

**PRACTICAL METAPHYSICS
DEALING WITH THE LIE OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY IN
PRACTICE**
*METAFÍSICA APLICADA. TRATANDO CON LA MENTIRA DE LA
FILOSOFÍA MODERNA EN LA PRÁCTICA*

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RECIBIDO: 13 DE SEPTIEMBRE DE 2010

ACEPTADO: 1 DE DICIEMBRE DE 2010

Abstract. Here I attempt to show that Practical Philosophy cannot only benefit from a revealed metaphysical grounding, but that such grounding is a necessary ethical foundation for anything philosophically practical. I take a broadly idealistic view which fits with the concept of worldly misperception. Recognition of this view, together with a certain view of love leads me to an atemporal view of eternity and an ethical understanding I call ‘value-unity’.

Keywords. Metaphysics, Philosophical Practice, value, love.

Resumen. En este artículo, intento mostrar que la Filosofía Aplicada no se puede beneficiar solamente de una metafísica revelada fundante, sino que tal fundamento es necesariamente de tipo ético en cualquier práctica filosófica. Tomo una perspectiva idealista amplia que incluye un error perspectivo cotidiano. El reconocimiento de esta óptica, junto con una visión específica del amor me conduce a una perspectiva atemporal de la eternidad y a una comprensión ética que denominaré “value-unity”.

Palabras clave. Metafísica, Filosofía Aplicada, valor, amor.

Introduction

It is my view that if modern Philosophy in Practice¹ is not to be a lie² it must have a metaphysical foundation.³ This may seem surprising as it would be more common to expect an ethical basis—after all, what is more practical than the concerns of human conduct, and what less practical than the remote concept of something beyond our knowledge? However, an ethical basis for Practical Philosophy is, I believe, a remote possibility. The scope of philosophy and its historical span have created an inherent diversity of appreciation so wide that it provides a natural mitigation of any one ethical system or ideology. Where the right outcome of human existence is seen in a philosophical range that runs from self-destruction to obedient worship, it seems unlikely that philosophy will provide anything ethically graspable. The alternative is stark though—faith based belief or metaphysics. In the absence of faith, a

¹ The distinction between what we might call ‘academic’ or university-based philosophy and modern Philosophical Practice lies in application—academic philosophy can be seen roughly as a pursuit in itself whereas Practical Philosophy implies some actual involvement with the world and usually with another or others. The modern movement of Practical Philosophy started in the 1980s and has spread mainly though not exclusively within Europe and the USA and mainly though its application as Philosophical Counselling. The journals *Philosophical Practice* and *Practical Philosophy* give flavour to the areas Practical Philosophy recognises as central to its remit.

² And there is little even ‘noble’ about this lie. Because of its concentration on Philosophical Counselling, and more commonly the teaching of Philosophical Counselling and training of Philosophical Counsellors irrespective of the actual amount of Philosophical Counselling that take place, modern Practical Philosophy has very quickly lost sight of the general gains to be made by doing philosophy in a common sense and accessible way. There are no data on this but judging by the numbers of counselees reported in case studies and general works it seems reasonable to conclude that there is only a small amount of philosophical counselling taking place worldwide and that there is an overprovision of ‘trained’ Philosophical Counsellors.

³ Contemporary Philosophical Practice draws largely upon the practices of the Ancient Greek Sophists (in Ancient Greece teaching individuals the techniques necessary for winning arguments in courts of law). At the same time it is common for Practical Philosophers to identify Socrates as their philosophical mentor and inspiration (as someone of great insight and wisdom who is at the same time out-of-step with ‘mainstream’ philosophy). It is true that Socrates attacked the Sophists though he was himself accused of being one. It is also true that Socrates was a tenacious and successful arguer who did not earn money from his philosophising. Plato was responsible for the establishment of the philosophical ‘establishment’ and there is a connection from this time to the modern day where philosophy, in its methodology drawing more on the tradition of Aristotle than anyone else, is used mainly as an analytical tool with a largely secular application. In parallel to this, religion in various forms has tended to satisfy the ‘spiritual’ (and ethical) needs of the individual who have found it in themselves to believe. Modern Philosophical Practice upholds philosophy (or exposure to philosophy) as a route to a wise life; a route others may think more properly laid out by religion.

rational understanding of an underlying system of reality is the only reasonable alternative—a lost man will not be so lost if he has an idea of where he has come from or is at least part of. Without this ‘sense of place’ there is no rationale or creditability for anything which we may ‘practise’, and there is no philosophical grounding for anything ‘practical’. With it though, there is not only something philosophically and practically coherent in an internal sense (a rational sense) but there is also the possibility of an ethical outcome. The rational pursuit of a seemingly inaccessible reality can lead to the most improbable of results—increased metaphysical place with meaningful human consequences. Discovery of improbable results may be considered an act of creativity, and as such finds itself in conflict with a rational approach. However, creativity cannot also regulate the processes of thought that bind together a sense of coherence necessary for a convincing view of that which is not apparent.

What follows is an explanation of the route I believe runs from a state of belief to the experience I call ‘value-unity’. This route and its ultimate point of arrival is how I see the practice of philosophy. Neither this description nor what it describes can be said to be strictly ‘philosophical’. These thoughts are drawn from a lifetime of doing philosophy and being under its influence, and are produced from my distillation of it all (at different times of the rejection of it all), of a feeling that everything is not quite how it seems, and of a feeling that how it seems might not be the best of how it can be. In this way it is both an expression of doubt and of hope.

There are three main methodological ways of expressing philosophy: deductive argument where any conclusions are drawn as tightly as possible from an assertion deemed to be something acceptably approximating an a priori; inductive argument which co-opts elements of the world of experience known a posteriori (and therefore always open to the challenge of repeatability) and assembled in a strictly logical way; a system of proposing thesis and antithesis which demonstrates by a mixture of deduction, induction and argumentative force more strength to the side favoured by the arguer. My method here is an inductive one which, for convenience, and because I have no compelling reason to formulate a piece of prose, I have numbered in the sequence which I

believe each part naturally follows. For me, this is an appropriate and convenient method. It is appropriate because I do not believe I can propose anything sufficiently a priori upon which to rest a deductive argument (and my reasoning follows many ideas influenced by experience) and convenient because it allows others to raise questions at easily identifiable points in the process and so help consolidate on the reasoning which I pursue. There are many assertions and sub-conclusions upon which the proceeding argument depends. I have provided a note of authority for some of these assertions, some I leave to common sense, and some are born of my own conviction.

‘Conscious beings’ and ‘human beings’

1. I refer to the quality of consciousness inherent to human beings as the ‘conscious being’.
2. I refer to the living form that is the species of animal ‘homo sapiens’ as the ‘human being’.
3. The ‘human being’ includes and practises all the qualities that cause us to believe in evil and good. The ‘conscious being’ is the simple quality of being able to apprehend the world.
4. The ability to apprehend the world is separate from the higher order brain functions such as reason, language or reflection, and is the benign quality of causing the world to be known.
5. The only metaphysical contribution human beings can make is the inherent quality of apprehension.
6. Conscious beings have in the quality of being conscious all that it is possible to offer.
7. Knowing the human being will quickly and readily camouflage, disguise or bury the quality of the conscious being and its ability to apprehend the world.
8. The value in knowing others lies in directly making contact with the consciousness of others and, although this can be in long lasting loving relationships, it is also found in brief loving contact with the conscious other while having reduced or minimal interest in the other as human being.

9. To experience the conscious other requires a high level of openness and focus.

The Metaphysics

The Necessity of Belief

1. Every philosophical pursuit should have a coherent rationally formed belief at its base. If this is not so then the pursuit is vacuous for it does not centre on anything of human importance. Of prime importance to us as humans is ‘meaning’—it is the seed around which all our conduct and action is formed. There is no point in using philosophy as a methodological approach to a topic of concern unless it appeals to some sense of meaning. We associate meaning with the ‘real’ and often appeal to an intuitive sense of what we consider most meaningful to be also most ‘real’.

2. If our philosophical aim is increased contact with, or knowledge of, reality then the process we employ in this pursuit should rest on a rational and coherent belief system. If this is not so then any progress will be undirected.

3. If something of reality is our philosophical aim then its nature is necessarily unknown. Reality is unknown. This is not because of the way we define it—it could be that we are in a state of reality now even though we think otherwise—but because even if this was the case we clearly do not know it. Whether we are in reality or not we are obviously in error. If we are in reality now but do not know it then reality contains fundamental error. If we are not in reality now we can suppose that it does not contain the level of error we are presently in. Because it seems that there is so much error in the world we inhabit it is reasonable to assume that this world falls short of something more ‘ideal’—something more ‘real’.⁴ This is a Platonic view and it is the view to which I subscribe.⁵

⁴ I accept that *prima facie* all that exists is real on the basis that all that is *is*, and anything that is must be universally admitted as real. My meaning of real here is one constituted of that which is for most if not all of the time not apparent.

⁵ Plato describes the world of reality as one constituting perfection—the Forms. The world of Forms

4. On this view we live in a world of error, but the system of reality which motivates our philosophical process must be metaphysical as it is formed from ideas beyond the world of error. In other words, we are necessarily separated from the objective state we aspire to have knowledge of.

5. It may be that entertaining reality is a figment—merely a hope or wish—but this cannot be known. That we have this idea in mind is sufficient to justify the possibility that such a thing exists.⁶ Even though reality is beyond our world we are still entitled to hold a belief in it if that belief has rational appeal.

6. Rationally appealing belief in something is not a faith. Faith rests upon an unquestioning belief and need not have any rational foundation. Belief is based upon a rational idea which appears to us coherent and convincing.⁷

7. Practical Metaphysics provides a believable rational foundation for a variety of practices which open us to reality beyond the world of error. One such practice is a method of being with strangers I call

or Ideas is a world in which sorts, types or kinds (of things) may exist and be independent of their usual association with things, in other words the idea may exist in itself. Although initially associated with Plato's thoughts on the virtuous man it became much extended to cover many types. No better exposition of the theory can be found than in the classic treatment by Ross (Ross, 1953).

⁶ This is the basis of the ontological argument for the existence of God—invoking the idea that God exists from the fact that I have in my mind the concept of his existence ((Anselm, 2001). It is also the substance of the Wittgensteinian view that only what we can think of can be real (Wittgenstein & Russell, 1922). This seems like conjuring up a reality from a thought, however, if we imagine the many other possibilities that we cannot think about it seems reasonable to say we cannot think about them because they are not 'there' to be thought about. Our conscious thinking patterns and systems work only on the existence of consciousness, and if that is considered fundamental to the universal structure, then it seems only right to accord it contact with what is there. Such ideas are expressed by many idealist philosophies, and all have their roots in Plato's theory of 'Forms' or 'Ideas'. For example: Berkeley's world constituted only of ideas (Berkeley & Ayers, 1980), A.N. Whitehead's view of existence as an organism (Whitehead, 1929), McTaggart's system of selves (J. M. E. McTaggart, 1921; J. M. E. McTaggart & Broad, 1927), Rochelle's description of timeless reality in a McTaggartian world (Rochelle, 1998), Plotinus' world structure of spiritual existence (Plotinus, MacKenna, & Dillon, 1991).

⁷ McTaggart provides a full discussion on the place of dogma in faith from an idealist point of view (J. M. E. McTaggart, ed. and with a new introduction by Gerald Rochelle, 1997). An outstanding collection of essays on faith can be found in Helm (Helm, 1999).

‘Connectionism’,⁸ though there may be many more (Rochelle, 2008B); (www.practicalphilosophy.org.uk)

That what is beyond our natural world is more real than the world in which we live and that our natural world is a world of error

1. There is always the possibility that our natural world is real and any other world is less real. There is always the possibility that our natural world is the real world and any other world is the world of error. Our reference to the ‘more real’ beyond our natural world is based on the idea that we sense error in our world and conjecture a world without it. Anything we sense that has the purity of no ‘error’ we associate with the ‘more real’ world. There is no foundation for this belief other than the human inclination for something better than what is. As with the possibility of the real itself, this idea (based as it is upon an experience of supposed imperfection) provides some justification for entertaining the view.

⁸ My first idea for an expression descriptive of this process was ‘Preaching the Word’. Although it spoke of an intention *not* part of a formal ‘delivery’ or ‘address’ and does not sit well with the moral connotations associated with ‘preaching’, it had some appeal—the philosopher (or ‘counsellor’) has some ‘missionary’ zeal, and engages individuals purposefully in the philosophical process. In this sense it seemed to me a form of ‘preaching’—the philosopher not the other knows that philosophical enlightenment is the best outcome of the process. However, despite my attachment to this term, I then decided on ‘Exchanging the Word—an appropriate description, I thought, of the engagement where the ‘word’ itself is the inspiration (Rochelle, 2008A). This expression emphasised the concept of ‘Exchange’ which was becoming an increasing part of my understanding of the process. However, by 2010 I was being asked to justify the idea of the ‘Word’ and found myself at a loss to do so. The idea that the ‘Word’ contained what was being exchanged had become redundant and I decided to call it ‘Connectionism’—a term used in the activation, function and process of neural networks that has predominant application to our understanding of artificial intelligence. This term has its roots in the thoughts of nineteenth century thinkers such as William James, Herbert Spencer and Sigmund Freud all of whom put forward what we could understand as ‘connectionist’ principles. It later became understood as ‘Parallel Distributive Processing’ (‘PDP’). My use of the term has something in connection to this thinking but interprets it more generally in the form of the dictionary definition “The doctrine that mental processes involve a bond or connection between stimulus and response; the theory that learning occurs by the formation of such connections” (Shorter Oxford English Dictionary). In doing this I remove some of the psychological inheritance and place it more squarely in the world of mutually perceiving selves.

Scale and the beyond-within

1. The universe is the entirety of things. Much of this seems beyond our perception but this is not true. In being conscious we are part of the entirety of things including reality. The structure is both beyond us and within us. It is a mistake to believe that most of the structure lies beyond us on some grand scale which makes us small in comparison.
2. Scale confuses us. The reference point is not us looking out at the grandness of the universe—us small the rest of it large. The universe is both smaller and larger and we are the reference point for both directions. The universe is not huge and mysterious in the way that we should ‘tremble before it in awe’, it is large but we are larger than more of it which is smaller. To imagine ourselves on a relative scale which diminishes our importance is incorrect.
3. The reality that is beyond is also within; and so the beyond is also within.

Reality lies within the detail

1. Having made this assumption about reality we need next to wonder how such a reality can be detected—it does after all seem to be defined as inaccessible. I believe that reality can be found in the detail of some aspects of the world of experience and it can be located by what I call ‘Practical Metaphysics’. In combining these two separate and apparently contradictory terms we are encouraged to see the possibilities inherent in their joint framing.
2. Practical metaphysics explores the detail of the world in which we find ourselves.
3. The world in which we find ourselves includes animate and inanimate things and the natural conditions in which those things exist—their temporal position, the material from which they are constructed, and the causal coherence which forms them and of which they form a part.
4. The world is constituted of this apparently substantial structure.
5. By ‘structure’ I mean the apparent nature of the world—its construction as the phenomena of our experience.

6. That there is such an apparent structure does not rule out the possibility of other kinds of existence. Indeed, it is possible that another kind of existence may be more real than the world in which we find ourselves.
7. If the world we are in is not the real world then—relative to what may be the real world—it must at least be a world of error.
8. If this is so then our experience of the structure is an experience of error and therefore not a true experience.
9. In addition, any experience we have of things which are not part of the apparent structure may be objects of reduced error and therefore may constitute a true or truer experience from within the world of error.
10. If an experience is ‘more true’ it may be part of reality.
11. The process which is formed from our perception of things without error is a true perception process not connected to or reliant upon time or other ingredients of the structure .
12. The detail of the structure, erroneous as it is, can still reveal something of the complexity of the perception process which can lead to enhanced awareness of reality. The detail of another object or person, for example, and the increased focus that goes with the acquisition of this detail, can bring us closer to the other, can enhance the correspondence of perception we can have with them, and create a link to the reality which lies beyond error. This is because the detail is what an object contains and not how it may appear.
13. The truest perception we can have within the world of error is our detailed perception of another.
14. To scrutinise detail of another, we will initially scrutinise the world of error in the form of the other’s appearance. This may mean that what we confront we find distasteful or difficult to understand in some way. This, however, is not an obstacle to accessing the perceiving self of the other, as this is, in its most engaged form, not in error, or at least not beset by the same level of error, as is the general case in the world of error. This is because we are either experiencing hints of detail or we anticipate the detail beyond the initial appearance.
15. Mutual perception in this way, between two conscious selves, greatly reduces error.
16. Mutual perception like this we commonly call ‘love’.

17. Our experience of love is one of an abundance of detail linked to the other that sets aside wholly or partly other areas usually of concern or interest.
18. Love exists in the world of error even though it is a part of reality.
19. Love is the only intact visitor the world of error receives from the world of reality

The nature, process and experience of love

1. Even though we live in a world of overbearing error this does not mean that error is the dominant condition. Reality is without error and this is the dominant condition that, at the moment, we are only either fleetingly aware of through love, or the existence of which we hold only a belief.
2. True perception is without error and perception of true love is without error. This experience is both a validation of the existence of love and evidence of the part it plays in connecting us to the reality that is beyond the world of error.
3. In the case of inanimate objects, and particularly conditions of nature, the sense of involvement with the other, and the loving wish that it continues to exist may be overwhelming. This may be largely connected to the relative scale of the other as a condition of nature, but also because, for example, a condition of nature may reflect more intensely the condition of reality.
4. Love emanates from the world of reality.
5. Structure emanates from the world of error.
6. Love has the capacity to intrude into the world of structure.
7. Love brings in its train threads of reality.
8. Any contact with love means some contact with reality.
9. The nature of love is not in error. It does not contain in itself any error, nor does it reside in the world of error. This may seem strange because we access love from the world of error, but it is not surprising as we approach existence from the world of error, whereas love approaches existence from the world of reality. The meeting is therefore fraught with problems and difficulties, and met head-on the meeting of ourselves and love can be overwhelming. The nature of love is not a commitment or

continued association with another; though it may be utilized to validate the experience of love, such an association can be a misleading one.

10. The nature of love is not something that is troublesome or difficult to acquire. It is freely available to us all, though there is an element of luck associated with us being aware of it or experiencing it in the long or short term.

11. In our interaction with others, love is of fundamental importance.

12. We have a greater sense of 'closeness' to another when we experience love than with any other human experience.

13. Love manifests itself in many forms and is not confined to romantic association with others.

14. Love, because it emanates from the world of reality, has the capacity to alter our normal perception of the world, allowing us to detach ourselves from parts of the world of error and perceive something of reality beyond or something 'from' reality.

15. In this way our experience of love is of reality beyond the world of error.

16. Our knowledge and experience of love is captured in a series of our perceptions.

17. These perceptions, because they are constituted of or formed by love, are part of reality or at least are perceptions of reality had from the world of error.

18. The nature of love is, in the case of another person, wishing that my beloved continues to exist.

19. This wish is also self-interested.

20. That I should wish my beloved to continue to exist means that I wish the perceptions that they carry of me, and others with whom they have correspondent perceptions, will continue to exist. In their continuance, my beloved and those whom my beloved perceives, take their part in the process of increasing the world of reality and reducing the content of the world of error. This is so because the trend brought about by the perception of love is from error to reality.

21. If I give up my life for my beloved then their perception of my loving act will contribute to the growing continuance of the world of perceived reality as it moves from the presently overarching structure of error to the true structure of reality.

22. Feeling that my beloved's life is as my own—that the life my beloved lives is mine—reveals the intrinsic identity of love. This identity, this close and intimate exchange or realisation of perception between selves, is a fleeting glimpse or experience of reality.

23. Our experience of love is one of an abundance of detail linked to the other which sets aside wholly or partly other areas usually of concern or interest.

Time, the physical world of structure and error

1. Time is unreal.

2. Although it appears that everything is in time, this is a mistaken impression of something non-temporal which simply appears as time in the world of error.

3. The physical world of structure is unreal.

4. Although the structure of the world seems inherently physical this is not the case. It is only in the world of error that this mistaken perspective is experienced. In reality, the world we think of as physical structure in the experienced world of error is made up of mental impressions or perceptions had by conscious perceivers.

5. Reality is made up of an atemporal, non-physical series of perceptions held between mutually perceiving selves in love or by a self perceiving the natural condition of the world in a loving way.

6. In the world as it appears, error is the dominant perception though any perception of error is not a true perception.

7. Any intrusion of reality into the world of error reduces the total amount of error, but the world of error is eroded only gradually by true perceptions of reality.

8. We have to accept that in our living experience we get most things wrong; and this could include any belief in a reality beyond what we construe a timeless world of error. There is therefore no certainty in any assumption we might make about the existence of reality as something beyond the world in which we live.

Eternity

1. If time is not real then eternity is possible.
2. Personal eternity is possible though a claim on personal identity in all pre-final stages⁹ is remote.
3. In the final stage (and possibly in stages that approach it) our personal identity will again be available as we come to know all (or almost all) others.
4. Because time is unreal, at the end of our current life as human beings, it will be only an instant until the final stage occurs. Everlastingness will therefore appear to us directly.

The Practical

Practical Metaphysics—the principles

1. Having a practical philosophy is having a practical view of living that directs us to increased awareness and knowledge of reality—itsself derived from increased association with reality.
2. A truly practical philosophy may have little to do with what we commonly think of as ‘philosophy’, though it may be drawn from philosophy and may use its rational method as a basis for understanding and interpretation.
3. A truly practical philosophy means nothing without an underlying metaphysics—a foundation built on the belief that reality is more truly real than the world as it appears to us.
4. Without an underlying metaphysics, practical philosophy is trapped in the world of error and cannot reveal the route to reality.
5. A rational belief in reality beyond our current experience provides us with a motivation to practical philosophy—in the sense of doing practical philosophy and in the sense of practising it in order to comprehend something more real.

⁹ McTaggart uses the term ‘pre-final stage’ to describe any stage in a non-temporal series which precedes the ‘final stage’ (J. M. E. McTaggart & Broad, 1927, pp. 421-50).

6. To 'do' practical philosophy we must apply ourselves with some discipline and certainty for it is not easy. We must look outwards from ourselves in order to see anything at all of reality. Although any knowledge of reality becomes within us if we perceive anything of it, it is, for most of our time, beyond us.
7. In the sense of 'practising' philosophy in order to comprehend something more real, we must attune ourselves to the nature of what reality may be by concentrating on the detail of the world. We must learn to see in that detail the fragmentary parts of reality that lie beyond the world of error.
8. Reality is beyond the world of error and will remain so until all error is eradicated.
9. Because we live in the world of error any hints of reality will be shaped within the world of error. These will necessarily be misshapen caricatures of reality but these fragmentary parts will, nevertheless, be so different from the world of error that we will be able to recognise them as hinting at something of reality.
10. We will find these hints bound up in the detail of the world of error.
11. The detail lies mainly in others and so it is others who should be our focus.
12. Reality is not in the structure of the world as we generally know it—which is erroneous and misleading—it is in the conscious perceptions we have of others and the relational correspondence we can have with the manifold perceptions inherent in us perceiving others who themselves perceive us and others. This is the nature of detail within the other.
13. Error is the dominating framework of the world.
14. Consciousness is an aberration of reality in the field of error which besets the world. Concentration on the mental world of others is the primary key we have to unlocking any glimmer of reality.
15. The structure of the world—temporal and physical—is particularly misleading because we, as part of it, feel a natural affinity with and inclination towards its structure.
16. Concentration on the structure—on form, or nature, or silence—only leads us further astray into the confusing domain of error. Though this can be confusing as sometimes the natural world of error produces very strong sensations of what seems like reality. Sometimes, though, when

the structure represents our close association with a condition of nature, we can perceive something of reality.

17. Concentrating on others—being closely focused and intimately engaged with others—allows us sight of something of reality. Sometimes this is the merest hint but, because it is something of reality, the world of error is, by comparison, readily, sometimes glaringly, shown up as the fake it truly is.

18. Any hint of reality will become part of us when we know it, but it will not be discovered within us before it is first found in our intimate focus on another.

19. Looking within for reality is mistaken. Although in due course we may contain detail sufficient to constitute something of reality, because self-love has limited potential self-analysis is unlikely to reveal this.

20. Love allows us to be intimately close to another.

21. Focus on a beloved can produce the strongest hints of reality.

22. We must learn to see the other as our beloved.

23. The continued existence of our beloved is our highest aim.

24. Continuance of self is the route to reality which exists outside the world of error in time. Reality will be known when our focus on others leads us to knowing all others they know and to them each knowing us and all others we know.

25. Even existing, as we do, within the world of error, there is no mistaking anything which is part of reality.

26. Reality, and any part we can have of it, persists outside time and the physical structure of the world.

The goal of Practical Philosophy—Value-unity

1. Value and not wisdom is the goal of the philosophical life and the object of practical metaphysics.

2. It is an error to think that wisdom is the primary philosophical aim of the reflective life.

3. Wisdom can only be found in a person imbued with it by the very act of the other's beholding

4. Any idea that we can recognise wisdom in our self goes against the self-effacing nature of wisdom itself.
5. We can be wiser than we were before, we can be wiser about something objective, but it remains that we cannot claim to be wise as wisdom as a personal attribute collapses in the making of the claim itself. Only in the absence of self-regarded wisdom can wisdom exist. This is not a problem with wisdom itself—it is simply the way that wisdom is defined—though it is a problem for wisdom as a possessed attribute. If ‘wise’ is at the top of the hierarchy of philosophical aims, the claim that we have it destroys the claim on the best thing. Putting wisdom in this position means that the ‘best aim’ is something logically inaccessible and so the individual can never have sincere knowledge of it being part of self.
6. Valuing something is different than being wise about it. Sensing value is an experience of the individual, whereas wisdom is an experience which, because its attribution is in the mind of another, is not an individually held experience.
7. It is impossible to measure the quality of my being wise using a standard derived entirely from the point of view of another.
8. I may say I feel ‘wiser’, or would deal with something ‘more wisely’ in the future, but it remains the case that I cannot say ‘I am wise’ and at the same time retain a state of wisdom; though I may have been considered wise prior to making this statement.
9. To invest the meaning of our self and our aims in the view of another like this not only reduces our responsibility for self it also allows us to use a measure which is inherently ambiguous—insufficiently defined, and psychologically vague.
10. Value is defined in respect of ‘value of being’. Value is a quality of a thing that describes part of that thing’s reality.
11. Value can be an intrinsic quality; indeed some things may have an entirely intrinsic value. Some things may have a value only because they act as a means to something else which is considered valuable (either in itself or as a further means). Intrinsic value is more fundamental, and therefore more real. It can be the end-value of a causal chain of means-values or it can exist as a combination of intrinsic or means-values. The experience of either sort of value is in the being of self.

12. Unity is of the greatest value because it combines its components in an integrated and meaningful way.

13. Value is, in the Platonic sense, hierarchical, the uppermost tiers being inhabited by values with the greatest degree of unity. For example, the human being is considered of high value largely because of its complex unity of the physical and the mental—the working together of matter and consciousness.

14. Value in its sense as the highest philosophical aim is neither ‘evaluating’ nor ‘valuing something’ (both of which may have other qualities involved or paramount). Although each is part of a process of recognising value, neither is part of the process of experiencing value in itself.

15. Nor is value an estimation of value which sees our life as meaningless (and so valueless) in light of the immensity and apparent complexity of the universe, as this is simply relative.

16. Although the universe includes the detail of each individual, the inherent detail of perception within the individual may be a greater unity than the major components of the universe itself.

17. Value in the sense of it being the highest philosophical aim, is the experience of value—that which is a unified intrinsic experience in itself and does not go beyond the self in search of a creative relationship with something else, or a meaning in respect of a ‘greater’ item in a metaphysical hierarchy. The experience of value is our very connection with value itself, experienced as a unified part of our self, which creates its own uniqueness and separates it from all other things including the apparent complexity of the universe.

18. This primary position, as a realisation which is itself keyed into the unification of self, makes value considerably of more worth than wisdom which does not have the unity, the experience of unity, the self-containment intrinsic in value, nor the detail of perceptions inherent to the individual.

19. Wisdom is like the other’s hand unable to shake the tree; value is like the wind that causes all the branches to sway.

20. The hierarchy of value is connected to degrees of unity.

21. Because the greatest unity is the unity of body and mind—consciousness and matter—the intuitive realisation of value connected to unity is in itself an expression of the unity of body and mind.
22. Body and mind do not have to be seen in a dualistic sense to be recognised as combining the apparently physical with the apparently mental; features that define the mental defy entire physicalist description.
23. The intuitive experience of value is unity. In this way it must be an experience of the greatest value as it is both an experience of the integrated effect of body and mind and the effect of experiencing the experience of unity itself.
24. Our appreciation of life gives meaning to our being.
25. Our best appreciation of life gives the greatest meaning to our being.
26. Value-unity is at the centre of our best appreciation of life.
27. There are many examples of value-unity in human existence (the polymath—well versed and competent in many things; evolution theory—integrating the disparity of nature; economic and political principles—distilling and harmonising opinions on the world of people; scientific and cosmological unified theory—seeking to integrate all differences into one reference point; art, poetry and literature—expressing the diverse natures of humanity in distilled form; religion—consolidating human experience and values into a god or gods).

The experience of value-unity

1. Value-unity is the experience of integrated value and unity. The object value-unity attaches itself to is not relevant to the experience outside the fact that the perception of the object is what triggers or sets off the experience itself. Value-unity is therefore not objectively reliant though it is objectively derived.
2. We do not acquire value-unity in any way similar to how we might be considered to have acquired wisdom. Wisdom relies upon time, progressive experience, and ability to balance, discriminate and fairly judge. Value-unity can be experienced immediately upon direct perception of another—usually their detail (and their own implicit perceptions) through love.

3. Beauty, which is a means-value leading to the intrinsic experience of value as beauty, is similar to, and has some parity with wisdom because it is in the eye of the beholder (whereas with value there is no intrinsic value beheld).
4. Value is the experience of beholding itself and the implicit state of well-being or peace derived from that experience.
5. Because it is connected to reality, value-unity leads to a state of peacefulness of mind. This is because it is only in the world of error—time and structure—that confusion arises, and value-unity is an experience of love which derives from reality.
6. Peacefulness of mind is a state which involves others in the general emanation of kindness and ease—a personal state of calm derived from value in the face of the clatter of the world, the noise of life, or the omnipresent silence of death.
7. In the world of error peacefulness of mind is unlikely to last.
8. In the world of error any experience of peacefulness of mind should be regarded as an experience of the world of reality that is only presently available in a fragmentary way.
9. Even so, the most fragmentary experience of reality is of immense personal value compared to the general experience of the temporal structure of the world of error.

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