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Edited by Thomas Baldwin and Consuelo Preti

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G. E. MOORE

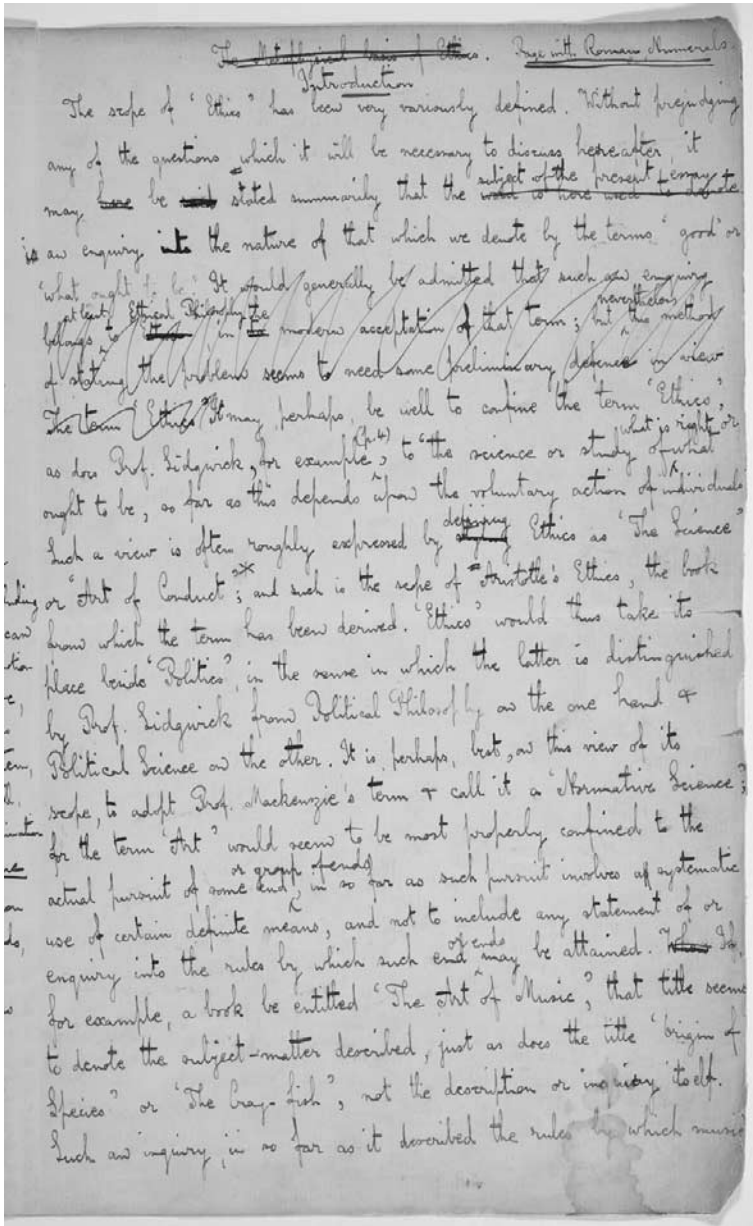
Early Philosophical Writings

G. E. Moore's fame as a philosopher rests on his ethics of love and beauty, which inspired Bloomsbury, and on his 'common sense' certainties, which challenge abstract philosophical theory. Behind these themes lies his critical engagement with Kant's idealist philosophy, which is published here for the first time. These early writings, Moore's fellowship dissertations of 1897 and 1898, show how he initiated his influential break with idealism. In 1897 his main target was Kant's ethics; but by 1898 it was the whole Kantian project of transcendental philosophy that he rejected, and the theory which he developed to replace it gave rise to the new project of philosophy as logical analysis. This edition includes comments by Moore's examiners, Henry Sidgwick, Edward Caird and Bernard Bosanquet, and in a substantial introduction the editors explore the crucial importance of the dissertations to the history of twentieth-century philosophical thought.

THOMAS BALDWIN is Professor of Philosophy at the University of York. His previous publications include *G. E. Moore* (1990), *Contemporary Philosophy: Philosophy in English since 1945* (2001) and *The Cambridge History of Philosophy 1870–1945* (Cambridge, 2003). He has also edited the revised edition of *Principia Ethica* (Cambridge, 1993) and a selection of Moore's papers, *Selected Writings* (1993).

CONSUELO PRETI is Associate Professor of Philosophy at the College of New Jersey. She is the author of *On Kripke* (2003) and *On Fodor* (2000).

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Early Philosophical Writings

EDITED AND WITH AN

INTRODUCTION BY

THOMAS BALDWIN AND CONSUELO PRETI



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Preface

About twenty-five years ago, when I was working on my book on G. E. Moore (*G. E. Moore*, Routledge, 1990), I came across the manuscripts of Moore's Fellowship dissertations which had recently been deposited in the Wren Library at Trinity College Cambridge. Realising the importance and significance of these dissertations, I formed a plan to prepare an edition of them for publication. But before this could proceed the permission of Moore's son Timothy Moore was needed, and Timothy was unwilling for this to go ahead, on the grounds that his father's reputation might be harmed by the publication of these juvenilia which his father had regarded as confused and unsatisfactory. The matter rested there until Consuelo Preti, while working recently on Moore's early papers, persuaded me to revive the plan to publish his dissertations. By this time Timothy Moore was dead and control of his literary estate had passed to Moore's grandson Peregrine Moore, who was happy to agree to the publication of his grandfather's Fellowship dissertations. We are grateful to him for agreeing to this, and we are confident that, far from being harmed, his grandfather's reputation will only be enhanced by this edition of his early philosophical writings.

In preparing this edition we have both spent a good deal of time in the Wren Library at Trinity College, and it is a pleasure to record our thanks to the Librarian, David McKitterick, and to his staff for their unfailing help and patience as we have returned again and again to check our transcripts of Moore's manuscripts. We have also made considerable use of the Moore archive at Cambridge University Library, and we are grateful for the help we have received from the staff there. At Cambridge University Press Joanna Garbutt has made valuable suggestions while helping us to prepare this book for publication and we are much indebted to her.

I am grateful to my Department at the University of York and the UK Arts and Humanities Council for the research leave in 2009 during which I worked on this volume.

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Preface

We have worked together on this volume and as well as sharing the work of preparing the edition of Moore's dissertations, we have composed our editors' introduction together. We are therefore grateful to each other for correcting our mistakes, but also happy to blame one another for the mistakes which remain.

THOMAS BALDWIN

I must acknowledge the help of many people for making the research for this volume possible, most of which took place between 2005 and 2009. I am especially grateful to the American Philosophical Society for the award of a Franklin Grant which enabled me to spend four weeks in Cambridge in 2007. Dean Susan Albertine and Dean Deborah Compton at the College of New Jersey supported my research with Dean's Mini-Grants between 2005 and 2009, for which I am very grateful. My particular thanks are due to Godfrey Waller and the staff at the Cambridge University Library Manuscripts Reading Room for their help with the Moore archives, and also to Jonathan Smith and the staff at the Wren Library, Trinity College, for their help with the Moore papers there.

In Cambridge, Bruno and Polly Kenway took me in good-naturedly for weeks at a time every year, during (among other things) Royal College of Surgeons exams, Ph.D. writing, new babies and some quite lurid degrees of illness. I could not have managed this project without their generosity, for which I am immeasurably grateful. Also in Cambridge, Francesca Stubbins provided much-needed distraction and company after the library every day (even though I was always there during her exams). At Woodhouse in Yorkshire, Liz and Jeremy Stubbins, along with Christina and Hugh, provided my weekends away from the library with a peaceful agricultural antidote, for which I am very thankful. In London, Twyla Howse (with help from Nathan and Danny) hosted me and ferried me around when I was able to get away from the library; I am very grateful to her.

I am likewise grateful to Simon Blackburn, Kenneth Blackwell, Malcolm Budd, Nick Griffin and Gary Ostertag for all their support of my work (and to Gary for German translation).

My greatest and most heartfelt debt, of course, is to Tom Baldwin, who welcomed my interest in Moore with great kindness, support and enthusiasm. His knowledge of G. E. Moore's work is unparalleled, and he has patiently answered my many questions. Tom is also indefatigably affable – even when he disagrees with me on some point of Moore

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interpretation – and I have learned much from talking with him (but not enough). I am exceedingly grateful for his generosity and his keenness to take on this project. His friendship has meant a great deal to me.

My deepest thanks finally are to Michael Esposito, for his inexhaustible supply of devotion, steadiness and encouragement; he makes everything possible.

CONSUELO PRETI

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ABBREVIATIONS

In our edition of Moore's dissertations we have retained Moore's abbreviations for the works to which he refers frequently; Kant's main works and Sidgwick's *The Methods of Ethics*, whose title he abbreviates as *ME*. Moore's references to *ME* are to the fifth edition of 1893. But the only edition readily available to present-day readers is the seventh edition of 1907 and since this turns out to differ from the fifth edition in some significant details these are noted in the footnotes; we have also noted where the seventh edition has different page numbers.

In the case of Kant's main works, Moore's abbreviations are:

R.V. for *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* (*Critique of Pure Reason*)

P.V. for *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* (*Critique of Practical Reason*)

G. for *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten* (*Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*)

M. for *Metaphysik der Sitten* (*Metaphysic of Morals*)

Moore's references are to the page numbers in Hartenstein's 1867 edition of Kant's works. This edition is unlikely to be available to contemporary readers and we have supplemented them with references to the standard Prussian Academy edition of Kant's works. In the case of the *Critique of Pure Reason* we usually just give the page number from the second 'B' edition, though where the reference is to a passage from the 'A' edition we identify it as such; in the case of the other works by Kant we give the volume and page number from the academy edition (e.g. 'AK 5: 63'). We also give a page reference to the English translations whose titles are abbreviated as follows:

GW for the translation of *Critique of Pure Reason* by Paul Guyer and Allen Wood (Cambridge University Press, 1997);

MG for the translation of Kant's *Practical Philosophy* by Mary Gregor, which includes translations of P.V., G. and M. (Cambridge University Press, 1996).

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In our editors' introduction we also employ these abbreviations; we also follow the common practice of using *PE* to abbreviate the title of Moore's *Principia Ethica*; page references are to the revised edition (ed. T. Baldwin, Cambridge University Press, 1993). When providing cross-references within his own theses Moore left the page numbers blank, as he did not have the numbers of his final typescript. Here these have been completed with the page references of the present edition.

NOTES

In our edition of Moore's dissertations we use a dual system of footnotes in order to distinguish Moore's notes from our own. Moore's notes are identified by lower case roman letters on a page-by-page basis, with editorial comments in square brackets; our own notes are identified by arabic numerals which run sequentially throughout each dissertation.

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I MOORE ON HIS DISSERTATIONS

In this volume we publish, for the first time, G. E. Moore's 1897 and 1898 Trinity College Prize Fellowship dissertations. The most noteworthy of his early philosophical writings, the dissertations represent a significant stage in the history and development of Moore's early thought, a stage that culminated with the publication of his 1903 *Principia Ethica*. In the autobiographical introduction to *The Philosophy of G. E. Moore* Moore gives a brief account of his 'Two years working for a Fellowship: 1896–1898' (Moore 1942, 20–2):

I did well enough in the Moral Sciences Tripos to make my advisers think it worth while that I should compete in Philosophy in the annual Fellowship examination at Trinity. In order to compete, it was necessary to submit a dissertation; and, after consulting Ward, I decided to try to write one on Kant's Ethics. Accordingly for the next two years, 1896–1898, I was engaged in trying to do this; and, of course, a great deal of my time was spent in puzzling over Kant's three *Critiques*, his *Prolegomena*, and his *Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten*.

During the first of these two years the part of Kant's ethical doctrines with which I was chiefly concerned was some of the things he said about freedom. He seemed to me to say or imply that each of us had two 'selves' or 'Egos,' one of which he called a 'noumenal' self, the other an 'empirical' self, and he seemed also to say or imply that the 'noumenal' self was free, whereas the 'empirical' self was not; and what I wrote during this first year can, I think, be described as, in the main, an attempt to make sense of these extremely mysterious assertions. I found something which seemed to me at the time to give them an intelligible meaning, but I have no doubt that the meaning I found was as far as or further from anything which Kant actually meant, as was McTaggart's interpretation of Hegel's 'absolute Idea' from anything which Hegel meant. The substance of what I wrote on this topic was published shortly afterwards as an article in *Mind*, entitled 'Freedom;' and, though I have not looked at that article for a long time, I have no doubt that it was absolutely worthless. I expect that Sidgwick, who was the representative of Philosophy among the Fellowship electors in that year (1897),

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must have felt about my dissertation much the same as he is said to have felt about the dissertation on Hegel by which McTaggart won his fellowship a few years earlier. Sidgwick is reported to have said about McTaggart's dissertation (and I believe this is authentic): 'I can see that this is nonsense, but what I want to know is whether it is the right kind of nonsense.' I think he must have decided about my nonsense, as he had decided about McTaggart's, that it was the right kind; for, though I was not elected that year, Ward told me that in the next year (1898), when he had taken Sidgwick's place on the Board of Electors, Sidgwick spoke to him just before the final meeting of the Electors and warned him that he must be careful not ruin my chances of election by failing to speak sufficiently favourably of my work.

In the second year's work (1897–98) I got on to what I think was a much more profitable line of inquiry, though one which had a much less direct connection with Kant's Ethics – had, indeed, a more direct connection with the *Critique of Pure Reason* than with the *Critique of Practical Reason*. It seemed to me that it was extremely difficult to see clearly what Kant meant by 'Reason.' This was a term which occurred not only in the title of both these works, but also frequently in the text, and, as it seemed to me, in a very mystifying manner. What on earth did Kant mean by it? He must be referring, more or less directly, to something which was to be found in the world, and which could be described in other terms. But to what exactly? This was what I set myself to think about; and it led me to think first about the notion of 'truth,' since it seemed to me that, in some of its uses at all events, Kant's term 'Reason' involved a reference to the notion of 'truth;' and, in thinking about truth, I was led to take as my text a passage from the beginning of Bradley's *Logic*, in which after saying that 'Truth and falsehood depend on the relation of our ideas to reality,' he goes on to say that the 'meaning' of an idea consists in a part of its content 'cut off, fixed by the mind, and considered apart from the existence' of the idea in question. It seemed to me, if I remember right, that the meaning of an idea was not anything 'cut off' from it, but something wholly independent of mind. I tried to argue for this position, and this was the beginning, I think, of certain tendencies in me which have led some people to call me a 'Realist,' and was also the beginning of a breakaway from belief in Bradley's philosophy, of which, up till about then, both Russell and I had, following McTaggart, been enthusiastic admirers. I remember McTaggart once saying of an occasion when he met Bradley at Oxford that, when Bradley came in, he felt 'as if a Platonic Idea had walked into the room.'

I added what I had written this year about 'reason' and 'ideas' as a concluding chapter to what I had written the year before, and submitted the whole at the Fellowship Examination in 1898. This time I was elected. The substance of the new chapter was published soon afterwards in *Mind* under the title of 'The Nature of Judgment;' and though I am sure that article must have been full of confusions, I think there was probably some good in it.

Ward, although he had secured my election to a Fellowship, was not very happy about me. When I went to see him after the election, he told me he thought I was too sceptical, and that I seemed to take a pride and pleasure in picking

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holes in accepted views; this he did not like, and he compared me in that respect to Hume.

II EARLY LIFE

George Edward Moore was born in November 1873 into a comfortably prosperous middle-class family. He was the fourth of seven children of Dr Daniel Moore and his wife Henrietta,¹ and named for his paternal grandfather.² Moore's father had retired from his medical practice two years before Moore was born to live in a suburb of London not far from Dulwich College, in order to send his boys to school there. The family was close – the great majority of the letters in the Moore archive comprise letters between Moore and his parents, sisters and brothers.

Moore was sent to school at Dulwich College from 1882 until 1892.³ Moore's studies at Dulwich, particularly in the last six of his schoolboy years, mainly centred on translation of English prose and verse into Greek and Latin, with 'very few hours per week being given to French and German and to some mathematics . . .' (Moore 1942, 5–6). In spite of this Moore was not prepared to deny that he had received a good education at Dulwich, averring that the translation of so much English literature exposed him to qualities of the language that he would not otherwise have had the opportunity to appreciate (Moore 1942, 6). When Moore was ten years old he and his brother Tom, along with two of their friends (also brothers), formed what they called the 'Boomerang Club', which they kept up for a few years thereafter. The future editor of *Mind* and his friends produced a club journal, whose issues each contained a contents page, editorial, articles, poems, reports of sporting events, jokes, letters and reviews. As a young man, Moore continued the practice of keeping accounts of his activities;⁴ and the close companionship of a trusted group of friends remained a key feature of his days as an undergraduate and Fellow.

¹ Dr Moore had had a daughter by his first wife, so there were eight children in the Moore family.

² Moore much disliked his given name, and called himself 'Bill' in the company of his own wife and sons.

³ Former scholars of Dulwich are known as Old Alleynians, after the founder of the school, Edward Alleyn. Dulwich College today describes Moore as one of its 'Eminent Old Alleynians', and (curiously) as the author of *Ethics* (1912) . . . a key work which pointed out that moral philosophers, and particularly utilitarians, were logically confused.

⁴ These mainly take the form of lists that record events from his arrival in Cambridge in 1892 and continue up to 1913. Moore did keep diaries but seems to have destroyed most of them. Those that survive record events in 1908, 1909–16 and 1924. There are some supplementary diaries/notebooks from 1909 to 1928 and extracts from diaries from 1929 to 1939. The content of the surviving diaries makes it difficult to avoid the supposition that Moore preserved (just) the ones that mentioned Wittgenstein.

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In October 1892, following his brother Henry, Moore arrived at Trinity College Cambridge to study classics. Moore described his first two years' work for part 1 of the Classics Tripos as consisting of nothing in which he was not already proficient, given the intensity of the schooling in classics he had received at Dulwich (Moore 1942, 5). But in his first and second years at Trinity, Moore began to get to know the young men who would have the greatest impact on him, personally and intellectually. One of Moore's classics tutors at Trinity, A. W. Verrall, had himself been at Dulwich College. Verrall had been tipped off by the masters at Dulwich of Moore's promise and, as a member of the selective and covert Cambridge Conversazione Society – the Apostles – he was among those who recommended Moore for membership.⁵

The society was the defining intellectual experience of Moore's undergraduate life. Never more than a handful of active members at any time (usually twelve, mostly drawn from Trinity and King's College), the group met every Saturday evening in the rooms of a member. Someone would present a paper on a topic; debate would ensue; and a vote would be taken at the end on a question that was only sometimes directly related to the subject of the paper. The members of the society in 1894 included Russell, McTaggart, the Davies brothers, Theodore and Crompton, Robert Trevelyan, Ralph Wedgwood, Edward Marsh and Charles Sanger; a few years later, the society elected George Trevelyan, Desmond MacCarthy and Alfred Ainsworth. These were, and mostly remained, Moore's closest friends.⁶

Moore's aptitude for argument, which surfaced early on, was what caught the attention of notable Apostles (like Russell) – he was considered as quite ferocious in philosophical discussions, at least in the company of close friends. In letters to his parents in 1893 Moore describes meetings with McTaggart, 'a fellow at Trinity for metaphysics, who is very interesting' who 'spent nearly an hour in trying to explain to me the metaphysical aspect of "time"'. Arguing forcefully with McTaggart about the nature of time was later described by Moore as an early experience of the appeal of

⁵ Such was Moore's regard for the clandestine nature of the society that he only obliquely mentions the influence of 'friends' (whose conversation was nevertheless characterised as brilliant) in his autobiography (Moore 1942, 12). In late 1898 he seems to have gone so far as to scold Russell for a lapse in discretion about the society; Russell replies 'It is not very unwise to write about the Society on a p[ost] c[ard]; none but the porters would read it and none but the initiates would understand it. However, it is perhaps better to avoid it' (Griffin 1991, 186). It is not clear that the society was as secret as its members thought it was.

⁶ See Levy (1979) for details on the Apostles' Society and its members during Moore's time at Cambridge. Moore was particularly close to MacCarthy and Ainsworth (who married one of Moore's sisters).

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philosophy.⁷ McTaggart himself was an Apostle, and Moore was elected to the society on 10 February 1894. His first contribution at a meeting, a week later, was an objection to a point of Russell's on the question posed for the evening, 'What ought Cambridge to give?' Russell had argued that the end result of a Cambridge education was young men unfit for practical life, as a result of the profound scepticism produced in them. Moore instead countered that 'we should . . . spread scepticism until at last everybody knows that we can know absolutely nothing'. Moore's manner, perhaps more than his inaugural remarks, prompted Russell to write to his wife Alys that 'the scene was so perfectly wonderful and unprecedented that I would give anything to be able to describe it adequately', managing none the less to paint a picture of Moore as having 'electrified' the assembly, who had 'never realized what fearless intellect pure and unadulterated really means'.⁸ Moore went on to deliver his first paper to the society later that year, entitled 'What end?'⁹ This, Moore's earliest licensed incursion into philosophy proper, is a discussion of hedonism, a subject Moore was to revisit in his Trinity Prize Fellowship dissertations and develop further in *Principia Ethica*.

In 1894 Russell had successfully achieved a first-class result in part II of the Moral Sciences Tripos after only a year's study, having already achieved a first-class result in part II of the Mathematics Tripos in 1893. Russell encouraged Moore to do something similar after he had completed part I of the Classics Tripos in 1894, as did Moore's teachers Jackson, Ward and Verrall. So instead of just sticking with the Classics Tripos and qualifying himself thereby for the career as a classics teacher in a public school he had initially envisaged (Moore 1942, 13), Moore took their advice;¹⁰ and

⁷ Add. MS 8330 2/1/16 (18 March 1893). Moore later accords to McTaggart almost as much credit for philosophical influence as he does to Russell (Moore 1942, 18) – in particular for what has become the hallmark of Moore's own style, 'trying to give a precise meaning to philosophical expressions, on asking the question "What does this mean?"' An interesting point about Moore's philosophical development arises, however, in his retelling of his first meeting with McTaggart (Moore 1942, 14). Moore there claims that upon hearing McTaggart express 'his well-known view that Time is unreal' he was sufficiently moved to argue against it, given that 'this must have seemed to me then (as it still does) a perfectly monstrous proposition'. But Moore's first publication was part of a symposium on the nature of time (Moore 1897), in the course of which he seems to find the doctrine of the unreality of time less 'monstrous' than he later claims he did.

⁸ Bertrand Russell to Alys Pearsall Smith, 18 February, 1894. Moore's own recollection of these discussions, characteristically, takes a more diffident line: 'I felt (and was) extremely crude compared to them; and did not feel able to make any contributions to the discussion which would bear comparison with those which they were making. I felt greatly flattered, and rather surprised, that they seemed to think me worthy of associating with them' (Moore 1942, 12–13).

⁹ Add. MS 8775 12/1/1.

¹⁰ Moore wrote to his parents to tell them of his decision on 11 June 1894 (Add. MS 8330 2/1/33).

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from 1894 until 1896 he combined his studies for part II of the Classics Tripos with further study for part II of the Moral Sciences Tripos. In preparation for the Moral Sciences Tripos, Moore attended lectures by Stout (history of philosophy, 1894) and Sidgwick (ethical systems, 1894), as well as McTaggart's lectures on Hegel (1895–6),¹¹ and he successfully passed the Moral Sciences part II Tripos exams in May, 1896 (first class, with distinction, though he only achieved a second-class result in part II of the Classics Tripos). Committed now to philosophy, Moore's thoughts turned towards submitting a dissertation in the hope of winning a Trinity Prize Fellowship.

III THE TRINITY COLLEGE PRIZE FELLOWSHIP COMPETITION

Moore submitted his dissertations in the hope that he would be elected to a Prize Fellowship at Trinity College Cambridge, and he was successful in this attempt in 1898, having been unsuccessful the previous year. These Prize Fellowships were immensely valuable positions for those who aspired to enter an academic career. At this time there were no postgraduate programmes or degrees in Britain even though they were already well established in Germany and had been introduced into the USA (the Ph.D. degree was first introduced as a postgraduate research degree, as opposed to an honorary award, in Britain in 1917). Since those British students who aspired to an academic career still needed a way of becoming qualified for such a career after the completion of an undergraduate degree, the Prize Fellowships offered by Oxford and Cambridge colleges provided one of the main ways of achieving this, even though these Fellowships were typically available only to students of the colleges providing them. Among these Fellowships those at Trinity were among the most valuable and prestigious: a Trinity Prize Fellowship lasted for six years, provided free board and lodging in college, and included an annual 'dividend' of £200 (which would be worth about £16,000 today if one inflates by relative prices of goods).¹²

In aspiring to become a Prize Fellow, Moore was attempting to follow in the footsteps of his friends McTaggart and Russell. McTaggart had achieved first-class honours in part II of the Moral Sciences Tripos in 1888, and in 1891 he was elected to a Prize Fellowship at Trinity; his dissertation formed the basis of his book *Studies in the Hegelian Dialectic* (McTaggart 1896).

¹¹ Moore's lecture notes survive (Add. MS 8775, 10/1/1; 10/2/1; 10/3/1).

¹² £200 then would be worth about £85,000 today if one inflates by average earnings. Perhaps this tells us something about the relative decline in academic salaries.

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So McTaggart was already a Prize Fellow when Moore met him in 1893. In 1897, when his Prize Fellowship ended and Moore first competed for a Prize Fellowship, McTaggart was appointed a lecturer in moral sciences at Trinity College; so for him the Prize Fellowship precisely enabled him to make the transition from undergraduate studies to an academic career. Russell's progress was initially similar: having achieved first-class honours in part II of the Moral Sciences Tripos in 1894 he was awarded a Prize Fellowship at Trinity in 1895; his dissertation formed the basis of his book *An Essay on the Foundations of Geometry* (Russell 1897). So Russell was an undergraduate when Moore met him during his first year at Trinity, but had become a Prize Fellow by the time Moore was starting his third year. Unlike McTaggart Russell did not become a college lecturer when his Prize Fellowship ended in 1901. He had a substantial private income and following his discovery of his 'paradox' in 1901, he was in a position to undertake his ground-breaking research into the foundations of mathematics without any teaching duties. But in 1910, when his private income was becoming depleted, he did accept an invitation to become a college lecturer in mathematics at Trinity College; he was deprived of this position in 1916 because of his opposition to the war.

Whereas McTaggart took three years between his graduation in 1888 and his election to a Fellowship in 1891, Russell achieved the same result in one year. Moore attempted to match Russell's achievement: he graduated in 1896 and entered the competition in 1897. But, as Moore himself acknowledged, his 1897 dissertation is incomplete. Hence although these points are not mentioned explicitly in the examiners' reports by Sidgwick and Caird, it is easy to imagine the 1897 Trinity electors thinking that the award of one of their valuable Prize Fellowships to Moore just one year after his graduation would be premature. It may also be that preference was given to some candidates who had been turned down the year before and for whom the 1897 competition was their last chance of election to Fellowships.¹³ One year later, however, Moore's new dissertation was more polished and more original and, despite Bosanquet's negative report on it (see VII below), this time Moore was successful. As Moore's account indicates (see I above), for this success Moore was primarily dependent on Ward's support, even though, as Moore also indicates, Ward did not in fact much like the work.

¹³ Russell wrote to Moore from Venice on 19 October 1897 to say: 'I am sorry to see from "Nature" – the only English paper I get – that you did not, apparently, get your Fellowship at this shot. However, as Fletcher and Lawrence were both at their last chance, I suppose they could not be passed by' (Add. MS 8330 8R/33/3).

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Moore's election to a Prize Fellowship did not in fact depend wholly on the assessment of his dissertation. The 1896 edition of the Trinity College 'Ordinances concerning Fellowships and the Fellowship Examination' includes the following clauses:¹⁴

7. Candidates may be examined in the subjects of their dissertations and in matters connected with them as well as in the branches of study to which they refer, but the questions set in the examination will not be confined necessarily to the subjects indicated by the candidates.

8. Every Candidate is expected to take the questions on Modern Philosophy in both the Philosophy papers, and also the paper on English Essays. Any Candidate may send to the Secretary of the Council not later than July 31 preceding the examination a list of works on Modern Philosophy upon which he wishes to be examined, but the questions will not be confined necessarily to these works.

...

10. Every candidate in the Moral Sciences is expected to take the questions on Ancient Philosophy.

In accordance with clause 8 here Moore did indeed send a list of works on which he wished to be examined, namely parts of Kant's major works:¹⁵

Trinity College
July 31st, 1897

Dear Sir

In accordance with Regulation 8 of the Fellowship Regulations issued to candidates, I wish to give notice that I should prefer to be examined in the following works on Modern Philosophy.

Kant's works on the Principles of Morals: namely all those translated by T. R. Abbott (Longmans 1889), including the 'Grundlegung zur Metaphysik der Sitten'; the 'Kritik der Praktischen Vernunft'; out of the 'Metaphysik der Sitten' Part I, the 'Einleitung in die Metaphysik der Sitten', and out of Part II the 'Vorrede' and 'Einleitung zur Origenlehre'; and the 'Erstes Stuck', of the 'Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft'; and also out of the 'Kritik der Reinen Vernunft', the section in the 'Dialectik' on the 'Auflösung der kosmologischen Idee von der Totalität der Ableitung der Weltbegebenheiten aus ihren Ursachen', and in the 'Methodenlehre' on the 'Kanon der reinen Vernunft'.

yours sincerely
G. E. Moore

No similar letter survives with a request concerning the works on which he is to be examined in 1898. But in a letter to Russell of September

¹⁴ There do not appear to be new editions for 1897 and 1898. So it is reasonable to assume that Moore's attempts to gain a Fellowship were governed by the rules specified in the 1896 edition.

¹⁵ The letter is bundled in with the dissertation manuscripts at Trinity College.

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1898 Moore writes 'I must begin to stir again now, doing Classics for the exam', where the 'exam' in question is presumably that for the Prize Fellowship competition and the 'Classics' questions arise from clause 10 of the ordinances.

Moore's period as a Prize Fellow of Trinity College lasted from 1898 until 1904. Moore records that soon after his election Sidgwick, slightly surprisingly, advised him 'to spend a year or two at some German university' (Moore 1942, 17). Moore did not take this advice, although he had earlier followed Ward's advice and spent the summer of 1895 in Tübingen. One can speculate whether Moore's philosophical development would have been different had he taken Sidgwick's advice; Moore himself comments 'I still feel very doubtful whether I should have got as much benefit by studying in Germany as I did from staying at home'. And there is no question but that Moore did use the six years of his Prize Fellowship in a very productive way.

IV SIX YEARS AS A PRIZE FELLOW: 1898–1904

Moore's list called 'Chronological Table of My Life' contains an underlined entry for October 1898: 'Become a Fellow'. In one way the life of the scholar suited Moore down to the ground – he had, he recalls, 'a set of Fellows' rooms on the north side of Neville's Court – a very pleasant place and a very pleasant life' (Moore 1942, 23). But Moore's letters to friends and family during this time indicate that he worried all the time about the difficulty of getting on with his work. He even later claimed that had it not been for the stimulus of requests from the Aristotelian Society for papers for symposia, which he felt he could not refuse, he would have published much less than he did (Moore 1942, 24).

In fact Moore was already engaged on writing a series of entries for two volumes of J. M. Baldwin's *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology* (Baldwin 1902).¹⁶ More importantly he had also already accepted a commitment to provide some lectures for the London School of Ethics and Social Philosophy, an institution founded by Bosanquet and Sidgwick to provide the working men of London with an opportunity for some university-level instruction.¹⁷ Moore provided two courses of lectures, one in the autumn of 1898 on the 'Elements of Ethics' and the other in spring 1899 on 'Kant's

¹⁶ He contributed the entries in volume 1 on 'Cause and effect' and 'Change'; and in volume 11 the entries on 'Nativism', 'Quality', 'Real', 'Reason', 'Relativity of Knowledge', 'Relative and Absolute', 'Substance and Essence', 'Spirit', 'Teleology', and 'Truth and error'.

¹⁷ See Regan (1991) for a description of the London School of Ethics and Social Philosophy and for the text of the 1898 lectures.

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Moral Philosophy'. Each course was ten lectures long and Moore went to London every Thursday to deliver his lecture. Moore had the text of the autumn lectures typed up with a view to preparing them for publication;¹⁸ significantly perhaps, Moore did not take the same attitude to the text of his 1899 lectures.¹⁹

Complaints to his parents and others notwithstanding, during the period of his Fellowship Moore in fact produced nine papers, including the influential paper in which he set out his critical response to idealism, 'The Refutation of Idealism' (Moore 1903b). Crucially, too, the Fellowship enabled him to complete his single most important book, *Principia Ethica* (Moore 1903a). This evolved out of the 1898 London lectures on the 'Elements of Ethics' which Moore had had typed up. In 1902 Moore submitted a revised version of these lectures to Cambridge University Press for publication. In reply Moore received a letter from Sorley, who told Moore that 'he was responsible for the Syndics' decision' to accept the lectures for publication, but then provided a list of criticisms to which Moore was expected to respond. Moore struggled at times over the revisions Sorley had requested, but eventually produced his masterpiece which was published in October 1903.²⁰

In retrospect Moore was characteristically doubtful about the value of his work during this period. In the preface that he wrote in 1922 for the second edition of *Principia Ethica*, but which he did not in the end publish, he wrote, concerning *Principia Ethica*, 'I now see that this book, as it stands, is full of mistakes and confusions' (Moore 1993a, 2); and the only paper from this period which he included in his 1922 collection of his papers *Philosophical Studies* was 'The Refutation of Idealism', concerning which he commented 'This paper now appears to me to be very confused, as well as to embody a good many down-right mistakes' (Moore 1922, viii).

Moore himself was not, however, best placed to appreciate the value of his own work during this period. For by 1922 he had changed his general approach to philosophy, increasingly emphasising the importance of philosophical analysis and the 'Common Sense view of the world'. That perspective is not, however, the appropriate one for an appreciation of the

¹⁸ Two typescripts of the 1898 lectures survive in the Moore archive in Cambridge University Library (Add. MS 8875 14/1/1 and 14/1/2). Typescript 14/1/1 contains over 300 marginal comments, some in Moore's hand, some in Russell's and some in what we believe is Sorley's, who read the typescript for Cambridge University Press and corresponded with Moore about it.

¹⁹ Moore kept his notes for these lectures and they are now in the Moore archive in Cambridge University Library (Add. MS 8875 14/2/1).

²⁰ See Baldwin (1993) for details of the relationship between 'The Elements of Ethics' and *Principia Ethica*.

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value of his early work and the two dissertations which initiate it. Instead, the value of this work lies in the ways in which, starting from the idealist standpoint of the 1897 dissertation, he thinks his way, via the 1898 dissertation, to the analytical realism of *Principia Ethica* and 'The Refutation of Idealism'. Moore himself, once immersed in his distinctive analysis of common sense, did not recognise his own achievement; but in the context of contemporary inquiries into the origins of analytic philosophy, the contribution made by Moore's early work is obvious.

In 1904 Moore's Prize Fellowship came to an end. Given that McTaggart was well established as a college lecturer in moral sciences at Trinity, there was no opportunity for him to make a similar transition to a college lectureship, since the college did not need two lecturers in moral sciences. Instead Moore applied to have his Fellowship continued as a Research Fellowship. This application was not successful; in his autobiography Moore comments 'election to a Research Fellowship was, and still is a very rare and exceptional thing at Trinity, and I was not surprised that my application was refused' (Moore 1942, 25).²¹ It appears that the college had again consulted Bosanquet about this application and that his advice was again negative;²² but it is likely that Ward's opinion will have been crucial since Russell had by now left Trinity and even though Moore may have had McTaggart's support, Ward was the senior philosopher at Trinity.

At this juncture, therefore, Moore might have had to fall back after all on the option of taking a position as a classics teacher in a public school. But he was saved from this fate by the fact that, following the recent death of his parents, he had obtained an inheritance which enabled him 'to live in moderate comfort without needing to earn anything', so that he could 'go on working at philosophy, which was what I wanted to do, without a Fellowship and without needing to try to obtain any paid employment' (Moore 1942, 26).

Moore did, however, leave Cambridge at this time, moving first to Edinburgh and then in 1908 to London where he shared a house with his sister Hettie. During these years he continued to publish reviews and articles, delivered papers to the Aristotelian Society and gave an important series of lectures on 'Some Main Problems of Philosophy' at Morley College, London, in 1910–11.²³ In 1911 he was offered, and accepted, a lectureship

²¹ One person who was later awarded a Research Fellowship at Trinity was Wittgenstein, partly through Moore's strong support for his application.

²² A diary entry dated 27 February 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 unfavourable reports from English philosophers (Bosanquet)' (Add. MS 8330 1/3/4).

²³ These lectures were published in 1953 – see Moore (1953).

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at Cambridge after the resignation of J. N. Keynes. For the next twenty-eight years until his retirement in 1939 he lectured at Cambridge, first on psychology, and subsequently on metaphysics (but never on ethics).²⁴ He quickly re-established himself there, and in 1925 he succeeded Ward as Professor of Philosophy. His tenure of this professorship spans the golden period of Cambridge philosophy when a succession of visitors from abroad came to study with him and Wittgenstein, who returned to Cambridge in 1929. Moore did not publish much during these years, but he exercised his influence through his friendships, lectures, the meetings of the Moral Sciences Club and his role as editor of *Mind* (which he edited from 1921 until 1945).²⁵

V INTELLECTUAL BACKGROUND

The story of the rise of analytic philosophy has long emphasised the dominance of idealist philosophy in nineteenth-century Oxford and Cambridge, and the 'rebellion' of Moore and Russell from its central doctrines.²⁶ A key element in that story is Russell's credit to Moore for having rescued him from its stifling effects:

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 those compose. Before learning these views from him, I found myself completely unable to construct any philosophy of arithmetic . . . (Russell 1903, xviii)

But it was not only these rather dry, logical, doctrines that made me rejoice in the new philosophy. I felt it, in fact, as a great liberation, as if I had escaped from a hot-house on to a wind-swept headland. (Russell 1959, 61)

However, partly due to the uncritical acceptance of Russell's own descriptions, some of the details of this story remain unexplored. In his early writings Russell certainly accepted the framework assumptions of the neo-Hegelian metaphysics he had learnt from McTaggart. And Moore cites

²⁴ Moore kept his lecture notes and they are now preserved in the Moore archive in Cambridge University Library.

²⁵ Moore's undogmatic openness in discussion is affectionately described by Gilbert Ryle in his memoir of Moore: 'G. E. Moore' in Ryle (1971).

²⁶ See Hylton (1990) and Griffin (1991) for detail.

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Bradley – and no one else – as an influence in the preface to his 1897 dissertation: ‘It is to Mr. Bradley’s “Principles of Logic” and “Appearance and Reality” (2nd. edn. 1897) that I chiefly owe my conception of the fundamental problem of Metaphysics’ (1897 dissertation, p. 4). But the story here is not simply one of the dominant influence of idealist philosophy on Russell and Moore. Idealist philosophy itself was not a unified doctrine, and an important aspect of Moore’s acknowledgement to Bradley is that he credits Bradley’s metaphysics with preventing him from accepting Caird’s neo-Kantian idealism. Thus at this stage Bradley’s Absolute, which transcends not only our own consciousness, but consciousness generally, provided Moore with a way of avoiding the subjective idealism that he held had infected Kant’s ethics and metaphysics. Furthermore a fuller picture of the rise of analytic philosophy will link Moore’s early philosophical development to other intellectual developments in the late nineteenth century, in particular to the rise of ‘mental science’, i.e. scientific psychology. For an important aspect of the way in which Moore became equipped to distance himself from his early embrace of Bradley’s idealism in 1897 to the realism at the core of his 1898 dissertation is to be found in his reaction to this newly emerging field of scientific psychology. Finally, it is also important to take account of the influence on Moore’s still developing ethical theory of his teacher, Henry Sidgwick, who remained a powerful critic of idealist ethics.²⁷

V.I BRITISH IDEALISM

In order to understand the connections between Moore’s early philosophy and the idealist philosophy of the period it is sensible to start with a brief account of T. H. Green’s neo-Kantian metaphysics since this sets the scene for Bradley’s metaphysics which, as we have observed, initially provided Moore with his philosophical framework.²⁸

T. H. Green (1836–82) died at the age of forty-five when he was at the height of his powers and influence. His most important work, *Prolegomena to Ethics* (Green 1883), was nearly complete at his death; among his earlier works the most significant was the long introduction he wrote for the 1874 edition of Hume’s *Treatise of Human Nature* which he prepared with T. H. Grose (Green 1874) and which is reprinted in volume 1 of his

²⁷ There were other important British critics of idealist philosophy, most notably ‘Oxford Realists’ such as J. Cook Wilson. But little of their work was published at this time and it does not appear to have had any significant influence outside Oxford until later.

²⁸ Hylton (1990) argues that Bradley’s distinctive idealism is not comprehensible except in the context of Green’s more canonical idealist and anti-empiricist views.

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works (Green 1885–9). Green's views were formulated in reaction against the empiricist account of knowledge to be found in Hume, though in fact he concentrates mainly on Locke's position. Green's reaction was Kantian in spirit: he argued that knowledge, even that based on the simplest experiences, involved an active consciousness which relates and organises disparate experiences as perceptions of the world. The Lockean, empiricist, position that perceptual knowledge is based upon the passive imprint of ideas of sensation upon the mind is, according to Green, untenable. Green accepts that it is not Locke's view that the mere occurrence of sensation is by itself knowledge of anything; instead, as Green notes, Locke holds that knowledge requires the 'perception' of relations between one's ideas; but, Green asks, how does the mind come by these relational perceptions? For Locke this is ultimately a matter of reflection on one's ideas of sensation, and it is his account of this which provides Green with his target. Perceptual knowledge of the presence of a red cup here and now, for Locke, will employ the general ideas of *redness* and *cuphood*, which relate this perception to others; but what account does Locke provide of these general ideas? Locke claims that they are reflective abstractions of what there is in common among a series of similar ideas, but Green objects that in order to be able to abstract a general idea from a series of ideas of sensation, most of which are now past and gone, I must already have an idea of what they have in common. Green puts his criticism in the following way:

17. It is not difficult to show that to have a simple idea, according to Locke's account of it, means to have already the conception of substance and relation, which are yet according to him 'complex and derived ideas', 'the workmanship of the mind' in opposition to its original material, the result of its action in opposition to what is given it as passive. (Green 1885, 12–13)

24. The fact is that the 'simple idea' with Locke, as the beginning of knowledge, is already, at its minimum, the judgment, 'I have an idea different from other ideas, which I did not make for myself.' (Green 1885, 19)

How do Green's criticisms of Locke introduce idealism? For Green nothing can be thought or meant or experienced without being in some way related to other things, and relating is an activity of mind (or 'spirit', Green's preferred term). Green infers from this that whatever is an object of a mental state is dependent upon 'spiritual' activity. Kant of course hypothesised the existence of things-in-themselves (the *Ding-an-Sich*) to provide an independent source of what is given to sensation. But Green rejects the possibility that we can make sense of the existence of any such realm of things inaccessible to the mind and, once this is dropped, what

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is left is the claim that all reality is dependent upon the activity of 'the spiritual principle in nature' (Green 1884, 59), a conclusion which is clearly idealist.

Green's conception of reality's dependence upon the spiritual principle in nature brings him to the brink of monism (Green 1884, 104). But it is Bradley who explicitly affirms this monistic implication in *Appearance and Reality* (Bradley 1893). Although things *appear* to be several, distinct but related, reality cannot be fundamentally relational; and if there are no relations, then there is just one all-encompassing whole. Green took the unifying role of mind in constituting a relational reality as foundational, but Bradley went further into speculative metaphysics by denying the reality of relations.

Bradley's main argument against relations is that they involve a vicious regress (Bradley 1893, ch. III): where two wholly separate things are thought of as related by a relation, the unified character of the resulting relationship requires a second-order relation to relate the first-order relation to the things to which it is related; and that relationship requires in turn another relation which relates *that* relation to *its* relata; and so on. So relational being is not self-sufficient and makes sense only as abstracted from something more comprehensive whose unity is non-relational. It follows that relations are not 'real', since for Bradley 'real' implies 'unconditional'. Metaphysics is the inquiry into unconditional reality of this kind, and it leads to the conception of the Absolute as the one independent reality, which encompasses everything in a form sufficiently 'transmuted' to become harmonious with everything else (Bradley 1893, ch. XIV).

It is then Bradley's Absolute which Moore implicitly invokes in his 1897 dissertation to provide a conception of 'Reality' which can serve as a ground for empirical appearances, including human life. As Moore recognises, 'Reality' so conceived is not a Kantian *Ding-an-Sich*, and his description of it is recognisably Bradleian:

On this view, therefore, it is unnecessary to deny that the Real World appears to Intuition – our own experience. We can only deny that it appears as it is . . . There is no longer any need for conceiving Reality as external to all particular Appearances in the same way in which one Appearance is external to another – a false conception, which seems to have led Kant to call the Reality a cause. It is, indeed, their 'ground'; but that relation is to be conceived not merely like that of formal logic nor like that of cause and effect, but as something between the two. The Reality is not an Individual separated from particulars as they are from one another, not yet a mere universal from which they might be deduced; it is an Individual both implied and existing in them. (1897 dissertation, p. 35)

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Moore goes on to suggest that this absolute Reality provides the best way of making sense of Kant's conception of 'Transcendental Freedom', though he acknowledges that Kant himself would not accept this account of his position (see VII.2 for discussion of this issue):

The answer, then, to the question what Kant means by Transcendental Freedom is this. Transcendental Freedom is the relation in which the world as it really is stands to events as we know them. It is the relation of Reality to Appearance. This relation necessarily appears to us as the logical relation of reason to consequent. The reason is free cause of its consequence. (1897 dissertation, p. 35)

Bradley himself does not connect the Absolute with Freedom in this way. But he does connect it with goodness – 'In a sense, therefore, the Absolute is actually good' (Bradley 1893, 412) – though he has also to allow that, because the Absolute includes all phenomena, including bad actions, 'it manifests itself throughout in various degrees of goodness and badness' (Bradley 1893, 411). Moore postulates much the same connection in his 1897 dissertation, with the same baffling complications:

Appearance may partake more or less of Reality, and thus gives rise to the differences in the categories by which its relation to Reality is expressed. It is thus that evil, though, like good, it is only possible through the union of Reality with Appearance, yet expresses less, than good, of the nature of Reality and more of mere Appearance. The object which is said to be good and that which is said to be real, are identical, if that object is taken to be Reality, as such, and it is not bad, only because 'good' is more adequate to that object than bad. (1897 dissertation, p. 83)

A year later Moore remarks in the Preface to his 1898 dissertation that he no longer shares Bradley's general philosophical attitude: 'I have come to disagree with him on so many points, and those points of importance, that I doubt if I can name any special obligations' (p. 117). It is indicative of this changed attitude that Moore eliminates all talk of a 'Reality' which embraces all appearances from his dissertation. All the passages quoted above are dropped, and although Moore continues to discuss the conception of a 'Transcendental Freedom' which grounds all empirical action, his attitude now is sceptical: 'Transcendental Freedom, upon which the main stress of the theory lies, is possible, as a chimaera is possible, but in no other sense' (p. 209). In particular, therefore, all discussion of the relation between goodness and 'Reality' disappears.

But not only does Moore in this way seek to purge his philosophy of Bradley's Absolute idealism, he also introduces in chapter 11 of the 1898 dissertation a critical discussion of Bradley's account of judgement. Although in his account of his dissertations Moore highlights this discussion as the

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central point of his new dissertation (see 1 above), it is in some respects a somewhat unsatisfactory episode. Moore focuses on the opening pages of Bradley's *The Principles of Logic* (Bradley 1883) where Bradley is concerned to reject empiricist conceptions of ideas and judgement. To this end he distinguishes between the conception of an idea as a particular 'psychical state', or 'sign', with its own properties, and the logical conception of an idea as what is signified, or meant, by such a sign, and he takes it to have been a fundamental error of empiricism to confuse these two, by treating universal meanings as if they were just very thin abstract particular psychical states (Bradley 1883, 6). Thus far Bradley is in fact largely following in Green's footsteps; Bradley, however, does not continue by introducing Green's Kantian conception of the mind's synthetic activity to explain how signified meanings are derived from signifying psychical states. Instead, he just says:

A sign is any fact that has a meaning, and meaning just consists of a part of the content (original or acquired), cut off, fixed by the mind, and considered apart from the existence of the sign. (Bradley 1883, 4)

It is this passage which attracts Moore's attention; he argues (1898 dissertation, p. 164) that so far from avoiding the errors of the old empiricist theory of ideas, Bradley has just repeated them. For, Moore argues, I cannot 'cut off' part of the content of a signifying psychical state unless I can identify that part, which presupposes that I already grasp the signified meaning which is supposedly constituted by 'cutting it off' from the total content of the original psychical state. In effect, Moore argues, Bradley has reverted to the empiricist doctrine of 'abstraction' according to which the signified universal meaning is just an abstraction, 'cut off' from some particular signifying states (1898 dissertation, p. 163).

If Moore's interpretation of Bradley were correct, the objection would be appropriate; and it is fair to note that Bradley does write of the signified meaning as 'an adjective divorced, a parasite cut loose, a spirit without the body seeking rest in another, an abstraction from the concrete' (Bradley 1883, 8). None the less this interpretation is so implausible in the context of Bradley's assault on the empiricist conception of ideas that it must be wrong, despite Bradley's suggestive language. And in this case we have Bradley's word for it: for once Moore had published this part of his 1898 dissertation as 'The Nature of Judgment' in *Mind* (Moore 1899; see VIII.2 below), Bradley wrote to Moore to explain that Moore had misunderstood him:

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The first [argument] seems to be that the separation of meaning from existence required for judgment presupposes a previous judgment. Well certainly it *may* do so – a psychological judgment, that is, but then again it may not and often does not . . . I suppose that my phrase ‘cut off’ etc. has been taken to imply *a going about to cut off* and therefore a previous idea. I never meant this . . . But I admit my language was loose.²⁹

Things would indeed have been clearer had Bradley explained what he meant by ‘cutting off’, and it is remarkable that neither here, nor elsewhere, does he provide an extended account of the meaning of signs. Perhaps he wanted to avoid tangling with Green’s complex neo-Kantian theory of the synthetic unity of consciousness, and had no simple alternative to offer. Moore, of course, did not see things this way: his view was that once one had understood what is wrong with Bradley’s account, one should infer that meanings, or ‘concepts’ as he calls them, are irreducible non-mental entities which:

may come into relation with a thinker; and in order that they may do anything, they must already be something. It is indifferent to their nature whether anybody thinks them or not. They are incapable of change; and the relation into which they enter with the knowing subject implies no action or reaction. (1898 dissertation, p. 165)

Moore’s concepts are the constituents of ‘propositions’, and we now turn to the background to the thesis he introduces at the start of chapter II of the 1898 dissertation, that ‘that which we call a proposition is something independent of consciousness, and something of fundamental importance for philosophy’ (1898 dissertation, p. 162).

V.2 MENTAL SCIENCE

Moore was strongly attached to robustly objectivist intuitions about the nature of ethics (ethics is a science, not an art, as he claims in the preface of the 1897 dissertation). 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. Moore was ready and willing enough to adopt aspects of the views dominant in his orbit at Cambridge so long as he thought that these would contribute substantively to his steadily sharpening convictions. Thus, as we have seen, Bradley’s

²⁹ Bradley’s letter is preserved in the Moore archive at Cambridge University Library: Add. MS 8830 8B/21/1. For further discussion of Moore’s criticisms of Bradley’s account of ideas, see Baldwin 1990, 14–15.

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Editors' introduction

Absolute idealism could and did play a brief (if seemingly paradoxical) role in providing a metaphysical foundation for an early version of Moore's ethical objectivism, by providing a non-subjective formulation of Reality as the ground of appearances. But it made demands that were increasingly unattractive to Moore; so it was discarded once Moore had found his way to a preferable alternative. In this search Moore was assisted by the quickly evolving shift in views about the nature of judgement in the discipline then known as mental science.

Moore's 1942 acknowledgement to his teachers at Cambridge emphasises the influence of McTaggart (Moore 1942, 18), though Moore mainly stresses the influence of McTaggart's method, crediting McTaggart's Hegelianism principally as an improvement on the incoherence of Hegel himself. Apart from Ward, the person Moore credits most is Stout, and there is significant archival evidence of this influence. Moore, like Russell before him, attended Stout's history of philosophy lectures in 1894, where the emphasis was on Kant and Lotze,³⁰ and Stout thought well enough of the young Moore to encourage him to speak at meetings of the Moral Sciences Club, even when Moore was the only student present.³¹ Stout 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) until 1921. Although Russell called Stout a Hegelian (Russell 1959, 30), this is misleading: Stout's work is a useful signpost to the progressive emergence of twentieth-century philosophy of mind from nineteenth-century mental science.³² The metaphysical demarcations in this discipline were not always consistent, as the psychologically minded philosophers fought to account for a study of mind that would avoid collapse either into metaphysical mentalism or physical reductionism.

Central to this intellectual debate was the *Psychologismus-Streit*, which took hold on the continent, mainly in Germany, Austria and Poland.³³ The dispute over the nature of logic and reasoning inevitably developed into a dispute over the nature of thought, which drew the discipline of psychology, by now in a fully extended advance toward the status of empirical science, into the fray. The distinction between the act of thought and its objects became the focus of the literature. Stout (and Ward) had both studied in

³⁰ The notebooks survive (Add. MS 8875 10/1/1).

³¹ Moore to parents, 4 February 1894 (Add. MS 8330 2/1/27). Stout was not, however, a member of the Apostles Society.

³² See Griffin (1991); Preti (2008); Van der Schaar (1996).

³³ See Kusch (1995).