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John Rawls and R. M. Hare: A Study of Canonization

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Abstract: Why is someone enduringly prized as a philosopher? To answer this question, this historical case study examines the intersecting careers of John Rawls and R. M. Hare. It looks at their writings, a complex chain of disagreements, the argumentative dimension. The essay moreover explores the clash of differing temperaments. Finally, themes in addition to ratiocination and personality are factored in: the leanings of the institutions that control access to intellectual endeavor; the public square—politics widely conceived—into which the two men were thrown; and the cultural rivalry between England and America after World War Two.

Keywords: Rawls, Hare, Protestantism, Second World War, justice, canonization, political theory

In 1972, G. P. Henderson, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Dundee and editor of the Scottish journal, *Philosophical Quarterly*, commissioned his friend, R. M. Hare, to assess John Rawls' 600-page *Theory of Justice*. It had come out in late 1971. The American Rawls—at Harvard and fifty years old—had published only nine essays over the previous 20 years. Nonetheless, many philosophy professors still regarded him as a person of potential, and had read a few of his articles, although these men had not yet transmuted him into RAWLS. More than distinguished, the Englishman Hare was a Fellow of the British Academy. For almost seven years he had held one of the three chairs in philosophy at Oxford University, home to the leading collection of some 70 Anglophone thinkers. Hare had authored two previous books on moral philosophy, and had assembled four volumes of his papers. The premier ethicist in Britain, he was arguably the most influential moral philosopher in the western world, perhaps on his way to becoming HARE. Wikipedia still lists the review of Rawls as one of seven 'notable' essays *Philosophical Quarterly* has printed in its over 70 years of circulation.

The appraisal, impassioned and irate, came out in 1973, and savaged *A Theory of Justice*. The withering critique ran so long that the new editor of the *Quarterly*,

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Bernard Mayo the Professor of Moral Philosophy at Saint Andrews, divided it into two twelve-page parts that circulated in successive numbers—10,000 scorning words. "Many years ago," said Hare at the conclusion (Hare 1973c), Rawls had produced some "promising articles. . . though without clarity." But, "painful" to read, the large, repetitious and ill-written *Theory of Justice* would likely "waste a great deal of a good many people's time." Rawls should have attempted "something more modest" and "do[ne] it properly" (Hare 1973b, 251–2). Hare took Rawls as a duffer, out of his league. Thereafter, Rawls mutated to RAWLS and, over time, admiration for Hare declined—he never evolved into HARE.

Why is someone enduringly prized as a philosopher? Thinkers do not transparently develop their ideas, and then have them accepted to the degree that they are warranted. If such an idea were true, how could Hare have written such negative criticism of an impressive volume, and how could Rawls have survived such a verbal lashing? To answers these questions, this history of the intersecting careers of a US and a UK national examines their writings, a complex chain of disagreements, the argumentative dimension of my approach. Yet I also look to the clash of differing temperaments. Finally, I factor in themes in addition to ratiocination and personality: the leanings of the institutions that control access to intellectual endeavor; the political times into which the two men were thrown; and the cultural rivalry between England and America after World War Two. My approach contrasts with many others (Akehurst 2010; Bevir and Blakely 2011; Forrester 2019; Gališanka 2019). To advance my view most effectively, I have deliberately chosen an idiosyncratic format—a comparative chronological narrative of the lives of the two men. I will have, by the end of the essay, exhibited my own interpretations of the issues presented. But readers should take the interpretations as tentative, for the central aim has not been to prove a thesis but to elaborate a problem. Readers are encouraged to come to their own understanding based on the evidence offered up.

1 Hare and Rawls, Protestant Background

Richard Mervyn Hare was born in 1919 to a 'rich' business family that the worldwide depression of the late 1920s had reduced to the affluent by the early 1930s. Brought up an Anglican of the Protestant Church of England, Hare had correct convictions. The prestigious public school, Rugby, where he boarded and shone as 'head boy,' did not test his faith. After Rugby, he started to read Greats—classics and philosophy—at Balliol College, Oxford, in 1937. World War Two, which began for the British in September 1939 against the Germans, interrupted his studies. Hare volunteered for the army (2014).

Two years younger than Hare, John Bordley Rawls was also upper class, although he did not have a father in trade, and his parents were more cultivated. His mother's inheritance supported Rawls' father, who had unusual success as a lawyer in Baltimore, Maryland. The Rawlses practiced a serious Episcopalianism, the superior American denomination that descended from the English Anglicans. The parents sent this son to the Kent School in Connecticut, a selective institution comparable to Rugby but also formally connected to the Episcopal Church in the United States. At this preparatory academy, spiritually stricter than Rugby, Rawls was a 'sub-prefect,' a senior student of high distinction. In 1939, from Kent, Rawls went to Princeton, the Ivy League college of choice for aristocrats living below the Mason–Dixon line (Baranowski 2017; *Modern Intellectua*l *History*; Pogge 2007, 1–27).

The military promoted Hare to a junior officership after instruction but did not second him to France where, by 1940, the English were fighting. Instead, he joined the forces protecting the British Empire in India, Malaysia, and Singapore against an expansionist Japan. In 1940 and 1941, in 'the Far East,' there was latent hostility, but not armed engagement. At the close of 1941, however, the Japanese attacked British possessions. Japan went to war with an England now allied with the United States because of Japan's simultaneous air raid on America's Pacific fleet quartered at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Immediately thereafter, Germany declared war on the United States. America teamed up with England in both Europe and Asia.

The British underwent a major defeat in the Far East when their strongpoint of Singapore fell in February of 1942. In combat before and after the siege of this island city-state, Hare was one of some 13,000 troops of the British Empire whom the Japanese captured. He was marched up the River Kwai—roughly running along the western coast of present-day Thailand. For a time, he and other POWs built the Siam-to-Burma railroad, but the Japanese eventually imprisoned him in Singapore itself. This detention lasted for three-and-a-half years until the war ended in 1945 (Hare 2002a, 2002b).

Incarcerated, Hare wrote up his philosophy, later preserved in some 150 typescript pages. His 'Essay on Monism" combined a bit of Bertrand Russell's neutral monism with musings from Alfred North Whitehead's *Process and Reality*. The manuscript says that being flows impersonally, a blooming, buzzing confusion. Value does not inhere in the heavens, and individuals merge in some illimitable whole. The twenty to twenty-two-year-old Hare was finding a way around his incomprehensible envelopment in the war. In retrospect, he said about the manuscript: 'worthless,' 'mostly rubbish' (Hare 2001, 2002a, 2002b, 283; Seanor and Fotion (eds.) 1988, 201).

Meanwhile, at Princeton, Rawls also took up philosophy. When he completed an accelerated B.A. at the close of 1942, he had turned in a thesis, 'A Brief Inquiry into the Meaning of Sin and Faith: An Interpretation Based on the Concept of Community' (Rawls 2009). It has garnered more attention and has more coherence than the 'Essay on Monism.' Published in 2009 in 140 pages, Rawls' capstone project was produced in a scholastic context that must be explicated if the essay is to be comprehended.

The intellectual growth of Protestantism in the United States stressed not the more lenient tenets of Anglican-Episcopals in either England or America but the credos of John Calvin. These 'Reformed' ideas emphasized the impotence of good deeds in achieving salvation. All people sinned and could not hope to escape the penalty of death through meritorious behavior. Instead, they must humble themselves before an inscrutable God. If one recognized one's utter insignificance and had total faith, then God would save. Conversion, the mysterious act that broke the will evidenced faith, and overpowering 'grace' 'elected' the saint. Calvinist preachers again and again refined these views in a unique American tradition centered around 'the New England Theology.' The instruction at the Princeton Theological Seminary, once connected to Princeton University and just down the road from it, had illustrated the long story of that refinement.

Nonetheless, at the end of the nineteenth century, a revolution had occurred in American centers. Theology retreated as a central study, and a less supernatural professional philosophy advanced. An outlier among esteemed places of education, Princeton University dissociated itself from these more worldly constellations of professors. The institution had moreover established a Department of Religion and (in 1944) hired Paul Ramsey, who formidably defended traditional Protestantism.

Where learned quarters still respected theologians, Reformed formulations had usually yielded to a new liberal Protestantism that accentuated the figurative meaning of the Bible. The 'Higher Criticism' had taken off in Germany in the early-nineteenth century and urged the inspection of the Bible like every other book produced by human hands. The Higher Critics treated the tales of a virgin birth, miracles, and rising from the dead with caveats. German ideas had traveled to the United States by the late nineteenth century and had propelled in America the rise of a Protestantism that stressed the metaphorical. The liberals did not have an indispensable stake in a verbatim Bible, but rather distilled its poetic-like significance. They underlined the freedom of human beings to come to God; His accommodation to their exertions; and the progress of Christian civilization. Again, Princeton lay beyond the consensus. Many divinity schools simply went out of business, and while the Princeton Seminary did not give up the

ghost, non-literalists swept it to the periphery and colloquially associated it with Fundamentalism, or Evangelicalism.

Then Reformed Protestantism came back, at least in the rarified circles that still cherished its defense. A complex movement, 'Neo-Orthodoxy,' took the allegorical inflections of liberal Christianity but employed them to re-invigorate the ancient notions of faith and grace. The Neo-Orthodox asserted that mankind's shared life manifested the Protestant Bible's ideas of the inevitableness of selfishness, the need for effacement, and reliance on God's clemency. The Neo-Orthodox accepted a figurative Bible but found in it the teachings of Calvin and not those of a symbolically friendly deity, explicable to human beings. The University and the Seminary in Princeton, which had never given up on such reformed ideas, rebounded.

Some have read Rawls' 'A Brief Inquiry' as Neo-Orthodox (Gregory 2007; Nelson 2019; Rawls 2009, 24–101), and it relies on some primers of that movement. But it so wants an interest in the symbolic, crucial to Neo-Orthodoxy, that it barely counts as a contribution to that effort. Evidence suggests that Rawls did not even know about the Higher Criticism – like the symbolic, strategic for the Neo-Orthodox – until a couple of years after he had fulfilled his undergraduate requirements (Bok 2017a, 163–4). Rather, 'A Brief Inquiry' takes the Bible at its word.

This long essay for the Princeton Philosophy Department is theology, but even as a paper on religion, it jettisoned the relaxed positions that stamped Anglicans and the Episcopalians with whom Rawls grew up. The thesis, moreover, is Reformed Protestant, and not Neo-Orthodox theology; it does not pursue the emblematic but the plain meaning of the Bible: 'It is assumed at the outset that there is a being whom Christians call God and who has revealed himself in Christ Jesus.' By surveying Church teachings and how Christians faced the world, Rawls maintained that any levelheaded person must admit Reformed truth. The leading scholar of the collegiate Rawls has surmised that he was 'born again' in his junior year. Rawls located conversion as "the womb of Christian theology." He also wrote about what happened to the self after election: "Out of the feeling of being dissolved there thus grows this perception . . . of the bounteous mercy and love of God [,] . . . the understanding of dependence upon God." Those who had closed with Christ journeyed as "pilgrims on their way to Him," and Rawls assured himself of an actual resurrection: "we may look forward to the day, which may not be far off, when Christ will appear in his glory . . . and . . . [t]he whole creation will be bound together and all the creatures of God will kneel at his feet" (Bok 2017a, 157–8; Rawls 2009, 111, 233–4, 238–9, 242, 252).

Rawls' thesis speaks to his protected education at Princeton, but more so to serious, fundamentalist, devotion. His last two years as an undergraduate

had taken him from blue-blooded Episcopalianism to a literalist Reformed piety. During this time, he pondered the Episcopalian priesthood as his vocation. Yet, in early 1943, immediately after fulfilling the requirements for his degree, he enlisted in the army, and took basic training.

The United States made war on the Japanese more successfully than the British, and from September of 1944, Rawls fought in the brutal South Pacific theater. He saw the destruction of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima that had prompted the Japanese surrender in August of 1945. When the army discharged him at the end of that year, Rawls was participating in the American occupation of Japan.

In 'Essay on Monism' and 'A Brief Inquiry,' both Hare and Rawls crafted papers that tried to make sense of their post-teenage lives. What did the war leave in their feelings? At various times, they told others about what the mêlée had taught them, but these teachings only got fully conveyed near the end of their lives, and the vagaries of recollection weaken the written record. Nonetheless, we must gauge the shock of the conflict on these two sincere young people, barely into their twenties.

Rawls observed a solemn Protestantism when he left Princeton, and the viciousness of the Japanese-American encounters, and the horrors of death in fighting, destroyed his sheltered picture of life. A participant in the cruelty of the contest, he lost his belief. He even reported exact incidents that led to the loss, and the time—June 1945. Even if God existed, the malignity of the war had made Christianity incredible, and men somehow had to find their own principles that would replace sacred codes. Rawls, as he put it, "reject[ed] the idea of the supremacy of the divine will as ... hideous and evil." Protestantism depicted God as a "monster." About what he had defended a couple of years before: "few people really accept these doctrines or even understand them." Christianity felt "alien" to him, and he allowed that to the extent one took it seriously, it "could have deleterious effects on one's character" (Rawls 2009, 263–5, 268).

The archives have shown that Rawls overdid his change of heart. He did lose his literalist Protestantism. The loss was not, however, instantaneous and occurred over a longer period. In 1950, for example he reviewed Paul Ramsey's *Basic Christian Ethics*, and criticized it because it did not add anything to Christian ideas beyond what could be found in 'ordinary morality'—Protestantism still added something exceptional (Rawls 2002a, Box 8, Folder 5). World War Two precipitated in Rawls a lengthy transition from Reformed to liberal Christianity, and from liberal Christianity to a post-Protestantism. A dose of Protestant individualism and self-righteousness did permeate Rawls' later thought, when he described himself as an agnostic and rejected any credal loyalty. He sometimes reminded

students of the awfulness of the war, and said that it impelled him to seek conviction elsewhere than in the supernatural (Baranowski 2017, 51; Bok 2017a, 153–8, 2017b).

In contrast, after the war, as a stalwart member of the Church of England, Hare continued unequivocally to look to God. The war instructed him not of the falseness of Christianity, but of the mysterious ways of the Spirit. During the war, he had "confronted . . . a number of moral questions which did not admit of an easy answer." Thinking over the early 1940s, he wrote that "illustrations of cultural diversity made me stop believing in a universal objective moral standard known by intuition." He too would exhort his students but apparently more specifically and didactically than Rawls: if you survived a Japanese prison camp with masters disdainful of your misfortunes, and determined in some way to defeat you, you would see that scientific methods could not resolve ethical unease (Hare 1959, 1; 2002a, 2002b, 11).

We can contrast Hare and Rawls using the labels of dogma. On the one hand, World War Two tilted Hare toward Calvinism, away from his previous Anglicanism; our deficient mental powers were up against an unknowable God. The dreadfulness of the Pacific forced us to acknowledge that we could not penetrate the Holy but should show 'humility' about what the Deity required. On the other hand, Rawls deserted Calvinism. More pious to start with than Hare, he renounced belief more. One could not admit a divine will as supreme if one lived through this same dreadfulness. Individuals had the responsibility to figure things out without the dubious help of the Almighty.

Mustered out of the army, Hare returned to Oxford where he finished his four-year B.A. in 1947. In a time-honored fashion, he accumulated the rewards given to intelligent, studious, and advantaged young Englishmen who took a superior First-Class Degree at Oxford, especially in Greats. Without further training, Hare went on to tutorial duties at his college, Balliol, and soon began writing essays for the English journals of professional philosophy (Hare 1959, 102; 1960, 110–4; 2002a, 2002b). Just then, in 1946, Rawls was back at Princeton in graduate work in philosophy, looking toward the Ph.D., required in US academia. Princeton had a casual arrangement with Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, another home to faded Protestant philosophy, and Rawls spent a year at Cornell as an advanced student. He returned to Princeton, where he obtained his doctorate in 1950 and instructed there in the early 1950s. In the American context, for alert and favored men, the degree put Rawls on a vocational journey as effortless as Hare's. Nonetheless, Rawls' advanced degree intimated that the United States was ahead of Britain in developing a graded system for educating university teachers and researchers. There was a discrepancy between the less formal preparation

in Britain and the length and breadth of American training that evidenced the growing professionalization of the Anglophone academy.

Two young men in similar social stations and with similar duties. They had analogous ambitions, and both later called to mind the discomfort they had felt about their privilege. Each fought the Japanese. Nonetheless, the campaigns altered their otherworldliness in different ways. Rawls would search in Non-God-Given Human Reason for the answers to deep personal and meditative dilemmas; Hare would suspect Fallen Reason as the entire answer to such dilemmas. Each outlook had incongruities: Rawls found absence of faith as self-evident as he had previously found faith; Hare was sure that he could not be sure.

2 Philosophical Beginnings

Both scholars started writing up their ideas at the same time, and each found a way forward in an intellectual environment saturated by logical positivism. It demands some explanation. In England, A. J. Ayer's *Language, Truth, and Logic* of 1936 disseminated these much brooded over ideas. For the positivist, knowledge occurred in the hard sciences, and biology, chemistry, and physics held primacy. Language about ethics, politics, metaphysics, and the soul diverged. These areas of human aspiration had a paucity of empirical content, and pertained to feelings, fears, and longings. *Language, Truth, and Logic* was a simplification, however, and C. L. Stevenson, a US national, had written an elaborate defense of positivism as it pertained to morality. *Ethics and Language* of 1944 detailed the uses of language involved in speaking about the right and the good, and gained prominence in defending 'emotivism.' This forceful stance in mid-century professional philosophy insisted that ethical words expressed emotion or approval, or persuaded; morality did not communicate information, but moved people to do something. Laymen might identify Stevenson as a relativist or subjectivist about ethics; philosophers came to designate him and his ilk as 'non-cognitivists.'

Rawls' 1950 dissertation, 'A Study in the Grounds of Ethical Knowledge: Considered with Reference to Judgments of the Moral Worth of Character,' is easily his weightiest work before *A Theory of Justice*. The editor of Rawls' *Collected Papers* has observed that Rawls' writings prior to 1971 were "experimental . . . , opportunities to try out ideas" that Rawls might later "develop . . . , revise . . . or abandon" (Rawls 1999, ix). While this comment is not inaccurate, 'A Study' resembles Rawls' second effort of 20 years later. Its 90,000 words make it some 25% longer than any of Hare's many brief books. It also cites hundreds of authorities, picking up notions that Rawls wanted to defend, amend, reject, or delve

into not only from the history of philosophy but also from law and the social sciences. The intricate writing in the dissertation, moreover, protected its discussions from every conceivable objection, as Rawls adjusted refutations, conjectures, and responses to one or another dilemma. 'A Study' has the same contours as *A Theory of Justice*. Finally, notions of the later work turn up in the doctorate.

Rawls searched for objectivity comparable to that in science, what I would call moral objectivity. This knowledge lay between two extremes that denied debate the ability to reach mutually agreed upon suppositions about what men ought to do. One extreme reduced morality to the non-rational, emotivism. Rawls had little time for it, avowing the factual complexion of moral statements while still conceding their 'imperative' force. Appeals to authority—to religious dictates or to intuition—defined the other extreme. But Rawls was guarded in his critique of these authoritarian allegiances. Christian commitments that revolved around the "Grace" of "the Comforter," he reckoned, could reliably guide conduct. That is, Protestant notions were consistent with Rawls' conviction over what constituted goodness. These notions, however, received justification from philosophy. Rawls also cautioned about the inadequacy of intuitions: the inadequacy stemmed from not "considering consequences" (Rawls 1950, 1–3, 9–10, 24, 126–30, 251–3, 344). That is, utilitarianism flavored this dissertation. Rawls attempted to find a role for it, though in the 1950s and 1960s he was led to stressing the greater adequacy of intuition and diminished the utilitarian.

In seeking the underpinning for a common right between emotion and authority, Rawls looked to the unanimous contemplation of people who have, in various ways, distinguished themselves as reasonable, fair-minded, or impartial. He told us, again and again, in various ways, that his enterprise had such contemplation at its heart. These "men," "living structures," can "plan and act." At least twice the reasoning was circular, if you are a disparager of Rawls; or he espoused what he later designated "reflective equilibrium," if you admire him: morality's "justification is . . . a series of formal and material justifications culminating in an . . . intuitive justification"; "Reasonable rules . . . depend . . . on . . . agreement on the part of reasonable men that certain principles are reasonable and right" (Rawls 1950, 30–44, 106, 248, 343).

3 Hare, Early Theory

One of Hare's earliest published essays (in 1950) expounded on his Protestantism by way of a 'blik.' This much-talked-about invention marked something like a *Weltanschauung*, a general way of framing the world. It was irrefutable for the people holding it but lined them up with a grand scheme of things—for Hare

himself his theistic resolve. He routinely tried to nail it down more carefully: a connected series of propositions with "a logical status [that] will leave the ... [propositions] saying something ... meaningful, and not obviously false"; "morals helped out by mythology"; "faith that all shall be well ... matched by a feeling of thankfulness that all is well." He might have found the best way to talk about this blik in Psalm 75, where God says, "The earth is weak and all the inhabitants thereof; I sustain the pillars of it" (Hare 1949, 1973a, 16, 22–3). Over the years, Hare proclaimed his Protestant-tinged inclinations in his books, and was conspicuously immersed in the activities of his parish churches, singing in their choirs. Yet he never assumed the singularity of his blik, and acknowledged that equally tolerable ones might differ from his and cover the same territory.

In 1952, Oxford University Press published Hare's first book, *The Language of Morals*. It defined a peculiar form of non-cognitivism—Hare camped with A. J. Ayer and C. L Stevenson—whatever his personal Protestant opinions. As became clear in many parentheses, Hare's wartime ordeals prompted the contentions made in the book. He could not reconcile Imperial Japan's concepts with Rugby and Balliol. We had no procedures ultimately to adjudicate among rival ethical systems. "A few months spent as a coolie" on the Burma railway, Hare later wrote, "is worth more to one's moral thinking than the reading of ... many novels or even factual reports about underdeveloped countries." To put this topic another way, there was "an irrational side of our nature, which none of us can escape" (Hare 1963, 183, 1992, v).

In *The Language of Morals* Hare self-consciously did 'metaethics.' Both Stevenson and Hare did not design their common non-cognitivism to make us better people, but to explain how the moral vocabulary behaved. Hare did not concentrate on applied rights or wrongs, what we ought or ought not to do. He fixed instead on how ethics worked; on what occurred when we used language to pronounce verdicts. Rawls' 'A Study' also raised this thought, but not consistently (Rawls 1950, 95–7). In any event, *The Language of Morals* emphasized the division between substantive ethics and Hare's 'metaethics.' Hare called his 'prescriptivism.' Words like 'good' had an essential commendatory function; they had the energy of a command. He said most elaborately that he opposed an alternative metaethics, 'descriptivism,' also roughly called cognitivism, or naturalism. The way the world was—the way it might be satisfactorily described—never dictated the right. For Hare and Stevenson moral conversation did not tell us what was in nature, but steered action. Their shared anti-cognitivism premised that knowledge of the world differed from moral engagement.

Prescriptivism and emotivism nonetheless parted company. Part of a prize essay Hare wrote when winding up his undergraduate degree assailed Stevenson, and *The Language of Morals* integrated this assault on emotivism (Hare 1952, 306).

Evaluation-imperatives had logical constraints built in, and Hare separated himself from emotivism in explicating the constraints. He enlarged on them to shield himself from the charge of cynicism about ethics and from any confusion with Stevenson. I get a little ahead of the inquiry in looking at Hare's next book-length piece of writing of 1963. Oxford Press also brought out *Freedom and Reason*, which stressed constraints in a way that Stevenson did not.

The *Freedom* in the title alluded to the non-cognitivism. People had incompatible notions of the human flourishing to which they would inevitably want others to consent, and moral discourse aimed at consent. Eventually, however, we had to expect imperfect accord; getting people to live like we wanted might only partially succeed.

On the other side, the *Reason* in the title pointed to how the logic of moral language restricted opponents in everyday negotiations. Adversaries must acknowledge that their directives should apply to themselves were they equivalently circumstanced to those with whom they were debating—'universalizability.' If I granted something as acceptable, I had to acknowledge that it was acceptable even were it done to me. With careful thinking, we might enhance the circle of the we. Yet 'the fanatic,' whom Hare brought up in the book and then repeatedly over the next 30 years, showed the limits of *Reason*. Fanatics might legitimately order the doing of evil even if they were to undergo it themselves. Thus, universalizability guaranteed no single correct morality. We had to allow for competing precepts, however repugnant some of the devotees to these precepts might seem to us.

In one striking treatment, Hare took his metaethical prescriptivism and showed how it made sense of his own everyday morality and that of the fanatic. Four times on a single page in *Freedom and Reason*, he contrasted his Protestantism to fanaticism. Hare's own teaching was the Golden Rule—Do as you would be done by—and so, for example, Hare avoided torture for he did not want to be tortured himself. The fanatic, nonetheless, was willing to torture or be tortured under some hypothetical situations, and prescriptivism allowed for this. However upsetting we might find such situations, we must live with the intolerant fanatic, still a moral being (Hare 1963, 106, 110, 112, 157–85, 192).

Reason was prized, but circumscribed. Metaethical emotivism downgraded ethics to feeling, and gave us no roadmap on how to live. Prescriptivism, according to Hare, added something based on philosophical logic. The universalizability of moral language put some controls on how debate could occur, but could not, *in extremis*, close debate. This accent on the 'logic' of usage—the core of Oxford ordinary language deliberations from the 1940s to the 1970s – was a touchstone of professional philosophy among English-speakers.

Over the years Hare re-invented, polished, and altered his insights. Still, he remained a non-cognitivist. Science was one thing, morality something else; Ayer, Stevenson, and Hare championed the descriptive and evaluative distinction that had a grip on philosophers in the post-war era. From a cosmic point of view, Hare and Stevenson may have little differed. “Professor Ayer,” Hare exclaimed at one point, “is more responsible than anyone else for putting me on the right track in moral philosophy.” (Hare 1985, 62) Yet, still, for 50 years, Hare lamented that even professors often categorized him as an emotivist or relativist or subjectivist (Hare 1997).

The response to Hare’s publications evidenced disparate British and American priorities, whatever the pre-eminence of Oxford in post-war Anglo-America. The celebrated Gilbert Ryle, a colleague of Hare’s, edited in Oxford the leading English-language journal, *Mind*. Ryle arranged a thirteen-page notice of *The Language of Morals* by the eminent R. B. Braithwaite of Cambridge University. Braithwaite, closely and positively connected to Hare (Hare 1973a, 15–6), praised the effort and advised that Hare was at the same challenging level of Stevenson in espousing non-cognitivism. “All serious students of moral philosophy,” wrote Braithwaite, “dons and undergraduates” “would have to . . . ponder the text.” (Braithwaite 1954, 249). In the United States, the Philosophy Department at Cornell oversaw the leading journal, *Philosophical Review*. An unexceptionable and unpublished philosopher had a brief exegesis of *The Language of Morals*, declaring it “a perceptive contribution.” *Philosophical Review* did not take up *Freedom and Reason*, while *Mind* spent almost 20 pages on the book (Taylor 1965; Tomas 1955, 132). British thought, more than American, promoted Hare.

4 Rawls’ Turn to Justice

In 1952–1953, still a junior instructor at Princeton, Rawls left for a year-long Fulbright Fellowship to study abroad. As did many Americans, he went to Oxford and was associated with Christ Church. From Balliol, where Hare had his rooms, Christ Church was a walk of under 10 min; and All Souls, where Rawls often took dinner, was 5 min. Nonetheless, we have little information about Rawls’ confidential exchanges during that year. From his unpublished autobiographical notes:

> I still recall vividly an evening in 1953 when I had dinner in Gilbert Ryle’s rooms at Magdalen with William Kneale and J. D. Mabbott. H.H. Price, the fourth member of their group, which had met regularly for years for dinner and a paper to be delivered by one of them, couldn’t come, so I was invited to fill in . . . We . . . retired to Ryle’s study where he proceeded to read his paper. As Ryle read on, . . . I noticed that Mabbott had fallen asleep. It occurred to me

> that if there was to be a discussion, I'd better be prepared with a question, so I tried hard to listen and formulate one. I didn't want to disgrace myself! Then I looked around and noticed that Kneale had also fallen asleep . . . . Once Ryle had stopped, I tried to carefully phrase my question, only to find that when I finally finished asking it, Ryle too had fallen asleep! I feared I had violated their long tradition by staying awake! After a while, Kneale got up, tapped Ryle on the shoulder and said, 'Good show, Gilbert,' and left. Mabbott then woke with a start, did the same, saying, 'Jolly good, Gilbert.' I could hardly say that, so I said, 'Thank you and good night, Professor Ryle.' He looked up, gasped, 'Good show, Rawls,' and then nodded off again as I let myself out. (Rawls 2002a, Box 42, Folder 12)

No mention occurs of meeting Hare, although Rawls had written up for himself criticisms of *The Language of Morals*, which had just come out when Rawls arrived. What went on between them during this year at Oxford? We do not know. We do know that Hare was an acerbic personality, and more friendly and ecumenical Oxford thinkers—Isaiah Berlin, Stuart Hampshire, H. L. A. Hart, and J. O. Urmson—looked after Rawls. Later, Rawls commented on the many trips he took to Oxford, but there is never a whisper about Hare, although he speaks of many consultations with Hare's colleagues (Rawls 2002a, Box 8, Folder 8; Box 42, Folder 12).

We also know that during 1952–1953, Rawls accepted an offer from Cornell for a tenure-track job to start in the fall of 1953. The institution's philosophers hired him because of their up-close knowledge of the man. Their time with him in his year of graduate study in Ithaca took precedence over his stutter, which discomfited senior philosophers about his teaching; and his failure to write very much.

When he was elevated from an assistant professorship to a tenured position at Cornell in 1956, Rawls had published two essays in the university's *Philosophical Review*. He had benefited from his Ivy League connections and his stay at Oxford. In Ithaca, however, he succeeded through his decency and hard work as a teacher, collaborator, and member of *Philosophical Review's* editorial board. He also became a mentor to graduate students, most crucial in the supervision of the doctoral dissertation. Rawls was making a place for himself. In participating in the standard American training system for professors, he was also creating a network of professionals larger and more advanced than that which defined British thought.

Rawls mulled over many philosophical topics, and in the documentation we have through the 1950s, we can see that Hare and emotivism were two of Rawls' preoccupations. Rawls wrote in detail for his own edification about Hare's attaching 'magical powers' or 'a kind of incantation' to ethical terms, and a few years later taught sections of *Freedom and Reason*, as an 'emotive variant.' A lengthy treatment of what Rawls called 'the consistent sadist' paralleled Hare's

ideas about the unfortunate but extant fanatic. Rawls wrote that while a generally sympathetic person is "a possible conception," a consistent sadist, who is not "Normal Human Nature," cannot exist; such a sadist "is not a possible conception" (Rawls 2002a, Box 9, Folder 9; Box 34, Folders 18 and 19; Box 35, Folder 6).

Rawls' dislike for Hare was not openly declared. The American only circuitously castigated non-cognitivism and never laid into Hare directly. In his 1963 'The Sense of Justice,' for example, Rawls wrote that someone "devoid of the natural attitudes that foster moral sensitivity would hardly be human," but it is not clear that this refers to the fanatic, whom Hare embraced as a moral being (Rawls 1999, 112–3). Rawls much preferred setting out what he thought, or meticulously modifying what he thought after reading critics, and he rarely disputed them. The 1963 essay—and seven others that he published in the late-1950s and through the 1960s—improved upon the ideas that had surfaced in Rawls' dissertation. Cornell's *Philosophical Review* took four of the first six papers; it printed three of these first six when Rawls taught at Cornell, two while he sat on the magazine's editorial board. These were the early articles that, in 1973, Hare admitted had exhibited some minor promise.

Rawls surveyed the meaning of the word 'justice', and regularly returned to this endeavor. 'Two Concepts of Rules'—the lead article in the 1955 issue of *Philosophical Review* that had barely touched on *The Language of Morals*—illustrated Rawls' strategy. Here he scrutinized utilitarianism as a basis for justice. However, over time, utilitarianism was downgraded, just as unpacking the concept of justice gradually became, or implicitly was, normative and not merely explanatory. Or, rather, Rawls presumed that apprehending justice led to advocacy of what ought to be done.

5 Hare and Linguistic Method

Proud of his Balliol College appointment, Hare soon saw it made lifetime. He told a series of listeners in the late 1950s that the illustriousness of Oxford philosophy was grounded in the priorities of Plato in the conversation or essay, of which Hare wrote an imposing number. At Oxford in the 1950s, 'dialogues of the question-and-answer type' took place in connection with the presentation of brief papers. No man assembled "a private coterie to listen to him," and even "humble students went to the seminars of professors to attack," "ready to do battle." Progress occurred in "original Socratic discussions," and when "the cudgels are taken up," the virtues sought were "clarity, relevance, . . . brevity . . . and . . . originality." "People . . . can meet and understand one another's arguments," and "dispute . . .

about the correct way of resolving the problems." English thinkers did not write "huge volumes which only a handful of people will understand." The "certain way" to oblivion was penning "long or difficult [or] obscure books. Nobody will ever read them." (Hare 1960, 43–5, 53) *The Language of Morals* and *Freedom and Reason* were brief, just about 200 pages—"short, clear and to the point"—and drew on a slender number of sources, mainly essays by fellows of other Oxford colleges. Hare wrote that he was "extremely ignorant" of the history of philosophy; "I know little or nothing" of "whole swathes of it." (Hare 2002a, 2002b, 286) His name appeared in lights when he advanced to the White's Professorship, which took him from Balliol to Corpus Christi in 1966. With a professorship, Hare had increased duties in the guidance of post-baccalaureate students. Oxford was responding to the growth of Britain's system of higher education and was providing more advanced work—specifically the B. Phil. degree—for faculty who would teach in university settings. But the country lagged behind the United States, and Hare, who did not care for such schooling, tended more to undergraduates.

6 Rawls Approaching 'the Book'

At the end of the 1950s, Rawls visited at Harvard for a year, then took a vacancy at nearby MIT. Philosophical friends at Harvard secured a full professorship for him there in 1962—as it turned out for the rest of his career. By that time, he had published three articles. Yet by this point he was combining his separate essays into a manuscript of 'the book.' Through the 1960s, this manuscript saw several rewrites. Events exterior to the cloister nonetheless complicated the problems in wrapping up the document.

In the aftermath of World War Two, the Cold War pitted the United States against the old Soviet Union. A global fight with communism occurred in which the West saw Russia copying the German regime under Hitler, both orders anti-democratic and totalitarian. Hare attended to these developments more than Rawls. Hare always had in mind the fanatical enemy in the Pacific. While steadfastly supporting Britain's commitment to the United States, he additionally favored England's attempt to maintain its colonial influence, and occasionally criticized America's assertive policies (Hare 1957, 1985). More conventional, Rawls embraced the struggle with the Soviets, undisposed to belittle US leaders (Pogge 2007).

A turning point came for Rawls as the United States mired itself in far-off Southeast Asia. He had no sooner settled himself at Harvard when President Lyndon Johnson, in 1964, escalated a minor and peripheral contest in the

geo-politics of anti-communism. The ‘War in Vietnam’ soon divided Americans about domestic and foreign affairs. World War Two had put Rawls on the road to his loss of faith, and Vietnam was a second calamity. His concerns exceeded Hare’s, and Rawls matured as a political thinker; his allegiance to American priorities ebbed. He denied the justice of the war, caused—according to him—by defense businesses and the undue sway of monied reactionaries. Giving draft deferments to well-to-do college students was unfair. Nonplussed about how he should oppose the conflict, Rawls joined anti-war ‘teach ins’ in the mid-late 1960s. He straddled more conservative and more radical scholars at Harvard about the right course for individuals, the institution, and the faculty to take. Troubles disrupted Cambridge Massachusetts, including notable demonstrations in 1966, more turmoil through 1968, and the police ‘bust’ of 1969. Rawls’ apprehensions, pertinent to what justice was and required, were expanding his manuscript by way of notes, disclaimers, and insertions.

In 1969–1970 Rawls went to Stanford, and the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences. As a biographer has written, “He arrived there with a typescript of about two hundred single-spaced pages, which he was continuously reworking through additions and substitutions.” (Pogge 2007, 21–2) When he came back to Harvard in the fall semester of 1970, he took over as chair of his department. Even critics regarded him as a laudable person and useful academic citizen, although he was not a publishing giant. Quarrels still beset Cambridge, and from an office on the third floor of Emerson Hall, Rawls adjudicated spats among the philosophers. He simultaneously controverted skeptics by putting the last touches on his long-awaited project, finding solutions to dilemmas, conceptual as well as expediently pressing. The typescript of 200 pages had enlarged, and Harvard University Press ‘amazed’ Rawls when the publisher presented him with galley proofs of 587 pages (Baranowski 2017, 205–24; Pogge 2007, 21–2).

As one scholar has declared, “no one would have dared to predict the broad critical acclaim, even fame,” that welcomed the book—in the erudite and non-erudite press (Daniels 1975, xxxi). A good illustration of the research media came with the fifteen-page inspection in *Philosophical Review*. The notice told readers of a “memorable,” “fundamental” work (Nagel 1973, 220, 234). The author, Thomas Nagel, had classes with Rawls at Cornell, taken his Ph.D. under him at Harvard, and held a professorship at Princeton, Rawls’ alma mater. Out of step was *Mind*. At the end of 1971 its editorship had passed from Gilbert Ryle to David Hamlyn of Birkbeck College of the University of London; he had read Greats at Oxford, interrupted by two years in the army during World War Two. In 1972, *Mind* listed *A Theory of Justice* among some 80 other philosophy publications in its ‘Books Received’ columns but did not attend further.

Hare occupied the chief place in Anglo-American ethics in the 20 years before the publication of *A Theory of Justice*. The book, however, overlooked Hare and prescriptivism just as *Mind* had overlooked Rawls. The text of *A Theory of Justice* did not mention Hare, and it obliquely took up non-cognitivist meaning on only three pages. Four brief citations to Hare did show up in the footnotes and referenced two pages of his writing (Rawls 1971, 404–7, 596).

Rawls continued to adhere to what I have called moral objectivity. Ethics was still as unbiased as science. To get at this objectivity, Rawls did employ different philosophical tools that had come to the fore over the preceding two decades. The notable 'constructionism' of some of his Harvard contemporaries urged that philosophical reasoning could not assume a fixed point but had to begin in the middle of things in epistemology—or in our political and moral life at this particular time. Yet Rawls had anticipated in his dissertation the 'thought experiment' that got him to justice. Students have often outlined this core motif of *A Theory of Justice*, but we need see it from Hare's point of view to see what incensed the Englishman.

To delineate justice, Rawls called on his readers' imagination. Visualize a group of people founding a society. They begin in an 'original position,' and then put on a 'veil of ignorance,' wherein they cast aside ideas of whether they are young or old, rich or poor, male or female, white or black. They cease to know who they are and become more pure intelligences. What rules would these organisms draw up to live together harmoniously? According to Hare, to get a handle on justice, Rawls fabricated a setup that could not pertain to human beings; he modeled a kind of rationality and discarded real politics, or even the limited hypotheses of theories of the social contract. In mortal life, ignorance of our sex, age, and race would disqualify us from civic participation, if not from claims to be human. For Hare, Rawls made such ignorance the *sine qua non* of civics. Hare pushed an extreme interpretation of Rawls, but many readers, Hare included, counseled that Rawls accepted this scenario.

Members of this putative society would comport themselves so that a modicum of benefits might accrue to the least advantaged. This truth, said Rawls, would pilot a rational mind: under the veil of ignorance, it could be one of the disadvantaged. We approached the 'reflective equilibrium,' in which reasonable people settled on reasonable rules of association. The upshot of the enterprise brought definitive answers to queries about ethics and politics. As a meticulous biographer has stated, "heated and persistent disagreement," according to Rawls, concealed "a shared conception of justice." "Political disagreement is a result of misunderstanding, which philosophy should correct." (Gališanka 2019, 1) Justice *meant* being fair, and we recognized fairness as a matter of fact.

In dissecting *A Theory of Justice* in *Philosophical Quarterly*, Hare said that other Oxford philosophers had bolstered his 'courage' in a twice-over examination that had taken more than a year. He made two basic points. The first, formal, point found that Rawls had not borne in mind what a philosopher should do. The Harvard thinker did not consistently distinguish metaethics from moralizing. As Hare had it, the misconceptions that Rawls had about his job led him not to tend to the logical properties of concepts; Rawls did not get metaethics. Thus, he "lacked the equipment" to speak about "what we ought or ought not to do." No "firm arguments" supported what Rawls said, "however popular it may prove. "Over the years," Rawls had accumulated "a mass of criticism of his views" but he had "insulated himself from the effects of them by folding each in a little piece of cotton wool (Hare 1973a, 144–5).

In making the second, substantive, point, Hare pinpointed *A Theory of Justice*'s leading notion, and controverted his implication that Rawls was garbled—Hare understood what Rawls was about. Again and again, Hare censured the 'fantasy' of the original position. Rawls summoned up intuitions in his thought experiment. Justice would be served because all those in the original position, after they adopted the veil, would come to the same choices about what was appropriate, and about what should be done. But, for Hare, Rawls always extracted this searched-for estimate from people like himself. "A typical man of his times and society, . . . [Rawls] will therefore have many adherents [but] this does not make this a good way of doing philosophy." A "cozy unanimity" prevailed among those whom Rawls petitioned, and he congratulated sensible individuals like himself and those whom he addressed as representing "people generally" (Hare 1973b, 242, 252). The American had no sense of diversity and did not fathom the emptiness of the intuitions of kinfolk. What Rawls took as the rock bottom, Hare saw as cultural chauvinism.

While unspoken in 1973, Hare later made unambiguous a crucial and related accusation. If you trusted intuition and avowed to the death that everyone must dispose of moral questions as you saw them, you were—in the words of *Freedom and Reason*—a fanatic. This sort of person embodied moral absolutes and showed the limits to reaching agreement. In the wake of the publication of *A Theory of Justice*, Hare repeatedly returned to the fanatic. He suggested that Rawls did not have metaethical ideas, in some way above the fray. Rather, the book exhibited the real-world morality of a fanatic. (Hare 1981, 75, 172–3; 1984, 126–8; 1997, 149; Seanor and Fotion (eds.) 1988, 258).

Hare would not let Rawls be. From 1973 to 1979, he took up *A Theory of Justice*'s deficiencies in 11 published essays, not including the two-part review (Wellbank, Snook, and Mason 1982, 238–41). While Hare's *Nachlass* is far less curated and

extensive than the Rawls archives at Harvard, Hare's unpublished notes and correspondence are also preoccupied with Rawls in the 1970s (Hare 2001; uncatalogued material). The American kept his own notes about many things, but in his own way was just as involved with Hare, though privately. Rawls carefully read *Freedom and Reason* three times, and annotated it with special reference to Hare's sections on the fanatic. He elaborated on Hare in a 1500-word memorandum that focused on the fanatic and that concluded with a chart of the chronology of Hare's ideas (Rawls 2002a, Box 38, Folder 8). When Rawls read Hare's later *Moral Thinking*, he recorded every explicit slight to Rawls' own work, and what he recognized (probably correctly) as every implicit slight. He wrote in the margin of one page, "Here, and elsewhere, Hare seems to think of his opponents—those of other views—as idiots" (Rawls 2002b, Box 2, 140). Rawls saw in Hare not liberal Protestantism but the sanctimonious. This was, however, almost always for personal consumption. Despite a now enormous platform, Rawls persistently passed over Hare in public, as had *A Theory of Justice*. Rawls' *Collected Essays*, written over 40 years, also hardly touch on Hare (Rawls 1999, 637) Rawls' primary audiences shared his aloofness: the Blackwell 'companion' to Rawls, of 600 pages, does not have Hare in its index; the same-sized Cambridge companion has one brief footnote to Hare's 1973 piece, but no more (Mandle and Reidy (eds.) 2014; Freeman (ed.) 2003, 454, n 4). Chandran Kukathas and Philip Pettit's *Rawls*: A Theory of Justice *and its Critics* has one allusion to Hare (Kukathas and Pettit 1990, 41). Hare's primary audiences did marginally, but only marginally, better in a far less grand book (Seanor and Fotion (eds.) 1988).

7 Why Canonization?

Why did Rawls triumph? Why do some make it to a hall of fame while others are forgotten? Just because the former were better? Following the pattern of intellectual controversy is essential to answering these questions. But competing 'readings' of the deductions and counter-deductions of the thinkers demand analysis. For my money, these two professors furthered ideas that derived from contrasting but equally self-assured Protestant orientations. The ideas of each were, moreover, rife with strains. Paradox, if not contradiction, marked the standpoint of each man, and it can be argued that only narrow concerns differentiate the two when we take into account the development of both visions and their internal tensions. The non-sectarian Rawls demanded that finite humans embrace the Christian "perspective of eternity" (Rawls 1971, 587). The practicing Anglican Hare denied that human beings could reach this perspective. But did not 'universalizing' an evaluation take Hare to this perspective? When Hare said we could put ourselves in

the shoes of another, how did this differ from putting on Rawls' veil of ignorance? Hare was committed to a Protestantism that hovered around a reformed outlook; Rawls had explicitly rejected this outlook. Yet it has been persuasively contended that Rawls remained a reformed thinker. In *Theory of Justice*, an instructive discussion goes, notions of earned salvation are condemned: differences in talents or abilities are arbitrary from a moral point of view, and achievement based on merit is to be ascribed to forces and opportunities outside of the control of individuals (Nelson 2019). Rawls had wondered about the virtue of utilitarianism before measuring his distance from it. By the 1970s, Hare was cautiously defending a complicated utilitarianism, after years of denigrating this kind of 'naturalism.' The philosophies look as similar as we might expect two pea plants, nourished in different soils, to look. The quality of thought in the writing and its distinctiveness, I believe, are not enough to cause the later repute, or lack of it.

In addition to the written record, we must factor in matters outside that record to construe how the record was appreciated. Fathoming the long-term evaluations of Hare and Rawls additionally obliges us to look at the disposition of each man, and the social context in which the men pursued their livelihoods.

The experience of the Pacific war molded their make-ups, and they were opposing types. Vigorous and aggressive, the Englishman could not stop explicitly reproaching in print what he took to be stupidity. As his son said, the elder Hare did not suffer fools gladly, and "was given to anger, even flashes of rage" (Hare 2002a, 2002b, 308). He was a difficult person, unashamed of his independence. The American, on the other hand, was a controlled gentleman, proper and reserved. He prided himself on his fairness, but he also determined only to heed what he could countenance, and what would not affront his dignity. Although Hare had advocates, he made enemies and might frighten off many, while Rawls was an attraction, especially for a legion of post-graduates.

In addition to psyche, the setting in which the philosophizing occurred has a role. Several features of Anglo-American culture call for consideration. Hare and Rawls had strategic niches in the organizations that legitimated intellectual life in their countries. Catering to Protestant males, who were connected by finance and family, universities of stature assisted their own; a kind of structural nepotism was at work. Journals sponsored one or another man. The publications promoting Hare and Rawls tread in a twilight area between honest appraisal and flattery (or its opposite).

On both sides of the Atlantic, the systems of graduate mentorship provided arrays of supporters, and here because of the size of graduate programs in America and their design, Rawls had a distinct advantage. He developed close relationships with and supervised the dissertations of numerous students who went on to success, promoted his work, and carried forward the commitments he had

inculcated. These kinds of students were also more likely to respect a big book and the great learning that Rawls commanded.

The sheer numbers here are important. Hare directly influenced only a handful of philosophers—perhaps W. D. Hudson, John Lucas, Brian McGuinness, David Pears, Peter Singer, Bernard Williams, and Richard Wollheim. Hare once told John Lucas that to have left no disciples made his life a failure (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). In contrast, Rawls might count Bruce Ackerman, Elizabeth Anderson, Kwame Anthony Appiah, Kenneth Arrow, Benjamin Barber, Claudia Card, Joshua Cohen, Ronald Dworkin, Samuel Freeman, Alan Gibbard, Gilbert Harman, Barbara Herman, Thomas Hill, Erin Kelly, Christine Korsgaard, David Lyons, Frank Michelman, Thomas Nagel, Susan Neiman, Martha Nussbaum, Onora O'Neill, Adrian Piper, Thomas Pogge, Henry Richardson, Michael Sandel, Tim Scanlon, Amartya Sen, and Judith Shklar.

Connected to the different range of students is the number of fields in which Rawls's work might apply. He engaged with multiple disciplines (philosophy, psychology, educational theory, economics and rational choice, legal and constitutional history, political science). The fact that, from the outset, he treated the question of justice as a question of the public square, gave his treatise an immediate interest to policymakers and other civic minded laypeople. Hare came to 'practical ethics' only late in life.

In the competition between the two different national orders of higher learning, the structure of gate-keeping in Anglo-American philosophy also changed to Rawls' benefit. Two differences are notable. While it may be impossible to assess in which country non-cognitivism was more dominant, even by the 1960s professors seriously challenged positivistic inclinations. In Britain itself descriptivists questioned Hare, and many thinkers leaned to a greater linguistic complexity than the fact-value distinction permitted.

The second difference concerns Oxford's standing as the principal place to study in English from the time of World War Two. By the late 1960s, the faculty there had made it greatest impact, and Oxford slipped. Over time, Harvard had built a third August department after the first of William James and Josiah Royce; and the second starring C.I. Lewis. Now, at Harvard, in addition to Rawls, were Henry Aiken, Rogers Albritton, Stanley Cavell, Burton Dreben, Roderick Firth, Nelson Goodman, Robert Nozick, Hilary Putnam, W. V. Quine, Israel Scheffler, and Morton White. No longer Oxford's junior partner, Harvard did not defer to England's philosophy.

The British–American 'special relationship' after World War Two, an aspect of the external world outside the institutions of education, shaped the reactions of academics keeping up with the literature. The Cold War relegated Britain to number two in the West. The English could not quite admit the passing of the

baton to the vulgar Americans. The triumphs of America in the Cold War also added to the milieu that sustained the status of Rawls' book. At 'the end of history,' US-style democracy would conquer the planet. Here another irony: the footnotes of *A Theory of Justice* spanned the entire domain of disciplines, but Rawls had trouble seeing beyond his own country; insularity defined Oxford, but Hare respected The Other more.

Then, at last, the shock of the Vietnam War on American scholars must be recorded. The ugliness of World War Two was one basis for non-cognitivism. Nazi rhetoric had conveyed to the logical positivists that political talk only aroused. Twenty-five years later, Vietnam unsettled Rawls as much as the Japanese enemy had. But the United States warred in Vietnam. Challenging diplomacy in America meant attaining an impeccable vantage point. Rawls's original position did just that, and at just the right moment—an absolute stance to oppose the war was at hand.

Disputation does not give us sufficient enlightenment in grasping renown. To it must be added the agreeableness of a person's character as a community understands it. And we must finally introduce complicated external conditions, intertwined but having dissimilar impacts over time. They involve the matrix of educational institutions, and institutions that have nothing to do with the academy. While a large trouble with the history of philosophy is its devaluation of social events, we do not have a measure of their influence or lack thereof. Although we have a comparative advantage in seeing how two thinkers in different national settings were embroiled in events outside the scholar's carrel, it should not be said that, for example, the war in Vietnam caused Rawls' victory; or that Oxford's decline in relation to Harvard led to a devaluation of Have. But the events are relevant, necessary in addition to temperament and to our sense of the quality of what was said. Intellectual allegiances are contingent on matters other than the written word.

8 Coda

In 1982, three years before his mandatory retirement from the White's Professorship, Hare gave it up, and left Oxford for the University of Florida, Gainesville, as a research professor. For 11 years, he spent winters in Florida, but returned to Oxford for Trinity Term each year. He retired in 1993, bemused by the antics in a decidedly dysfunctional and mediocre American department of philosophy (Hare 2002a, 2002b, 301–4). Rawls became emeritus at Harvard, also in 1993. They both suffered debilitating strokes in that decade and died in 2002, Hare in January, Rawls in December.

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