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GEACH'S THEORY OF JUDGMENT

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The central problem confronting any theory of judgment (or belief) is to show how a particular judgment has the propositional or intentional content it has. That is, what is it about, say, John's judgment that Tom loves Mary that distinguishes it from John's judgment that Mary loves Tom, or from John's judgment that there are visitors at the door?[1] The topic of this paper is the theory of judgment forwarded by Peter Geach in his book Mental Acts.[2] There, Geach attempts to expose the structure of judgments and show how the identity of the judgment is a function of the structural components of the judgment.

Geach's position is a compound of two theories: one which Geach calls a "revision" of Bertrand Russell's "multiple relation" theory of judgment;[3] and a second which is called an "analogical" theory and which is used to interpret the first theory.

Geach's revision of Russell's early (1910) theory is based on three definitions. First, a concept is defined as the ability to frame a judgment of a particular sort, viz., the sort that involves that particular concept. For example, "the concept some spoon is . . . the ability to frame judgments [to the effect that some spoon is . . .]." Second, Geach defines an idea as "the exercise of a concept in judgment." Last, Geach introduces an operator 'Z( ),'[4] so that if a relational expression is written inside the brackets we get a new relational expression of the same polyadicity. The operator is by definition non-extensional since 'R' and 'Z(R)' cannot relate the same objects. (pp. 52-54)

Geach is then prepared to state the first half of the combined theory of judgment:

> Suppose that James judges that every knife is sharper than every spoon. This judgment comprises ideas of every knife and of every spoon; let us call these two ideas α and β respectively. My theory is that Jame's act of judgment consists of his idea α, of every knife, standing in the relation [Z (sharper than)] to his idea β, of every spoon. (p. 54)

Perhaps the most noticeable feature of this part of Geach's theory is that the constituents of the judgment bear a one-to-one correspondence with the constituents of the sentence used to characterize the judgment. This approach has great promise since, as language-users, we can read and understand the characterizing sentence. If judgments were mental counterparts of sentences, then it would appear that we could understand and, more important, differentiate those mental "sentences".

Let us consider, then, the second half of Geach's combined theory, i.e., the "analogical" theory. On this theory, Geach says,

> . . . the concept judging is viewed as an analogical extension of the concept saying . . . The sort of analogy that is important is that in which a whole system of description is transferred to an analogical use; the oratio obliqua construction, for example, whose primary use is to report actual speech, is transferred to describing the content of judgments. (pp. 75-76)

In considering the isomorphism between the constituents of the judgment and the terms of the characterizing sentence which was evident in the first half of Geach's theory, the passage just quoted gives a hint of the type of relation between those two kinds of objects. The relation is to be revealed in terms of a special sort of analogy between the concepts of judging and saying, viz. one in which "a whole system of description is transferred to an analogical use." And, Geach says, the oratio obliqua construction is just such a system of description. Just as we may report what someone says by beginning our report with the words, say, 'John says that', rather than quoting John word for word, so, too, we may report what John believes or judges by using the construction 'John judges that . . .', though here, of course, we have no choice of an alternative construction.

Nevertheless, Geach quickly excludes the oratio obliqua construction as a basis of analysis of the analogical relation between the concepts of judging and saying. This is because oratio obliqua is used to report what was meant or intended

to give the "purport" of what was said - and those notions might require analysis in terms of the very psychological concepts they were supposed to explain. If judgment is to be analyzed in terms of language, the concepts involved in the analysandum must be fundamentally linguistic in nature.

Now, although oratio obliqua constructions are used to report the content of a judgment, the oratio recta construction is also used for the same purpose. The advantage of the latter, Geach says, is that "the primary role of oratio recta is certainly not psychological; it serves to report what somebody actually said or wrote." (p. 80) When the oratio recta device of quoting a person's words is extended to mental acts, though, certain allowances are made. Geach says that oratio recta "can be used metaphorically to report what somebody thought, 'said in his heart' (without, of course, implying that the thinker had the quoted words in his mind). . ." (p. 80) Geach cites two examples from the Bible in which oratio recta is used in this way: "The fool hath said in his heart 'There is no God';" and "They said in their heart 'Let us destroy them together'." Citing the latter of these quotations, Anthony Kenny argues that wants, desires, and intentions may also be reported via oratio recta.[5] (Interestingly, Russell was well aware of these various uses of the recta construction. He says, "We have no vocabulary for describing what actually takes place in us when we think or desire, except the somewhat elementary device of putting words in inverted commas."[6])

The primary of oratio recta over oratio obliqua constructions need not be pressed here; Geach's arguments for the logical superfluity of oratio obliqua, and corollarily, the replaceability of oratio obliqua with oratio recta, may be conceded in order to pursue his theory to the end. Nonetheless, we are still in need of an account of the analogy alleged to hold between the concepts of

saying and judging. In the first half of Geach's theory of judgment we found that to judge was to have one's ideas standing in a certain relation to each other. How is this model to be connected with the oratio recta description of the judgment?

As one might expect, the isomorphism in the first half of the theory (between the constituents of the judgment, viz. ideas, and the terms of the characterizing sentence) is not incidental. The analogy between the concepts of saying and judging implies that that correspondence is between the constituents of the judgment and the oratio recta construction describing it.[7] In reporting actual speech with oratio recta, the terms in the oratio recta construction correspond isomorphically with certain features of what is said, for example, with certain clumps of noise. By Geach's analogy then, the terms of an oratio recta report of a judgment must correspond one-to-one with some features of what is judged, presumably with the ideas that constitute the judgment.

The analogy that Geach wishes to promote is thus anchored in the notion that an oratio recta report of a judgment is a report of a mental "saying," or as Geach calls them, "mental utterances." This notion links the two halves of Geach's theory together. Geach defines ideas in terms of mental saying:

> Smith's idea every man consists in his saying-in-his-heart something to the same effect as "every man" (which, let me repeat, need not consist in his having mental images of these or other words). (p. 99)

Mental utterances are just sayings-in-one's-heart of something to the same effect as '. . .'; hence, Smith's idea every man is his mental utterance of 'every man'. This yields a one-to-one correspondence between the constituents of a judgment (ideas) and certain constituents of the oratio recta expression used to characterize or report the judgment. And, the analogy between the concepts of saying and judging is expressed by comparing real utterances with mental utterances.

It is at this point that the real challenge to Geach's theory arises. Students of Russell's multiple relation theory of judgment will recall that there, John's judgment, say, that A loves B consists of a complex of John, A, the relation loves, and B, all of which are related by the judging relation.[8] Wittgenstein was quick to point out that Russell's theory allows a judgment to be a piece of nonsense.[9] Since the relation loves in the above example does not function as a relation, but only as another relatum of the judging relation, there is no way to determine what is judged; no ordering of the constituents of the judgment is provided.[10] Geach prepares to meet this problem in the first half of his theory by means of the Z(R) relation which would order ideas in the desired way, but what is still needed is an interpretation of the Z(R) relation in terms of the second half of Geach's theory. Quite simply, Geach must show how the ideas in a particular complex of ideas are related so that the complex conveys the propositional content of the judgment. Russell's theory fails at this point-- does Geach's succeed?

Consider the relation Z (sharper than), and suppose that Smith's idea α stands in the Z (sharper than) relation to his idea β. Geach says that there will then be another relation %(sharper than) which behaves in the following way. Given Smith's judgment as just described, Geach says,

> . . . there are expressions A, B, C, such that α, β are Smith's mental utterances of A, B, respectively, and Smith's judgment as a whole is a mental utterance of C, and any (physical) occurrence of C consists of an occurrence of A in the relation % (sharper than) to an occurrence of B. (p. 100)

As Geach admits, the problem has merely been pushed back a step, for now we need a definition of '%(sharper than)'. That is, if we knew what relation it is that exists between the parts of a sentence (those parts which name the relata of the relation sharper than in this case) such that the sentence conveys the proposition

it does convey, then we could at least say that the Z(sharper than) relation functions in an analogous way, or that the Z(sharper than) relation holds between ideas α and β if and only if the %(sharper than) relation holds between expressions A and B, or something of that sort. The interpretation of the Z(R) relation depends on defining the %(R) relation if the analogy between judging and saying is to be preserved.

However, Geach does not define the %(R) relation. Instead, he promises to show us "the main outlines of the definition" by defining another relation '†(R)'. Using the same example, Geach says that

> . . . x is in the relation †(sharper than) to y if and only if: x and y are utterances of the same person, and there are expressions X and Y such that x is the utterance of X, and y of Y, in that person's utterance either of X & "is" & "sharper than" & Y or of Y & "is conversely" & "sharper than" & X. (The ampersand is as before the sign of 'concatenation'.) (p. 100)

Geach's efforts to provide an interpretation of the Z(sharper than) relation end here, and with them, the chances of interpreting, in general, the Z(R) relation in terms of the oratio recta construction. The only progress we have made is that the Z(sharper than) relation is alleged to hold between the two ideas just in case the %(sharper than) relation holds between the analogs of those ideas in an oratio recta description of the judgment. But what is that %(sharper than) relation? At the crucial moment, Geach's theory falters, leaving us much the same as did Russell's theory. That is, Geach fails to show us how it is that the constituents of a judgment are related so that the resulting complex is seen to have the propositional content it does have.

What has gone wrong here, and is there a solution? To answer both questions we may consider Anthony Kenny's emendations of Geach's theory. Kenny attempts to interpret the Z(R) relation by eliminating entirely the †(R) relation and

replacing the %(R) relation with another relation, the 'Y(R)' relation.[11] Kenny feels his Y(R) relation will suffice to interpret the Z(R) relation. Consider John's judgment that blood is thicker than water. The Y(thicker than) relation functions in the following way. In any physical occurrence of the expression 'blood is thicker than water', we may say that the expression 'blood' stands in some relation, call it 'Y(thicker than)', to the expression 'water'. Thus, John's mental utterance of 'blood' (his idea of blood) is defined as being Z(thicker than) to his mental utterance of 'water' if and only if any physical occurrence of the expression he mentally utters, viz. 'Blood is thicker than water' consists of the expression 'blood' standing in the relation Y(thicker than) to the expression 'water'.[12] In short, whatever relation exists between the expressions 'blood' and 'water' in an actual utterance of "Blood is thicker than water' has its counterpart in the mental analogue: some analogous relation exists between the mental utterances of 'blood' and 'water'. That analogous relation, Z(thicker than), is thus the beneficiary of whatever quality it is that the relation Y(thicker than) has, such that the Y(thicker than) relation relates the terms of the actual utterance so that the utterance conveys the proposition it does convey.

Unhappily, we still do not have an interpretation of the Z(R) relation. Both Kenny and Geach seem to be saying something like the following: "Take the constituents of a sentence or an utterance of a sentence. They are related in a way such that they convey a particular proposition. I can't tell you what that relation is, but we know that there is one since sentences do convey propositions. As for the constituents of a judgment, there must be some relation which relates them so that the complex conveys a proposition. I can't tell you what that relation is, either, but it is analogous to, or definable in terms of,

that relation that exists between the expressions of the actual utterance of which the judgment is a mental utterance."

The failure of Geach and Kenny to provide an interpretation of the Z(R) relation is no minor problem; without the interpretation, the entire theory of judgment collapses. But, Geach's initial idea of construing judgments as complexes of ideas in relation has strong appeal, and the promise to connect that conception of judgment with language is even more attractive. Thus, Geach's defender might point out that we have not shown the theory to be inherently defective, but merely incomplete. Nevertheless, I think there are systematic defects in Geach's theory of judgment and in the assumptions on which the theory rests. Exposing those difficulties may lead to a more fruitful view of judgment (and other mental acts).

Both Russell and Geach attempt to analyze judgments structurally. The identity of a judgment is felt to be a function of the structural relations of the components of the judgment. All such approaches face a common problem. Whether one feels that the constituents of a judgment are the objects that the judgment is about, or are ideas in relation, or are (ultimately) neural circuits, he must answer the question: how is this structure to be identified as the judgment that p? This is a question that can never be answered by Geach's theory. Geach's theory rests on the notion that the concept of judging is analogous to the concept of saying. But, the concept of judging cannot be an analogical extension of the concept of saying because there is nothing to which the concept of saying can be extended in any particular case that is identifiable as the judgment that p, say, rather than q. An analogy demands two analogues; hence, before we can say that the judgment that p is in some way analogous to the utterance or assertion that p, we must be able to identify the two analogues.

But on Geach's theory, the identification of the mental analogue depends on the premise that there is an analogy between judging and saying. The central fault of Geach's theory (and Russell's) thus lies in not recognizing that there is no access to the identity of a judgment--to its propositional content--independent of the speech-act reporting devices of oratio obliqua and oratio recta. That Geach turns to these devices in presenting his theory of judgment is important for it points us in the right direction.

The irony of Geach's theory is that it comes so close, only to stumble over the same obstacle found in the theory he criticizes. Russell could not account for the relation that must hold between the constituents of a judgment such that the judgment has the appropriate propositional content. Geach's Z(R) relation is supposed to correct this deficiency, but we can now see that the circularity outlined in the previous paragraph infects this project as well. Even if Geach could provide a definition of the %(R) relation (Kenny's Y(R) relation), the subsequent interpretation of the Z(R) relation will not suffice to individuate one judgment from another; the move is thwarted by what might be called, given our remarks above, the "no independent access" property of judgments. In the case of the Z(R) relation, there is no way independent of an interpretation of the Z(R) relation to know, in any particular case, what judgment it is that needs to have its Z(R) relation interpreted. We can't tell one judgment from another without the interpretation, but in order to know what relation to interpret, we must know with which judgment we are concerned.

What can be salvaged from Geach's theory is that the analysis of judgment must proceed in terms of some model of speech-act reports. What we are forced to admit is that judgments or beliefs are not mental sentences or "utterances" to which we have access independently of the structure of speech. This is why the

extension of the concept of saying to the concept of judging is not analogical. We do not have two structures which we then examine component for component, analyzing one in terms of the other.

Nevertheless, there is some connection between the concept of saying and the concept of judging. Geach's employment of the metaphors of saying in one's heart and mentally uttering show at least that much. But it is only what is literally said or uttered that can structurally be detailed. This allows, within limits, public debate about what is said. What is judged or believed, on the other hand, does not display a structure of its own, i.e., does not display some internal structure with respect to which a determinate propositional content may be discerned. The structure of a judgment, if the judgment must be said to have a structure (in the sense relevant to propositional content), is imported, borrowed from the structure of what is said. This is part of what we mean when we say that mental states are "private;" they do not display their features to the public eye. But we mean more than that here, for not even the one who judges can discern any structure intrinsic to his judgment. The structure exists solely as a function of the features of what he says when he reports his judgment to us. The judger, like everyone else, can specify his judgment only by employing constructions which find their fundamental application in speech.

Upon abandoning the attempt to identify a determinate mental structure which may then be compared by analogy with some linguistic structure (Geach's approach), we hold that the content of the judgment must be imputed to the state in the same way that we would proceed if we were reporting what someone had said. Following Joseph Margolis, the extension of the concept of saying to the concept of judging may be viewed as heuristic, rather than as analogical. Margolis says:

> . . . the strategy involved is to introduce, as a heuristic device, a speech-act model . . . in terms of which the intentional content of the mental state in question is treated as if it were the oratio obliqua counterpart of some direct speech-act.[13]

We may look at this in more detail. If the judger reports his judgment to us, or simply makes an assertion, then we may specify what he judges by specifying what he asserts. Here, oratio recta (and obliqua) is employed in a standard way. If the creature does not, or cannot, speak, then, on the basis of other evidence we have, we select the appropriate formulation of his belief, pretending, as it were, that the report is a report of an assertion (or some other appropriate speech-act). Note however, that in both cases, the content of the belief is reached not by drawing an analogy between a mental structure and a linguistic structure, then deriving the content, but rather by imputing the content to a state the structure of which is indeterminate with respect to its propositional content.

In the end, therefore, structural considerations are so much extra baggage in the theory of judgment, and generally, in the theory of propositional mental states. Geach's ideas in relation may be unceremoniously deposited beside the track. This cuts short what we have seen to be fruitless endeavors to establish a structural analogy between speaking and thinking. We are left with the second half of Geach's theory, detailing the mechanism of the extension of constructions used to describe what is said to the use of those constructions for describing what is judged or believed. We can generate a new theory of judgment by specifying the nature of the extension as heuristic. The heuristic theorist assumes the speech-act model of characterizing mental states as an intra-theoretical device, leaving the Geachian to struggle at getting to the mental side of his putative analogy. The heuristic theorist, of course, does not have this worry. In holding

the extension of the concept of saying to be heuristic, one circumvents the entire question of the structure of whatever the concept of saying is being extended to; the propositional content of the mental state may be specified quite apart from such a concern and the heuristic theory merely capitalizes on this fact. This is just a sketch of an alternative to Geach's theory, but the failure of Geach's theory alone is enough to suggest far-ranging consequences, e.g., that any theory of mental states which attempts to cast the internal states of the creature as structurally isomorphic with the sentences we use to characterize those states is bound to be circular, and hence, trivial.[14]

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FOOTNOTES

1. By comparison, the ease with which the sentences expressing these judgments are differentiated makes it clear why treating a judgment or a belief as a response, or a disposition to respond, to a sentence has been so attractive. But even these approaches presuppose an adequate theory of judgment simpliciter, since not all judgments or beliefs are expressed in language.

2. Peter Geach, Mental Acts (New York: Humanities Press, 1971). All page references are to this book.

3. For example, see Bertrand Russell, "Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description," reprinted in Mysticism and Logic (London: Allen and Unwin, 1950), pp. 219-220. As David Pears notes, Geach seems to conflate this early theory with a quite different theory Russell advanced in 1919. The reader may find an excellent discussion of the two theories in D.F. Pears, Bertrand Russell and the British Tradition in Philosophy (New York: Random House, 1967), pp. 197-241. Also see Daryl Close, "Language and the Ascription of Beliefs," (Ph.D. dissertation, Temple University, 1976), esp. Ch. 3.

4. I adopt the notation 'Z' in place of Geach's use of the section mark, following Anthony Kenny, Action, Emotion and Will (New York: Humanities Press, 1963), pp. 230ff. With this exception, Geach's own symbols are reproduced here, viz, the percentage sign (%) and the dagger (†).

5. op. cit., esp. pp. 206-208.

6. Bertrand Russell, An Inquiry Into Meaning and Truth (Baltimore: Pelican Books, 1962), p. 197.

7. The idea of such a correspondence is not new. In a letter to Russell, Wittgenstein says: "I don't know what the constituents of a thought are but I know that it must have such constituents which correspond to the words of Language". (Notebooks, 1914-1916 (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1969), p. 129).

8. "Knowledge by Acquaintance and Knowledge by Description," op. cit., pp. 219-220.

9. Ludwig Wittgenstein, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961), p. 109 (5.5422). Russell responds to the criticism in "The Philosophy of Logical Atomism," reprinted in Robert C. Marsh (ed.), Logic and Knowledge (London: Allen and Unwin, 1956), p. 226.

10. See Pears, op. cit., pp. 217-218.

11. These changes are made essentially because one and the same mental utterance of an expression may be expressed in two different expressions, thus making the (R) relation unnecessary. For example, 'Some knife is sharper than some spoon' is a different expression than 'Some spoon is conversely sharper than some knife', but mental utterances of the two expressions are indistinguishable. This is because, as Kenny reminds Geach, Geach defines 'mental utterance of' as "saying in one's heart something to the same effect as" (kenny's italics). It is worth noting that it is just this definition which cuts against Geach's

own view that oratio recta avoids injecting psychological concepts into the analysis of judgment, as oratio obliqua was felt to do. Cf. Kenny, op. cit., pp. 205-206 (footnote).

12. op. cit., pp. 204-205.

13. Joseph Margolis, Persons and Minds (from the typescript). Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science, Vol. 57 (Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 1978).

14. I have in mind "mental language" theories of thinking ranging from Ockham's "Mental" (Geach's term) in the Summa Logicae, Part I, to Jerry A. Fodor's views in The Language of Thought (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1975), though the degree of vulnerability to the charge remains to be made out in a further paper. Joseph Margolis takes what appears to be a successful line of attack against Fodor on grounds congenial with my own in a recent paper, "Cognitive Agents, Mental States, and Internal Representation," Behaviorism, 5 (Spring 1977), pp. 63-74.

INTENTIONS, RIGHTS AND WRONGS:

A CRITIQUE OF FRIED

Marilyn Fischer

During the past decade a good deal of moral philosophy has centered on rights--what are they, who has them and upon what basis should they be ascribed. The writings of Rawls, Nozick, Feinberg and Dworkin have been most prominent. Charles Fried, professor at Harvard Law School, contributed to this literature with his book, Right and Wrong, published in 1978. Like many others Fried argues against consequentialist theories.[1] He then develops his own deontological theory of the foundations of rights and the circumstances under which they are violated.

In this paper I will first summarize the basic elements of Fried's theory and then criticize his requirement that a wrong must be intended in order for someone's rights to be violated. I will argue that with this requirement rights become in a sense derivative from wrongs. This makes the relation between one's rights and one's moral integrity, upon which Fried wants to base rights, indirect and inappropriately weak.

Acknowledging close similarities between Kant's moral theory and his own, Fried bases his theory of right and wrong on moral personality, or on the capacity of persons to function as rational, freely choosing beings. Respect for persons' physical and intellectual integrity is the central concept in delineating right and wrong. We do wrong when we violate the integrity of another person, or "deny to our victim the status of a freely choosing, rationally valuing, specially efficacious person, the special status of moral personality."[2]