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The Origin and Influence of G.E. Moore's 'The Nature of Judgment'[1]

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1 Introduction

G.E. Moore and Bertrand Russell began their philosophical careers as undergraduates at Trinity College, Cambridge in the late nineteenth century; but not as undergraduates studying Moral Science (as philosophy was then known). Moore went up to Trinity in 1892 to study Classics, and Russell, by then in his second year, was studying Mathematics. However both young men, recruited as desirable members by the select Cambridge Conversazione Society, were exposed to philosophical discussion and debate through the Society's weekly meetings. There they were introduced to various formulations of the British neo-Hegelianism that was dominant in the established philosophy of the period in the work, among others, of T.H. Green, F.H. Bradley, and B. Bosanquet. The familiar version of the story of the rise of twentieth-century analytic philosophy in the early work of Russell and Moore is that their early incursions into philosophy were cultivated in this redoubtable neo-Hegelian atmosphere. Just before the turn of the century, however, Moore published 'The Nature of Judgment',[2] whose metaphysical doctrines had the unexpected effect of up-ending the established supremacy of nineteenth-century British idealism, and introduced what we now refer to as analytic philosophy.

Russell over his long lifetime lauded not only the nature of Moore's views, but their influence on him, and on the history of philosophy, with a notable fervor:

> On fundamental questions of philosophy, my position, in all its chief features, is derived from Mr G.E. Moore. I have accepted from him the non-existential nature of propositions (except such as happen to

> assert existence) and their independence of any knowing mind; also the pluralism which regards the world, both that of existents and that of entities, as composed of an infinite number of mutually independent entities, with relations which are ultimate, and not reducible to adjectives of their terms or of the whole which these compose. Before learning these views from him, I found myself completely unable to construct any philosophy of arithmetic, whereas their acceptance brought about an immediate liberation from a large number of difficulties which I believe to be otherwise insuperable. (1903)
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> …with Moore, British philosophy returned to the kind of work in which it had been pre-eminent in former centuries. Those that are too young to remember the academic reign of German Idealism in English philosophy after T.H. Green can hardly appreciate what Moore achieved in the way of liberation from intellectual fetters. All honor and gratitude are due to him for this achievement. (1959b)

An account of the origin and influence of Moore's doctrines in 'The Nature of Judgment' gives rise to a curious scholarly puzzle, however. Moore was no mathematician; still less a logician. Yet Russell credited to him not only ~~the foundational concepts of his own logicist program,~~ ~~but~~ a 'liberation' from the dead weight of British Hegelianism that re-oriented philosophy onto a more intellectually respectable track.[3] Further, the surviving record does not make it entirely plain just how exactly Moore came by the realist doctrine of the nature of propositions and their constituents that he underscored in 1899.[4] What is plain, however, is that Moore does not appear to have absorbed them from Russell. In what follows, I will give an account of the development of Moore's views, and of this critical turning point in the history of early twentieth century philosophy.

2 The Development of Moore's Account of Judgment

We begin with some brief background to Moore's (and Russell's) work circa 1897–98. Russell had by this time conceived of the so-called 'Tiergarten Programme'[5] projected as a sweepingly inclusive dialectical account of the sciences, Bradleian and McTaggartian in spirit. Between 1896 and 1899, Russell produced a large variety of notes, drafts, and published papers[6] to make good on his Programme, including his 1895 Trinity Prize Fellowship Dissertation, *An Essay in the Foundations of Geometry* (*EFG*).[7] By the summer of 1897, Russell was rethinking

some of the aspects of his views in *EFG* (characteristically, right after he published it); reading Bradley's *Appearance and Reality*; and thinking about, among other things, dynamics.[8]

The influence of Bradleian Idealism in Moore's case, however, is more nuanced.[9] In 1897, Moore was preparing to begin work on a dissertation on Kant's ethics to submit for a Trinity Prize Fellowship. But the surviving record supports the case that there were competing motivations in his work at this time. For instance, at an Aristotelian Society symposium on the nature of Time, Moore seems to defend a position that looks indistinguishable from the unadulterated neo-Hegelianism of Bernard Bosanquet, one of his co-presenters (Moore 1897, 240):[10]

> Time must be rejected wholly, its continuity, as well as its discreteness, if we are to form an adequate notion of reality… If I need, then…to give a direct answer to our question, I would say that neither Past, Present, nor Future exists, if by existence we are to mean the ascription of full Reality and not merely existence as Appearance.

By contrast, however, in an Apostles paper delivered on January 23, 1897,[11] Moore takes what looks like a fairly different metaphysical approach. Moore wrote to his friend Desmond MacCarthy the week before to tell him of the topic:[12]

> Dickinson and McT[aggart] joined in choosing subjects here on Sat. night, and they carried 'Can we mean anything, when we don't know what we mean?' against Trevy's single vote for English superiority. The question chose is meant to bear on 'abstractions' (the one I told you I cared most for) and will be illustrated by love and goodness.

And the Apostles paper itself even gestures toward themes that were to emerge a few years later in *Principia Ethica*:

> My hope, in choosing this subject, was to have made myself clear on certain points of a chiefly philosophic interest, namely what sense 'abstracts' were real, what was the difference between the particular and the universal, and whether the universal might not be distinguishable from the general…I had better pretend to an orderly arrangement: which will be as follows: first to point out the difference between two sorts of abstracts, and then to examine what bearing the results so obtained have upon the meaning of two such simple propositions as 'I love Susan' and 'Port wine is good'.

As 1897 progressed, Moore began to work out a criticism of Kant on free will, one that ultimately rejected Kant's account of the will and its objects. Part of the problem, as Moore initially grappled with it, was his growing conviction that an apparently ineluctable feature of Kant's conception of freedom was a bothersome form of subjectivism, inconsistent with the conception of ethics Moore was determined to defend.[13] Moore and Russell saw each other at the end of June[14] where one topic seems to have been a paper of Russell's on plenal theory.[15]

This meeting is worth pausing over in the attempt to explain the 'revolution' effected upon Russell's thought by Moore's in the next few years. The significance rests on Russell's continuing attempts, at this period, to make good on the Tiergarten Programme. The dialectical transition, now that geometry was accounted for, was set to move toward physics (dynamics). But emerging contradictions in accounts of motion, matter, and space had begun to set up obstacles in Russell's work—his account of geometry, for example, had required that space be relative; but theories of matter that underpinned his account of geometry required that it be absolute. His discussion of plenal theories in 1897 was an attempt to address some tensions.[16] Although no archival material that survives refers directly to the topics under discussion at this meeting, Moore's later review of *EFG* (Moore 1899b) may contain a clue about the direction that their discussions were taking in June, 1897. In the review, Moore describes Russell's project as working to determine 'the logical relations of the most elementary constituents of space' while attempting to distinguish 'more clearly than [Kant] had done, between the *a priori* and the subjective'. Thus it is plausible that 'talk' between them in June was in the early stages of crystallising their thought on the Kantian framework, as both of them prepared to address issues raised by Kant's formulation of reason and the *a priori* (among other things).

Moore's dissertation for the 1897 Prize Fellowship competition was titled *The Metaphysical Basis of Ethics*.[17] Moore's main argument was that Kant did not succeed in coherently defending a notion of freedom of the will, because he was unable to formulate a convincing argument for the normative autonomy of the objects of Practical Reason from the will.[18] Moore's examiners, however, were nonplussed by his arguments,[19] and Moore failed to win a Fellowship. Moore occupied himself throughout 1897 by fashioning his first paper, 'Freedom', from part of his dissertation;[20] it appeared in *Mind* in 1898. Moore's later view (1942: 21) was that the paper 'was absolutely worthless' but as part of the evidence of Moore's philosophical evolution, it stands in intriguing contrast to 'The Nature of Judgment', which appeared a year later.[21] In 'The Nature

of Judgment' an explicit and novel philosophical logic made its entry onto the English-language philosophical scene, as Moore defends a metaphysics of the objects of judgment—and constituents of reality—as logically structured, mind-independent propositions. In 'Freedom', by contrast, Moore argues in more conventional nineteenth-century Idealist style, that Kant's views on freedom of the will are inconsistent with his determinism, in spite of Kant's own insistence that they are not. This stage in the evolution in Moore's work is one of the clearest pictures we have of the historical shift in philosophical perspective in the early twentieth century at Cambridge.

The shift began to gather speed through 1898. Moore and Russell both attended McTaggart's lectures on Lotze in Lent Term, taking extensive and verbatim notes.[22] In March 1898 they argued about 'whether existence means anything or not' at an Apostles Society meeting.[23] They met and discussed their work in May and June.[24] Moore complained to MacCarthy (June 19, 1898) that he had written '6 [*sic*] pages dissertation and done less work than ever'. But by August 14 Moore wrote again to MacCarthy to say:

> I have some 60 new pages finished, but it can hardly be that I shall be able to write on all the points that I intended. You may judge from the fact that all I have written so far is Metaphysics—not a word of Ethics. I have arrived at a perfectly staggering doctrine: I had never seen where my principles would lead me. An existent is nothing but a proposition: nothing is but concepts. There is my philosophy… I am pleased to believe this is the most Platonic system of modern times; though it is also not so far from Kant, as you might think at first…it had never occurred to me…that reality is in fact independent of existence.

The turning-point seems to have taken place during meetings between Moore and Russell on May 10, 1898 and June 28, 1898.[25] By July 20, Russell, who had been deep in the effort of drafting *An Analysis of Mathematical Reasoning*[26] wrote to Moore that he had finished Book I 'by skating over the difficulties and leaving them to be discussed later. I am having a typed copy sent to you'. Again, few letters or other material that survives describe the topics under discussion at these meetings, so we know very little directly except that they took place.[27] But given the shift in perspective in their work shortly thereafter, we must surmise that a significant feature of Moore and Russell's talks was the recognition that their views on the metaphysical basis of ethics and

the nature of foundational mathematical concepts and would require a precise formulation of reasoning in mathematics and ethics—a formulation, that is, of the nature of judgment. By August 1898, Moore had refined and reformulated his thinking away from judgment as an act of mind and onto the nature, instead, of the object of judgment. Moore's revisions to his 1897 dissertation (two new chapters and a reworking of the whole) were submitted to the examiners in August 1898. This time, Moore was awarded a Fellowship that would last until 1904.

Russell was, by late 1898, crediting Moore with an intellectual breakthrough of the premier order—lauding it in letters to Moore as 'your logic' and as 'to be on the level of the best philosophy I know'; describing 'a new logic' when writing to Couturat, praising Moore as 'the most subtle in pure logic'[28]— and anxious to discuss it, as well as his own evolving exertions (soon to include his book on Leibniz) in detail. The 'revolt' from Idealism was at full speed. And the key to an account of how Moore distanced himself from what looks like an early (if tepid) embrace of neo-Hegelianism for the logical realism at the core of his 1898 dissertation, as I argue below, is to be found in the intersection of a number of critical claims that play a role not only in the neo-Hegelianism of Green and Bradley, but also in the newly emerging field of scientific psychology.

3 British Philosophy in the Late Nineteenth Century: Neo-Hegelianism

As noted above, the intellectual climate in British philosophy in the late nineteenth century was dominated—at least on the face of it—by the various forms of neo-Hegelianism propounded by philosophers at Oxford and Cambridge. The emergence of analytic philosophy from Idealist roots has been examined by scholars in detail.[29] A question that lingers, however, is just how much, or how deeply, Moore's early theory of judgment can be attributed to the influence of neo-Hegelianism, Bradleian or otherwise.

For all its dominance, British neo-Hegelianism made a speedy exit from the philosophical scene once the century turned. In retrospect, however, we may argue that this was all but inevitable given the anti-psychologism that had begun to characterise developments in late-nineteenth-century logic, mathematics and psychology itself, effectively extinguishing intellectual support for neo-Hegelianism. This anti-psychologistic strain quickly developed into various forms of scientific naturalism which, among other things, became a hallmark of various

sub-disciplines in twentieth-century philosophy. As a representative of a form of metaphysical mentalism, British nineteenth-century Idealism could not hope to withstand the pressures of the rise of empirical psychology (with its scientific naturalism about the nature and objects of thought), let alone the consequences for the nature of logic itself soon to come from the logicism of Frege and Russell.

We can thus critically examine the evolution of Moore's theory of judgment by considering the most important claims of the Neo-Hegelianism of the period: (i) the inadequacy of classical empiricism to account for the nature of knowledge and reality; (ii) the nature of judgment as a unifying act of consciousness; (iii) the logical and metaphysical status of relations. What is important to note, however, is that philosophical disputes on these issues were not the exclusive territory of neo-Hegelianism. They also appear substantively in the developing views of the empirically-minded philosopher/psychologists on the continent—and at Cambridge.

T.H. Green's criticism of classical empiricism was the cornerstone of British neo-Hegelianism.[30] Green's views, formulated in reaction to the prevailing characterisation of the origins of knowledge in classical empiricism, were mainly Kantian in spirit: that human knowledge, constructed out of even the simplest experiential elements, presupposes non-experiential and non-passive elements ('formal conceptions'). For Green, experience is formulated as conscious experience, but not a passive reception of ideas. The key issue is the unity that consciousness imposes on its objects—the mind takes the disparate elements of experience and fashions them into a whole that is known or grasped. This by itself, however, will not imply Idealism, which enters the arena by way of Bradley's arguments concerning the nature of relations.

Bradley's main works in the period of his ascendancy were *The Principles of Logic* (1883) and *Appearance and Reality* (1893). Notably, however, Moore mostly credits Bradley's metaphysics in the preface to his 1897 dissertation as having had the effect of preventing him from sympathising wholly with Caird's interpretation of Kant.[31] So I would claim that that the dissertation shows that the role that Bradleianism plays in Moore's evolving metaphysics is to blunt the force of the subjectivist Idealism that featured in interpretations of Kant from British (Idealist) Kant scholars like Caird. Bradley's Absolute—which is independent of our own mental states and that to which they are directed—offered to Moore a way out of the subjective psychologism that he progressively began to argue infected Kant's metaphysics, his epistemology, and, more gravely, his ethics—but not for long.

Bradley's Absolutism begins with an argument against relations, mounted to avoid assuming them as irreducibly subjective. Bradley's metaphysics requires that Reality, though a form of consciousness, is not an individual subjective or psychological finite state. His main argument against relations is that they involve a regress: the unified character of a relation requires explanation by way of a second order relation, one that relates the relation to its relata, which will in turn need explanation by way of another relation, and so on. Instead, Bradley argues that our experiences are continuous with experiences that we do not have; which offers one way of understanding his view of relations, such as they are, as *internal*—a relation between *a* and *b* is reducible to properties held by *a* or *b*, or an aspect or attribute of a unified whole.[32]

Bradley derives his metaphysics from his logic, conceived more or less as a method of understanding reality. ~~This~~, for Bradley, like Green—and Kant—means 'unifying' or 'synthesising'. We have no cognitive or experiential access to anything save through our grasp of it; an act of mind. Logic takes as its object everything that can be grasped or known, and everything that can be grasped or known is an object of a state of mind; so logic is the study of states of mind (a recognisable vein of the psychologism in logic then prevalent; felled by Frege and Russell). That it does not follow from this that objects of mind need necessarily be themselves mental entities is something Bradley of course rejects. ~~The~~ role of mind in understanding and knowledge is a tendency toward the Absolute, a transcendent, unifying, conscious entity; and logical principles are the principles of that tendency toward unification in or with the Absolute.

For Bradley there was only one object, of thought and of reality—the Absolute. But this generates problems of the logical form of what seem like assertions about reality. In his *Principles of Logic*, Bradley provides an analysis of the logical form of judgment. Traditional subject/predicate categorical judgment purports to *relate* a predicate to the subject; but (i) the Absolute is non-relational in its essential nature; and (ii) it is not an idea, the kind of thing that can be a constituent of a judgment. For Bradley to claim that all judgments are categorical in logical form would be to make Reality into an idea (occupying the subject-place in a judgment); but even the most universal idea is not universal enough to be predicated of the Absolute. Worse, however, it would be to surrender to a conception of truth-value as separate from judgment.[33] Categorical judgments assert that the predicate term does or does not apply to the subject term, implying, at least on the face of it, that

truth-value is a relation of the constituents of judgments, independent of the constituents themselves. Bradley's well-known strategy to oppose this is to argue that the notion of a relation between distinct entities is incoherent.[34] For Bradley, nothing can condition the Absolute, the only legitimate subject of a judgment. So Bradley argues that the logical form of any judgment is not (genuinely) categorical. At best, our judgments are hypothetical proposals about reality under tacit, limiting, conditions. Given the claim that the Absolute 'transmutes' the universal ideas that constitute our judgments into a harmonious whole, our judgments about it are always incomplete. And this view supports Bradley's main metaphysical contentions that the only relations there are are 'internal'; and that the Absolute is independent of our subjective states of consciousness, even if it is a form of consciousness itself.

Bradley's contemporary, Bosanquet, does not seem to have played a significant role in the development of Moore's philosophical views; though he seems to have played a not insignificant role in the development of Moore's career as a philosopher. His comments as examiner to Moore's 1898 dissertation were hostile.[35] But Bosanquet did agree to have Moore teach his first set of lectures at the London School of Ethics in 1898, stressing in a letter inviting Moore to lunch that his opposition to Moore's position in the 1898 dissertation ~~were~~ purely philosophical.[36] Yet we know that Moore came to have reason to believe that Bosanquet was instrumental in his failure to secure a research fellowship in 1904.[37] It is possible that Bosanquet may have had a glimpse of the writing on the wall when he read Moore's dissertation and fought his corner as best he could. After all, there were, as Bosanquet was well aware, other philosophical influences very strongly at work in nineteenth-century British philosophy.

4 The Mental Sciences and the Moral Sciences in the Late Nineteenth Century

As it happens, neo-Hegelianism was not the monolithic presence at Cambridge that uncritical surveys of the period may have made it seem.[38] Though McTaggart was a steadfast neo-Hegelian, his star, at the turn of the century, was only just rising. The Cambridge moral sciences curriculum included lectures by Sidgwick on ethics and by Stout on the history of philosophy. Ward took charge, in 1896, of Moore's early incursions into philosophy, setting him assignments out of Lotze to read and to discuss every week.[39] None of these philosophers could be characterised as outright Absolute Idealists.[40] Other intellectual forces

at work on the young Moore, therefore, can explain why his initial attraction to a form of neo-Hegelianism did not entirely stick.

Something to underscore in the account of Moore's intellectual development—and which may have been largely obscured in the historical record, perhaps because his early work remained unpublished for so long[41]—is that (even) Moore's early views were driven by robustly ~~objectivist~~ intuitions about the nature of ethics. We can therefore argue that his intellectual development at this period can be seen as a path toward the discovery, formulation, and application of a metaphysics that would help to support those intuitions ~~on the basis of ethics~~. Moore was ready and willing enough to adopt aspects of the views dominant in his orbit at Cambridge—so long as he thought these would contribute substantively to his steadily sharpening convictions. Bradleian Absolutism appears to have played a brief role in providing a metaphysical foundation for an early version of Moore's ethical objectivism, by providing a non-subjective formulation of the Absolute as an object of thought. But it failed to live up to its promise, and was implacably discarded, as there were other influences that helped to give form to Moore's developing intuitions. An account of why and how Moore took the nature of judgment to be so metaphysically central at this time is thus only partly explained by his grappling with Kantian/Bradleian accounts of judgment on Idealist terms.[42]

In fact, a major line of influence was that coming from the quickly evolving shift in views about the nature of judgment in the discipline then known as mental science. Moore's 1942 acknowledgment to his teachers at Cambridge cites, of course, the influence of McTaggart and Russell, but also that of Stout, whose role in Moore's intellectual development has been somewhat obscured. Stout, though all but unread now, was a figure of some intellectual authority both at Cambridge and in British philosophy at this period, not least as editor of *Mind*, a position he held from 1892 (just before Moore arrived at Cambridge) to 1920.[43]

A key influential text was Stout's two-volume *Analytic Psychology* (*AP*)[44] in which Stout delineates what he calls 'The Scope and Method of Psychology' (1896: I, 1–37). Psychology, as Stout formulates it, 'investigates the history of individual consciousness, and this coincides with the history of the process through which the world comes to be presented in consciousness' (7). By 'consciousness' Stout, like others, meant to include 'every possible kind of experience' (19), nevertheless distinguishing a variety of states and processes within consciousness along the same lines as contemporary cognitive scientists

do, including chapters on apperception, attention, belief, comparison and conception, imagination, pleasure, and pain. Stout is sometimes held to have espoused an undiluted Brentaniansm in *AP*, but it is worth noting that he does not rely merely on Brentano to supply the criteria for the study of consciousness that he takes to be central in psychology. Stout cites various figures as influences: primarily Ward and Herbart, as well as Hodgson (a defender of the physiological process for psychology); and Kant, Bain, Sully, and Bradley (every one of whom, he claims, mainly had it all wrong).

We can thus make the case that an important element in the influence on Moore was the evolving mental science literature on the nature of consciousness, introduced by Stout (and others) as a part of the developing criticism of associationism (the 'relations of ideas' propounded by the classical empiricists). The key features in the literature that Stout takes as central concerning the nature of consciousness center on the nature and structure of the object of mental states like judgment and perception. Disputes on the nature of the object of judgment came in for a variety of treatments, as theorists struggled to formulate an account of what today we would call the representational properties of propositional attitude and perceptual content in a scientifically reputable way. Brentano, according to Stout, had proposed that the object of judgment is a form of representation (an 'intentional inexistence'), a formulation that all the same appeared, at least to Stout, to render the object of judgment (still too) psychological in nature.[45] Stout (and others) modified this view[46] by giving a complex analysis of judgment, on grounds that (i) the object may have properties that the content of my judgment about it will not have and (ii) my judgment always has content (is about something), even if what it is about does not exist.[47] Judgment, as Stout argues (1896: I, 52), is a tripartite relation between the act, its content, and its object, not to be accounted for on the Idealist model of synthesis or unifying act.[48] But Moore, significantly, does not take this tripartite distinction over in 1898. Instead, he reduces Stout's tripartite analysis of judgment down to a simple act/object distinction, but one that entirely defangs the role of the act of judgment.[49] Moore's formulation of the nature of judgment thus evolves into one whose basis is stronger than merely anti-psychologistic, in that it must support an objectivist account of the nature of ethical judgment. This is the logical realism of the nature of judgment, its constituents~~, and reality~~ that we see in 'The Nature of Judgment'.

What Stout's work clearly shows is that a formulation of the nature of judgment, directly opposed to the Idealist formulation of judgment

as an act of 'unity' or 'synthesis', had taken root in the mental science literature of the day as an especially useful way for descriptive psychologists to highlight and distinguish their accounts of the nature of mind and consciousness from those of the Idealists.[50] The decisive moment in Moore's work comes in the 1898 dissertation, in the material that was used to compose 'The Nature of Judgment' ~~from Chapters I and II.~~ Moore's criticism of Bradley on the nature of judgment introduces his own substantive account of judgment as an extra-mental entity; even the word 'judgment' itself is now jettisoned as connoting a deplorable mentalism. The metaphysical nature of judgment is accounted for entirely by way of the object of judgment. This is a proposition, a mind-and-language independent complex of constituents Moore calls 'concepts', which bear necessary relations to one another, and which themselves constitute reality ('Nothing is but concepts'). The evidence suggests that Moore adopted the formulation of objects of judgment in terms of 'propositions' from Stout; further, the evidence suggests that the influence of Bradley on Moore was as likely to have been distilled by way of Stout just as much as by McTaggart or Russell.[51] Thus, although the formulation of an object of thought as a 'proposition' was not without precedent in the mathematical and logical literature of the period, what is clear is that Moore did not get the formulation from where we might have expected him to—namely from Russell.

On reflection, however, this may not be so surprising. On June 3, 1898, in a letter to Couturat, Russell writes that he is 'preparing a work of which this question ["Wie ist reine Mathematik moglich?"[52]] could be the title, and the results will be, I think, purely Kantian'. The work, as we noted above, was *An Analysis of Mathematical Reasoning*. In what survives of a manuscript of *AMR*, we have the evidence Russell is targeting with more clarity the importance of the nature of relations for mathematics through a detailed analysis of types of mathematical judgment; but he does not adopt the expression 'proposition' in his analysis. At this (pre-Peano) period Russell had still not entirely shed his Tiergartian attachment to neo-Hegelian formulations of the nature of reasoning. *An Analysis of Mathematical Reasoning* ~~is~~ Russell's last attempt to (among other things) formulate an account of the nature of mathematical judgments and of foundational concepts of mathematics consistent with a framework that demands that all relations be internal, and that the nature of judgment is to bring synthesis or unity (identity) to diversity.[53] ~~But it is this~~ conception of judgment that Moore ~~is~~ about to reject.

Moore's resolve on the metaphysical basis of ethics and the concomitant logico-realist nature of judgment solidified in the period

between their talk on June 28, 1898 and August (when he finished the dissertation); but Russell was not entirely aware of the details. It wasn't until the dissertation was finished and delivered that Moore wrote to Russell and summarised the main new points:[54]

> …My chief discovery, which shocked me a good deal when I made it, is expressed in the form that an existent is a proposition. I see now that I might have put this more mildly. Of course by an existent must be understood an existent existent—not what exists, but that + its existence. I carefully state that a proposition is not to be understood as any thought or words, but the concepts + their relation of which we think. It is only propositions in this sense, which can be true, and from which inference can be made. Truth therefore does not depend on any relation between ideas and reality, nor even between concepts and reality, but is an inherent property of the whole formed by certain concepts <that> stand in a specific relation to the concept of existence; and I see no way of distinguishing such from what are commonly called 'existents', i.e. what exists + its existence. This explains how it should commonly be thought that a proposition can be inferred from an existent. Existents are in reality only one kind of proposition. The ultimate elements of everything that is are concepts, and a part of these, when compounded in a special way, form the existent world. With regard to the special method of composition I said nothing. There would need, I think, to be several kinds of ultimate relation between concepts—each, of course, necessary.

In reply,[55] Russell wrote 'I had been anxious to know what you felt about your dissertation when it finally went in…I shall certainly attend the [Dec. 9] lecture', and it is clear that he has not seen the final draft of the dissertation.[56] But—characteristically—Russell swiftly latches onto a key point: 'I agree most emphatically with what you say about the several kinds of necessary relations among concepts, and I think their discovery is the true business of Logic (or Meta[physics] if you like).'[57]

This remark, I would argue, captures the revolutionary essence of the effect that Moore's doctrines had on Russell. In that letter, Russell goes on to describe in detail the work he is engaged on in *AMR*:[58]

> I am really discussing all relations of a certain type. If a relation be indicated by '∩' and A and B be two terms having this relation, symmetrical relations are defined by these 2 axioms:
> (1) if A ∩ B, B ∩ A

> (2) If A ∩ B, and B ∩ C, then A ∩ C. The type is equality, or identity of content. Unsymmetical relations do not satisfy one or other of these necessarily, and never satisfy the deduction from them, A ∩ A. The first type does not always satisfy case (2); such as the diversity of content. Math[ematical] relations, however, normally satisfy case 2 but not case 1. Such are whole and part, greater and less, before and after, cause and effect…

The problem taking shape for Russell is that some types of relations were resisting analysis under the permitted Bradleian formulation of 'identity-in-diversity'. Russell's response in 1910 to a request from Philip Jourdain for a summary of the development of his early views provides more detail:[59]

> …I first read Cantor's work early in 1896; I was not then convinced that it was valid. I then worked for some time on the Principles of Dynamics…Gradually I found that most of what is philosophically important in the principles of dynamics belongs to problems in logic and arithmetic. This opinion was encouraged by my adoption of Moore's views in philosophy…Until I got hold of Peano, it had never struck me that Symbolic Logic would be any use for the principles of mathematics, because I knew the Boolian [*sic*] stuff and found it useless…I had already discovered that relations with assigned formal properties (transitiveness, etc) are the essential thing in mathematics, and Moore's philosophy led me to make relations explicit, instead of using only ε and ⊂. This hangs together with my attack on subject-predicate logic in my book on Leibniz… Peano gave just what I wanted.

It must be said that it is not obvious how what Russell calls his 'adoption of Moore's views in philosophy' could have encouraged his view that 'what is important in the principles of dynamics belongs to problems in logic and arithmetic'. The answer turns, of course, on Moore's formulation of the relations of concepts in 'The Nature of Judgment'. While Russell was working on dynamics, he was at the same time investigating the foundations of pure mathematics,[60] and became increasingly aware that the same contradictions were affecting in both areas of his work. The contradictions that affected the account of number as continuous quantity, for example, were just the same contradictions that affected space—both continuous quantity, and space, must be both infinitely divisible and yet homogenous.[61] This makes it clearer how a careful

formulation of relations needed to be worked out, and how 'Moore's philosophy led [Russell] to make relations explicit'. Moore's metaphysics of 'necessary relations among concepts'—his view that such necessary relations were independent of mind— showed that there was no need any longer to account for relations as a mental unity indistinguishable from the relata themselves. Moore's doctrines emphasised a rejection of the Idealist conception of judgment as a unifying act, and Russell swiftly adapted that rejection to the allied rejection of the conception of relations as internal. By the time he delivers 'The Classification of Relations' to the Moral Sciences Club on January 27, 1899[62] Russell, characteristically, has the bit firmly between his teeth. In this paper, Russell prefigures the logic of relations that emerges by 1900, underscoring 'the very great degree of difference which exists between relations of different kinds'. Here Russell argues, significantly, that 'relations may be between two or between more than two terms' (1899: 138) and that there are, as against Bradley's view, transitive and asymmetrical relations, which are genuine relations, but 'are not reducible to agreement or disagreement in respect of predicates, i.e. to identity or diversity of content' (1899: 139). The rebellion was firmly on its way.[63]

5 Conclusion

I have argued that the logical realism that Moore defends for the nature of judgment in 1898 can best be understood as the result of the convergence of a variety of forces in his intellectual environment. We saw above that a standard criticism in neo-Hegelian views was directed onto the notion of 'idea' in classical empiricism; even if, in Bradley's case, it was to claim that the only associations were between universal ideas, not individual subjective ideas. These criticisms, as I argued, are mirrored in the psychological literature against associationism and on the nature of consciousness. We also saw above that Bradleian Absolutism depended on a form of logical holism concerning the nature of judgment: the act of judgment is formulated as an act of synthesis or unity with its objects. This concern about the nature of judgment is mirrored in the psychological literature, as it grappled with making sense instead of a substantive distinction between an act of judgment and the (putative scientific objectivity of) its objects.

Thus we can say that Moore's work at this period can be seen as distinctively combining this variety of influences. Moore's early intellectual achievement was to join together a number of common elements in the seemingly metaphysically disparate views that surrounded him at this

period: (i) the anti-empiricism in Bradley and the anti-associationism in the psychological literature on the nature of judgment; and (ii) the anti-psychologism characteristic of Bradley's Absolute and the anti-psychologism in the work of the nineteenth-century psychologists on the nature of the objects of judgment. And not only did Moore's logical realism help in large measure to spell the end of the dominance of Hegelian Idealism in British philosophy, the shift in emphasis to the mind-independent nature of propositions ~~might have been~~ even more significant for the history of twentieth-century philosophy, for it introduced, in embryonic form, the prevailing notion of propositional content at the heart of contemporary philosophy of language, logic, and mind.[64] This emphasis on the early Moore as a (perhaps unwitting) metaphysician of content is not, of course, meant to substitute for an emphasis on the role of Moore's work in the development of twentieth-century ethics. But the story has needed more detail, as no one can claim that the philosophical evolution from Moore's dissertations to 'The Nature of Judgment' and subsequently to *Principia Ethica* is entirely perspicuous.

Principia Ethica was published in early October 1903 and had an immediate impact on Moore's circle at Cambridge, which had by now expanded to include Lytton Strachey, Leonard Woolf, and Maynard Keynes. Strachey wrote to Woolf to say (October 11, 1903):[65]

> Have you read it? The last two chapters—glory alleluiah! And the wreckage! That indeterminate heap of shattered rubbish among which one spies the utterly mangled remains of Aristotle, Jesus, Mr Bradley, Kant, Herbert Spencer, Sidgwick and McTaggart. Plato seems to be the only person who comes out even tolerably well. Poor Mill has simply gone.

It may seem an incongruity, particularly to contemporary analytic philosophers, that *Principia Ethica* should have ignited Bloomsbury's imagination as it did.[66] Bloomsberrian transports aside, however, what *Principia Ethica* did indisputably ignite was twentieth-century analytic philosophy, and, more specifically, twentieth-century ethical theory, which is incomprehensible without reference to Moore. So the greater irony, perhaps, is that Moore failed to secure a position at Cambridge after its publication.[67] When his Fellowship came to an end, Moore had no academic position. During these years he published reviews and articles, delivered papers to the Aristotelian Society,[68] and gave two sets of lectures at Morley College in 1910–11.[69] In 1911, when he was offered

a lectureship to teach either logic or psychology (after John Neville Keynes gave up the post), Moore returned to Cambridge. For the next 28 years, until his retirement in 1939, Moore lectured first on Psychology, and then on Metaphysics. He never taught Ethics.[70]

Leaving Cambridge in 1904 at what was then the height of his accomplishments did not have as much of a detrimental impact on Moore's career or his influence as might have been expected—even though, once away from Cambridge, he ceased to have quite as much close contact with the students and friends that surrounded him at Society meetings, meetings of the Moral Sciences Club, and the like. We can most likely put this down to the effect Moore was said to have on his intimates.[71] Upon his return—and in spite of the long shadows cast both by Wittgenstein's first appearance at Trinity, and Russell's apparently irksome presence[72]—Moore settled in to establish the career that has come to represent a cornerstone of analytic philosophy, in method and style. This approach to philosophy dominated Cambridge until the mid-century, and has come to govern twentieth-century philosophy, in many guises, ever since.

Notes

1. I am grateful to Tom Baldwin, Kenneth Blackwell, Nick Griffin, and Gary Ostertag for discussion. All references to Griffin 1993 are to his introduction to the *Collected Papers of Bertrand Russell*, (vol. 2, vii–xxxix). Moore's papers are archived in the Cambridge University Library Manuscripts Reading Room; I cite them by their classmark prefixes (Add. 8830 and 8875). Moore's dissertation manuscripts are archived in the Trinity College Library, and published in Baldwin and Preti 2011.
2. Moore 1899a.
3. Russell 1959a: 54. Russell considered this break with neo-Hegelianism as uniquely abrupt in his philosophical development; a 'revolution' instead of the more characteristic 'evolution' (1959a: 11). This may explain why he credited Moore so fulsomely for it.
4. Especially since Moore's two earlier published papers (1897; 1898) seem to defend recognisably Idealist positions. 'The Nature of Judgment' was pieced together from Moore's 1898 Trinity College Prize Fellowship dissertation. The surviving dissertation manuscript is missing pages from Chapters I and II, which were used by Moore in the composition of (1899a). See Baldwin and Preti 2011 for a reconstruction of the 1898 manuscript, substantiating the connections between its extant portions and 1899 in its published form. See also Baldwin 1990; Griffin 1991; Hylton 1990; Preti 2008.
5. During a walk in Berlin's Tiergarten in 1895. See Griffin (1991: 204–7; 1993). See also below, Section 5.
6. Papers published as 1–17 (144 pages of printed material) in *CPBR* vol. 2 (1993), part I (The Dialectic of the Sciences).

7. McTaggart was the conduit of Bradley's ideas at Cambridge. Russell dedicated *EFG* to McTaggart.
8. See Grattan-Guinness (1977: 132–3); Griffin, 1991; 1993.
9. And certainly Moore had not, by 1897, produced anything like the amount of work that Russell already had.
10. The other symposiast was Shadworth Hodgson (1832–1912). Though not an outright Idealist, he nevertheless espouses a subjectivism about Time in this symposium.
11. Add. 8875 12/1/11. I believe the two papers are about a month apart (the Aristotelian Society meeting will have been held in late 1896).
12. Add. 8330 2/5/4 (Jan. 18, 1897).
13. See Baldwin and Preti 2011 for details. See also Preti 2008.
14. Moore to his parents (June 30, 1897 (Add. 8330 2/1/71)).
15. 'Why do We Regard Time, But not Space, as Necessarily a Plenum?' (*CPBR*, vol. 2 (1993), 91–7). Russell wrote to Alys during its composition, 'The answer is simple, and applies to many other questions also. It is: because we are fools'. Russell goes on to claim that '…empty space is not only possible, but necessary, while empty time becomes unmeaning'. Griffin speculates that the paper was written just for the purpose of discussion with Moore (1992; 1993: 91–7).
16. Russell had also by 1897 begun to join issues in dynamics with issues in the foundations of mathematics. Griffin 1991: 198–207; 1993. See below, Section 5.
17. Moore described it to his parents as follows: 'What I have written is almost entirely taken up with Free Will, and hardly reaches the Ethics proper. I hardly expect to succeed; I should not be surprised at the very worst verdict on my work. Only, if it is thought well, of which, for all I can tell, it may' (August 26, 1897).
18. That is, Moore denies that Pure Practical Reason is coherent. See Baldwin and Preti 2011.
19. The examiners' comments are published in Baldwin and Preti 2011.
20. See Baldwin and Preti 2011 for the details of composition.
21. Even Moore was prepared to concede that *this* paper 'probably had some good in it' (1942: 21).
22. This material survives (Add. 8875 10/3/3). Copies of Russell's notes are at McMaster (RA3 Rec. Acq. 385, fos. 98–121); originals are with the Morrell papers archived at the University of Texas at Austin.
23. The paper was given by Russell, but is lost (Griffin 1992: 177–8).
24. Moore (Add. 8330 1/1/1).
25. The turning-point, that is, for *Russell*. As we will see, Moore does not seem to have been caught under the Bradleian spell quite as much as Russell was. This period also marks a turning-point in Moore's relations with Russell. (See Preti 2008–9).
26. *CPBR*, vol. 2, Part II (1993), 155–242. *AMR* represents the transition in Russell's thinking from the neo-Hegelianism of the Tiergarten Programme. It was written and abandoned in a matter of months.
27. See Griffin 1991; 1993.
28. Russell particularly refers to Moore's review of *EFG*, where he tells Couturat that he agrees with nearly all Moore's criticisms, 'which are rather severe'. Griffin 1992: 189.

29. See Baldwin 1990; Griffin 1991; and Hylton 1990.
30. See Hylton 1990 for extensive detail.
31. Perhaps impolitic, given that Caird was one of the examiners for the 1897 dissertation.
32. And in any case, relations belong to appearance, not reality.
33. And further subject to the regress argument of its own: the truth-value of a judgment would have to be thus conceived as a relation of the subject and predicate. But what makes it a relation? We need another relation to explain the relation that truth-value has to its relata. And so on.
34. It is this Bradleian analysis of judgment that had begun to stymie Russell's thinking circa 1897. The only permissible Bradleian account of relations—'identity-in-difference'— began to prove inadequate to support Russell's increasingly complex analysis of mathematical judgment. See below, Section 5.
35. Baldwin and Preti 2011.
36. (October 30, 1898; Add. 8330 8B/16/1). Probably Bosanquet's co-founder, Sidgwick, put Moore up for the job.
37. See n. 66. Bosanquet also reviewed *Principia Ethica* for *Mind* (1904), Vol. 13, 254–61; his review there does not differ appreciably in substance from his examiner's comment.
38. An important exception is Passmore 1957.
39. Most of these survive (Add. 8875 11/2/8–14).
40. In spite of Russell's characterisations. See Griffin 1991; Preti 2008.
41. And probably because he was so caustically dismissive of it (1942: 21). Moore never reprinted his early papers (they were first reprinted in 1986, nearly forty years after his death); his son Timothy, as executor, refused for years to allow publication of material like the dissertations.
42. See Preti 2008. Van der Schaar 1991; 1996 confirms the line of thought.
43. His successor as editor of *Mind*, of course, was Moore. Stout was not a member of the Apostles Society, but he took a mentoring interest in the young Moore (see Preti 2008).
44. Stout 1896. Moore does not refer to Stout directly in his dissertations, but, as Passmore 1957 notes about Lotze, credit for ideas in the late nineteenth century was very different than it is today. However, see Preti 2008 for the archival evidence that Moore was familiar with Stout's work at this period. See also Van der Schaar 1991; 1996.
45. For all that Brentano is hailed today as having bequeathed the contemporary account of representational content as intentional, Brentano himself would not have recognised the contemporary formulation as his own.
46. Stout 1896. Van der Schaar 1991; 1996 argues that Brentano's student Twardowski was more of an influence than Brentano on Stout.
47. 'We may, I think, confidently affirm that the object of thought is never a content of our finite consciousness. If the object exists at all in the sense in which the thinker refers to it, *i.e.* means or intends it, it exists independently of this consciousness…If an object is to be identified with the special modification of consciousness whereby we think it, we could never think of what does not actually exist…' Stout 1896: I, 40.
48. Note that the problem of the unity of the proposition appears to be foreshadowed in the literature at this time with respect to the role (if any) of the

unifying act of mind upon its objects. Although Moore and Russell's early theories of judgment rejected the Idealist conception of the unifying act of mind, the problem of unity reasserted itself at the level of the proposition (Russell 1903, sec. 51–5) and both Russell and Moore struggled to come to grips with it (Moore 1953). See Hylton 1984; 1990; Griffin 1985; 1991; Van der Schaar 1991).

49. There is precedent for this kind of move from Moore, which may explain why Russell later claimed (1959b) that Moore's early philosophy had an 'intellectual passion' that was missing from his later work (See above, where Moore describes it to MacCarthy as 'perfectly staggering'; and below, where he tells Russell he was 'shocked' by the formulation). His 1897 and 1898 dissertations show Moore boldly dismissing Kant's transcendental arguments as obviously and unacceptably mentalist (and worse); he does not, that is, read Kant charitably. See Baldwin and Preti 2011; See Preti 2008.
50. Stout himself refers to Johnson, who claimed that 'A proposition is simply the expression of a truth or a falsity.' Johnson, like Bolzano, argued that the truth-and-inference-bearing character of propositions was entirely independent of the act of apprehending their truth or their inferential relations. Van der Schaar 1991: 16 identifies Herbart (as early as 1808) as defending a distinction between act of judgment and object to underscore the distinction between logic and psychology. Stout himself published a two-part analysis of Herbart's psychology in *Mind* (Stout 1888).
51. Stout, for example, distinguishes acts of mind like 'belief' from 'mere presentations' in *AP* as a distinction between *understanding* a proposition and *assenting* to a proposition (1896: I, 110). Stout discusses Bradley in detail on 'the concept of mental activity' in *AP* Vol. 1, Book 2, Chapter 1 (1896: I, 165–77); also in his 1901 and 1902, collected in Stout 1930. See Van der Schaar 1991.
52. 'How is pure mathematics possible?', in Griffin 1992.
53. See Griffin 1991; 1993. Russell still had not conceived of logical form as other than subject-predicate at this juncture—that takes another few months, and emerges as he prepares his lectures on Leibniz for Lent term, 1899.
54. Moore to Russell, September 11, 1898 (McMaster Archives 710.052981). Although 'The Nature of Judgment' appeared in the April, 1899 volume of *Mind*, Moore delivered it at a meeting of the Moral Sciences Club in October, 1898; and again (as he tells Russell here) at an Aristotelian Society meeting on December 9, 1898 (these occasions will have provided the motivation to assemble the paper from parts of the 1898 dissertation). Russell was in Italy in October; we do not know if he made good on his promise to attend the December 9 lecture.
55. Russell to Moore, September 13, 1898 (Add. 8330 8R/33/8).
56. Russell didn't read it until November (Russell to Moore (December 1, 1898)), Add. 8330 8R/33/10.
57. Add. 8330 8R/33/8. On December 1, 1898 Russell wrote to Moore that he has read the dissertation, and that 'when I see you, I should like to discuss some difficulties which occur in working out your theory of Logic' (Add. 8330 8R/33/10).
58. Moore had said that he hadn't been able to look at the work yet in the previous letter.

59. Grattan-Guinness 1977: 132–3.
60. Griffin 1993.
61. As we noted above, Russell was thinking about the concept of number even in 1897. He wrote to Alys on April 6, 1897 to tell her he delivered a paper to the Aristotelian Society the day before called 'On the Relations of Number and Quantity':

    most people seemed to like it, though no one agreed with it. Moore, however, despised it. I heard…that he was going to pulverize me, but when I asked him, he said I was so muddled that it was impossible to show I was wrong…We had a long argument at the Davies' afterwards, in which he completely vanquished me as usual, but I couldn't find out how he proved his own view…

    We must regret that Russell does not tell us what Moore's view was, especially as Russell claims Moore vanquished his own argument 'as usual'.

62. If Russell did attend the Aristotelian Society meeting on December 9, 1898, where Moore read 'The Nature of Judgment', then it was on that occasion that he heard Moore's doctrines formally presented for the first time. Typically, Russell had digested them, advanced his own thinking, and prepared a detailed paper setting out his views in that direction, only a few weeks later.
63. In spite of the paradox, we should probably say.
64. This may make it clear why Ryle called 'The Nature of Judgment' 'the *De Interpretatione*' of twentieth-century philosophy (cf. Ryle1970).
65. Levy 2005: 19. The letter, however, opens with a blunt 'Christ! I have just written off a letter to the Yen [their nickname for Moore]. It *had* to be done... Nominally, of course, about his book. I hope I have managed it all right, the difficulty is of course supreme. If it doesn't come off the doom is too frightful' and ends with 'I don't know whether I shan't burn my letter to the Yen.' Strachey didn't burn it (Add. 8330 8S/44/1).
66. Russell's astringent later comments seem correct (1959b): 'Moore's ethical doctrines, were taken up and I think considerably distorted by his immediate successors at Cambridge…they noticed only what he said about intrinsic excellence, and ignored altogether the more utilitarian aspects of his doctrine. They seem also not to have noticed a certain moralistic fierceness which intrudes surprisingly in some passages in *Principia Ethica*, though not in his later work'.
67. A diary entry dated February 27, 1914 reads: 'Feel depressed. Fletcher tells me that why the older members of Council voted against my Research Fellowship [added in margin '1904'] was because of unfavorable reports from English philosophers (Bosanquet)' (Add. 8330 1/3/4).
68. See Moore 1942. One of his most well-known papers, 'The Refutation of Idealism', was also published in 1903. And although he spent a lot of time writing and revising a review of Russell's *Principles of Mathematics* (Add. 8875 15/2), it was never published.
69. Moore 1953.
70. Moore's lecture notes survive. Moore published *Ethics* in 1912 for the Home University Library, which he claimed to have liked 'better than *Principia Ethica*' (1942: 27). But this work has had nowhere near the impact of *PE*.

71. Even Strachey professed himself unequal to capturing it: 'it's quite impossible to describe anything about him in a letter—and probably out of it'; though he was warmly affectionate to Moore directly: 'Dear Moore! I hope and pray you realize how much you mean to us' (Levy 2005: 17). Russell, whose enthusiasm for Moore certainly waned after Moore returned to Cambridge in 1911, nevertheless maintained a singular (though not uncritical) loyalty to him, and consistently underscored Moore's great charm. Even Wittgenstein had a deep and lasting fondness for Moore, in spite of the quarrel that led to their estrangement in 1914.
72. Moore's diaries for this period contain meticulous detail of who sat next to whom at Hall; and of how often he 'avoided Russell' (Add. 8330 1/3/2–4).

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