *Two Concepts of Liberty*, Isaiah Berlin defined freedom of action as "negative freedom," and free will as "positive freedom." It is also known as Voluntarism, in contrast to Origination. And it is the Liberty of Spontaneity rather than Liberty of Indifference⁽²⁹⁾.

Free Will: is sometimes called Freedom of Action. Libertarian Free Will includes the availability of Alternative Possibilities and the ability to Done Otherwise. John Locke encouraged the separation of the adjective free, which describes deliberation, from the (adequate) determination of the will⁽³⁰⁾.

Laws of Nature: The "Laws of Nature" are often cited in compatibilist arguments as controlling events, together with the "Fixed Past".

The idea appears often in determinist/compatibilist accounts of whether an agent could have done otherwise. "One could only have done otherwise if either the Fixed Past or the Laws of Nature had been different," goes the argument. The Fixed Past refers primarily to the obvious fact that past events are not changeable.

The usual conclusion is "There is but one possible future, and it is determined at each moment by the Fixed Past and the (deterministic (Laws of Nature".

However, the real Laws of Nature, beginning with the most fundamental laws of physics, are in-deterministic and probabilistic, reflecting the availability of alternative possibilities ⁽³¹⁾.

Modal Fallacy: The Modal Fallacy usually involves possible or contingent statements that are falsely claimed to be necessary.

For example:

This proposition is true. (contingent)

If it is true, it cannot be false. (contingent)

If it cannot be false, then it is true and necessarily true (modal fallacy).

Ted Warfield claims that his colleague Peter van Inwagen's Consequence Argument contains contingent premises that make it a modal fallacy. Warfield has reformulated a purely necessary form of the argument. Unfortunately, necessary arguments do not apply to the world ⁽³²⁾.

Ontological: is the study of real things existing in the world. A crisis in philosophy emerged when Locke and Hume, and later Kant, observed that all our knowledge comes to us through our perceptions. We cannot know the "things themselves" behind the perceptions. Moreover, our perceptions may be illusions.

The existence of real ontological chance is often denied by those who claim that randomness and probability are merely the result of human ignorance. Chance, they say is an epistemic problem, not an ontological one ⁽³³⁾.

Principle of Bivalence: The Principle of Bivalence is that for any proposition p , either p is true or p is false. It is the reason the standard argument against free will is framed as two horns of a dilemma. Either determinism is true or false.

Most philosophers do not want to give up the idea of causal determinism, so opt to be compatibilists. Bivalence is also known as “the law of the excluded middle.” There is no middle term between true and false. This becomes the basis for the idea that there is no *tertium quid* or middle between chance and necessity, perceived as logical opposites. The Principle of Bivalence is also the basis for Logical Determinism, in which the present truth of a statement implies its truth in the future ⁽³⁴⁾.

Autonomy: Autonomy, (from *auto* + *nomos*) is literally self-lawful, self-governing, or self-rule, is often used in the free will debates as an alternative to free will, freedom of choice, freedom of action, etc. Like the term authentic, autonomy suggests that we are the author of our actions, that our actions are “up to us” ⁽³⁵⁾.

Actualism: is the idea that the events that do happen are the only possible events that could possibly have happened. Actualism denies the existence of alternative possibilities ⁽³⁶⁾.

Meta-ethics: is the term used for discussion about the nature and validity of ethical statements. If an ethical statement is about what is right and wrong (good or bad, moral or immoral etc.), a meta-ethical statement is about what it means to claim

that something is right or wrong. How to define 'good' is a meta-ethical question. Possible answers:

- "x is good" means "I like x".
- "x is good" means "x agrees with my beliefs".
- "x is good" means "I think everyone should do x".
- "x is good" is a statement of fact about the world.
- "x is good" is only ever an opinion.
- "x is good" is something we just know instinctively.
- "x is good" means "x agrees with the moral rules".
- "x is good" means "x has good consequences" ⁽³⁷⁾.

Emotivism: AJ Ayer agreed with Moore that you can't get values or moral judgments from descriptions. 'Argument is possible on moral questions only if some system of values is presupposed'. Therefore to say that something is wrong is to say that I disapprove of it or that it goes against my values. In other words, "Abortion is wrong" is the same as saying "I don't like abortion". Ayer argued that moral statements are merely subjective, sentimental statements based on personal values (personal values because there is no absolute, objective value in the world – we decide what we value). Statements of fact are either logically necessary (true by definition) or observable – moral statements are neither analytically or synthetically verifiable, so there are no moral facts.

CL Stevenson said the purpose of a moral statement was to persuade someone of the rightness or wrongness of an action. 'Good' is a persuasive definition. He said that when we talk about moral issues, we express approval or disapproval. Unlike Ayer, he said moral statements were not merely expressions of emotion, but were based on deeply held beliefs. This gives a better explanation of why people disagree strongly about morality – their ideas are based on fundamental social, political or religious beliefs. However, Stevenson is an emotivist because he believes moral statements are the result of subjective opinions, views or beliefs⁽³⁸⁾.

Prescriptivism: R. M. Hare argued that moral statements weren't merely descriptive (describing our beliefs) and persuasive, he said they were prescriptive and universal. When I say "Murder is wrong", I am writing a law which I believe others should follow. Hare thinks that reason plays an important role in ethics. He agrees with Kant that moral rules should be universals, and that we should 'do unto others as you would have done unto yourself'⁽³⁹⁾.

Intuitionism: GE Moore, in *Principia Ethica* (1903) famously refuted naturalism. He said that you can't move from is to ought. In other words, any observation of how people actually behave cannot tell us about how people SHOULD behave. He called this the 'naturalistic fallacy'. Moore went on to say that 'good' is indefinable. In the same way as yellow is just, well, yellow, 'good' is not a complex term that can be broken down further, you just recognise that something is good by intuition. If 'good' was a complex idea, we could ask of it whether it was

itself good. For example, Bentham defined good as pleasure (the greatest pleasure for the greatest number). But you can ask “Is pleasure good?” Because the question makes sense, pleasure can’t mean the same as good.

H. A. Prichard said there were two kinds of thinking: reason brought together the facts about a situation, and intuition perceived the right thing to do.

WD Ross argued that moral principles can’t be absolute. He said that we have *prima facie* (at first appearance) duties: keeping promises, making up for harm done, gratitude, justice, beneficence, self-improvement and non-maleficence. Intuition identifies our *prima facie* duties, but our actions are down to our judgment⁽⁴⁰⁾.

Humanism: Any philosophic view that holds that mankind's well-being and happiness in this lifetime are primary and that the good of all humanity is the highest ethical goal. Twentieth-century humanists tend to reject all beliefs in the supernatural, relying instead on scientific methods and reason. The term is also used to refer to Renaissance thinkers, especially in the fifteenth century in Italy, who emphasized knowledge and learning not based on religious sources.

Idealism: A term applied to any philosophy holding that mind or spiritual values, rather than material things or matter, are primary in the universe. See also British idealism.

Immortality: The view that the individual soul is eternal, and thus survives the death of the body it resides in. See also transmigration of souls.

Logical positivism: A twentieth-century school founded in the 1920s in Europe that was extremely influential for American and English philosophers. It advocated the principle of verifiability, according to which all statements that could not be validated empirically were meaningless. Logical positivism held that this principle showed that all of metaphysics, religion, and ethics was incapable of being proved either true or false. See also Vienna Circle ⁽⁴¹⁾.

Marxism: The political, economic, and philosophical theories developed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the second half of the nineteenth century. The philosophical side of Marxism is called dialectical materialism; it emphasizes economic determinism. See also dialectical materialism.

Materialism: The theory that holds that the nature of the world is dependent on matter, or that matter is the only fundamental substance; thus, spirit and mind either do not exist or are manifestations of matter.

Monism: The theory that everything in the universe is composed of, or can be explained by or reduced to, one fundamental substance, energy, or force.

Dualism: Any philosophical theory holding that the universe consists of, or can only be explained by, two independent and separate forces, such as matter and spirit, the forces of good

and evil, or the supernatural and natural. See also mind-body problem.

Pluralism: The view that there are more than two kinds of fundamental, irreducible realities in the universe, or that there are many separate and independent levels of reality ⁽⁴²⁾.

Mysticism: Any philosophy whose roots are in mystical experiences, intuitions, or direct experiences of the divine. In such experiences, the mystic believes that his or her soul has temporarily achieved union with God. Mystics believe reality can be known only in this manner, not through reasoning or everyday experience.

Metaphysics: The branch of philosophy concerned with the ultimate nature of reality and existence as a whole. Metaphysics also includes the study of cosmology and philosophical theology. Aristotle produced the first "system" of metaphysics.

Neoplatonism: A school of philosophy that flourished from the second to the fifth centuries A.D. It was founded by Plotinus and was influential for the next thousand years.

Nihilism: A term first used in *Fathers and Sons* (1862) by the Russian novelist Turgenev. Ethical nihilism is the theory that morality cannot be justified in any way and that all moral values are, therefore, meaningless and irrational. Political nihilism is the social philosophy that society and its institutions are so corrupt that their complete destruction is desirable. Nihilists may, therefore, advocate violence and even terrorism

in the name of overthrowing what they believe to be a corrupt social order ⁽⁴³⁾.

Nominalism: The view that general terms, such as "table," do not refer to essences, concepts, abstract ideas, or anything else; "table" makes sense only because all tables resemble each other. According to this view, such general terms do not have any independent existence.

Objectivism: The view that there are moral truths that are valid universally and that it is wrong to knowingly gain pleasure from causing another pain.

Obligation: In ethics, a moral necessity to do a specific deed. Some ethicists, following Kant, hold that moral obligations are absolute.

Ockham's razor: A principle attributed to the fourteenth-century English philosopher William of Ockham. It states that entities should not be multiplied beyond necessity, or that one should choose the simplest explanation, the one requiring the fewest assumptions and principles.

Personalism: A term applied to any philosophy that makes personality (whether of people, God, or spirit) the supreme value or the source of reality. Personalism as a movement flourished in England and America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Personalists are usually idealists ⁽⁴⁴⁾.

Pessimism: The philosophic attitude holding that hope is unreasonable, that man is born to sorrow, and that this is the

worst of all possible worlds. Schopenhauer's philosophy is an example of extreme pessimism.

Philosophy of mind: The area of philosophy that studies the mind, consciousness, and mental functions such as thinking, intention, imagination, and emotion. It is not one specific branch of philosophy, but rather an aspect of most traditional branches, such as metaphysics, epistemology, and aesthetics.

Philosophy of religion: A branch of philosophy concerned with such questions as, What is religion? What is God? Can God's existence be proved? Is there immortality? What is the relationship between faith, reason, and revelation? Is there a divine purpose in the world?

Philosophy of science: The branch of philosophy that studies the nature of science. It is particularly concerned with the methods, concepts, and assumptions of science, as well as with analyzing scientific concepts such as space, time, cause, scientific law, and verification⁽⁴⁵⁾.

Positivism: A theory originated by French philosopher Auguste Comte. It holds that all knowledge is defined by the limits of scientific investigation; thus, philosophy must abandon any quest for knowledge of an ultimate reality or any knowledge beyond that offered by science. See also logical positivism.

Pragmatism: An American philosophy developed in the nineteenth century by Charles Sanders Peirce (1839 - 1914) and William James, and elaborated on in the twentieth century by

John Dewey. Its central precepts are that thinking is primarily a guide to action and that the truth of any idea lies in its practical consequences.

Rationalism: The philosophic approach that holds that reality is knowable by the use of reason or thinking alone, without recourse to observation or experience. See also seventeenth-century rationalists ⁽⁴⁶⁾.

Realism: The major medieval and modern view on the problem of universals other than nominalism. Extreme realism, which is close to Plato's theory of Forms, holds that universals exist independently of both particular things and the human mind; moderate realism holds that they exist as ideas in God's mind, through which He creates things.

Relativism: The precept that people's ideas of right and wrong vary considerably from place to place and time to time; therefore, there are no universally valid ethical standards.

Syllogism: A kind of deductive reasoning or argument. As defined by Aristotle, it was considered the basis of reasoning for over two thousand years. In every syllogism, there are two statements (premises) from which a conclusion follows necessarily. Syllogisms are of three basic logical types, as illustrated by these examples:

- ☒ If a broom is new, it sweeps clean; the broom is new; therefore, it sweeps clean.

- ☒ Either the horse is male or female; the horse is not female; therefore, it is male.
- ☒ All philosophers are men; all men are mortal; therefore, all philosophers are mortal ⁽⁴⁷⁾.

Absolutism: The doctrine that there is one explanation of all reality-the absolute-that is unchanging and objectively true. Absolutists (such as G. W. F. Hegel) hold that this absolute, such as God or mind, is eternal and that in it all seeming differences are reconciled.

Altruism: The ethical theory that morality consists of concern for and the active promotion of the interests of others. Altruists strongly disagree with the doctrine of egoism, which states that individuals act only in their own self-interest.

Atheism: The rejection of the belief in God. Some atheists have held that there is nothing in the world that requires a God in order to be explained. Atheism is not the same as agnosticism, which holds that we can have knowledge neither of the existence nor of the nonexistence of God.

Duty: According to many ethical theories, the basis of the virtuous life. The Stoics held that man has a duty to live virtuously and according to reason; and Kant held that his categorical imperative is the highest law of duty, no matter what the consequences ⁽⁴⁸⁾.

Existentialism: A philosophy of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The dogma holds that since there are no

universal values, man's essence is not predetermined but is based only on free choice; man is in a state of anxiety because of his realization of free will; and there is no objective truth. Major existentialists were Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Sartre, Heidegger, Karl Jaspers (1883 - 1969), and the religious existentialists Martin Buber and Gabriel Marcel (1889 - 1973).

Fatalism: The belief that "what will be will be," since all past, present, and future events have already been predetermined by God or another all-powerful force. In religion, this view may be called predestination; it holds that whether our souls go to Heaven or Hell is determined before we are born and is independent of our good deeds ⁽⁴⁹⁾.

Positivism: A theory originated by French philosopher Auguste Comte. It holds that all knowledge is defined by the limits of scientific investigation; thus, philosophy must abandon any quest for knowledge of an ultimate reality or any knowledge beyond that offered by science. See also logical positivism.

Pragmatism: An American philosophy developed in the nineteenth century by Charles Sanders Peirce (1839 - 1914) and William James, and elaborated on in the twentieth century by John Dewey. Its central precepts are that thinking is primarily a guide to action and that the truth of any idea lies in its practical consequences ⁽⁵⁰⁾.

Self-evidence: IN philosophical discussions concerning self-evidence four points are normally made. They are:

(1) Knowledge which is self-evident is eo ipso not inferential knowledge.

(2) Equally, knowledge which is self-evident is not perceptual knowledge.

(3) For a piece of knowledge which is self-evident, to entertain it as a thought is to recognise it as true.

(4) If two incompatible statements are said to express self-evident knowledge, at least one is "linguistically incorrect" ⁽⁵¹⁾.

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