sist in a final appeal to axioms. As a result, two questions arise which both the skeptic and his opponent are trying to answer. What are the axioms from which value judgments are deduced and on which they ultimately depend for their justification? Are these axioms such that we can claim knowledge on behalf of our value judgments?

The analysis of validation which I have given in this chapter lends some support to this way of looking at the problem. I have emphasized how the validation of any standard or rule depends on our accepting a higher standard or rule. And it is perfectly true that, in this relation of a given standard or rule to a higher one, the first is deducible from the second (in just the ways I have been describing under Methods I, II, and III). It would seem, then, that if we are not to go on to infinity we must arrive at standards or rules that are ultimate. What is there left but to say that these ultimate standards or rules are either arbitrary (and hence are accepted without reason) or are knowable only by a synthetic a priori intuition?

A fundamental mistake is being made here. Certainly there is a deductive element in justifying value judgments, just as there are deductive elements in establishing scientific theories and laws. But this does not mean that evaluative reasoning is like mathematical reasoning in *all* respects. We are overlooking what is *distinctive* about evaluative reasoning. We are trying to fit it into some preconceived logical pattern, such as the analtyic-synthetic dichotomy. If we look at the way we actually do reason about what is good or bad, right or wrong, we find that there is an important difference. Just as such reasoning does not stop at verification of a value judgment but goes on to the validation of standards and rules, so it does not stop at validation. There are two further steps which are *essential* in the complete justification of any value judgment. These are the vindication of whole value systems and the rational choice of a way of life. The next three chapters are concerned with these steps in the justification of value judgments.

4 Value systems and points of view

A. *The concept of a point of view*

In order to understand the third and fourth steps in the justification of value judgments, namely vindication and rational choice, it is first necessary to distinguish two concepts and see how they are related to each other. These are the concept of a value system and that of a point of view. A value system is a set of standards and rules *of a certain kind* arranged according to the place they have in the verification and validation of value judgments (and prescriptions) *of that kind.* Thus a *moral* value system is a set of moral standards and moral rules that are appealed to in verifying moral judgments and moral prescriptions, and that are arranged in an order of relative precedence corresponding to the hierarchy implicit in their validation. An *aesthetic* value system is a set of aesthetic standards and aesthetic rules that are appealed to and validated in the justification of aesthetic judgments and aesthetic prescriptions. In like manner there are political value systems, economic value systems, religious value systems, etiquette value systems, prudential value systems, and so on. In each case, the structure of the system is logically determined by the justification of value judgments and

prescriptions of a particular kind. (We shall see in Part II that prescriptions are justified in the same way that value judgments are justified. A value system includes the standards and rules used in justifying both evaluations and prescriptions, but for the sake of simplicity I shall assume that prescriptions are included whenever value judgments are mentioned in this chapter.)

When value systems are said to be of different kinds, what criterion of classification is being used? The answer lies in the concept of a point of view. If we understand what it means to take a certain point of view, such as the moral or the aesthetic point of view, we will understand what makes a value system a moral or an aesthetic one. What differentiates a moral value system from any other kind is the moral point of view; what differentiates an aesthetic value system is the aesthetic point of view, and so for the other kinds of value systems. Belonging to each point of view are many value systems, often opposed to each other. There is only one moral point of view, for example, but there are many moral value systems. This is reflected in our speech. We talk of *the* moral point of view, but *a* moral system, or *the* aesthetic point of view, but *an* aesthetic system, and so forth. The concept of a point of view, moreover, is a cross-cultural concept, while that of a value system is culture-bound. One point of view may be found in different societies and at different periods of history, even though the value systems belonging to that point of view are composed of different standards and rules organized in different ways. Similarly a point of view shared by different social groups or by different individuals may retain its identity, no matter how varied are the actual value judgments, standards, and rules accepted by them. We identify certain judgments, standards, and rules accepted by an ancient Egyptian as moral ones, for instance, according to the same criteria that we use to identify certain judgments, standards, and rules accepted by an American Indian, or an Australian bushman, or a contemporary Englishman, as moral. Value systems vary from culture to culture, from epoch to epoch, from group to group, and from individual to individual; points of view do not. In order to account for this difference, we must see what it means to take a point of view.

Whenever someone attempts to justify a value judgment by the methods of verification and validation, he is offering reasons in support of the judgment. We may ask two questions about them. Are they relevant reasons? Are they good reasons? All good reasons, of course, must be relevant reasons. But the converse does not hold; what makes a reason a relevant reason is not the same as what makes it a good reason. We must distinguish the *rules of relevance*, which are implicitly or explicitly followed in justifying value judgments, from the *rules of valid inference*. Rules of relevance provide the criteria by which we determine whether a reason offered by someone in justifying a given value judgment is relevant. Rules of valid inference provide the criteria which determine whether a reason we have already found to be relevant is good (warranted, legitimate, valid, logically sound, intellectually acceptable). These two sets of rules together comprise the *canons of reasoning* which constitute the framework of the verification and validation of value judgments.

Taking a certain point of view is nothing but adopting certain canons of reasoning as the framework within which value judgments are to be justified; the canons of reasoning define the point of view. When we verify and validate our judgments from that point of view, we cite reasons which are good (and *a fortiori* relevant) according to the particular canons which define that point of view. We have already said that a value judgment is a moral judgment if it is made from the moral point of view. This means precisely that the judge or evaluator has adopted a set of rules of relevance and valid inference that recognize only certain reasons as relevant and good. It is not my task here to specify what the particular canons of reasoning are which define the moral or any other point of view; I am concerned only with elucidating the concept of a point of view in general. To give a detailed account of what particular canons of reasoning differentiate the moral, the aesthetic, the political, and other points of view is not necessary for distinguishing any point of view from the value systems that belong to it. It is essential to notice, however, that the concept of a point of view covers more than evaluative or normative points of view. There are also such nonnormative points of view as the scientific, the mathematical, and the historical. In each case, what defines the point of view is the canons of reasoning that govern the justification of the assertions made from it. Thus the scientific point of view is defined by the canons of scientific reasoning ("the scientific method"), the mathematical

point of view by the canons of mathematical reasoning, and the historical point of view by the canons of reasoning used by historians.

There is an important difference between what distinguishes a normative from a nonnormative point of view and what distinguishes one normative point of view from another. In the first case, both rules of relevance and rules of valid inference together constitute the differentiae; in the second, only rules of relevance have this function. The methods of science differ from the methods of justifying value judgments not only with regard to the sort of feature which makes a reason relevant, but also with regard to what makes a reason a good reason. A rule in virtue of which a reason is good in scientific justification is not always applicable in the justification of value judgments. In particular, the validation of standards and rules, which is essential to the justification of value judgments, is not a part of scientific reasoning. The rules of valid inference for the empirical sciences differ in this respect from those for normative reasoning. Scientific and normative reasoning also differ in their rules of relevance. What makes a reason relevant to the confirmation of an empirical hypothesis, a causal law, or a theory in the sciences is not the same sort of feature that makes a reason relevant to the verification and validation of a value judgment. It is relevant to the justification of a causal law, for example, that certain phenomena can be explained by it. But a moral rule does not function as an explanation of the particular acts which fall under it. To cite instances in which a moral rule is being followed or in which it is being violated is not relevant to its justification. The capacity of a scientific law to account for particular cases, on the other hand, is just what is relevant to its justification. Nonnormative points of view differ from normative points of view, then, in respect of both rules of relevance and rules of valid inference.

The situation is quite different when we compare one normative point of view with another (say, the moral with the aesthetic). Here the rules of valid inference are the *same* for both points of view. They are the rules which define the processes of verification and validation as these were analyzed in the last chapter. No matter what the different points of view from which value judgments are made, they are always justified in the same way (i.e., according to the same rules of valid inference). We shall see in the following

two chapters that this is also true of the third and fourth steps in the justification of value judgments. The rules of valid inference which govern the processes of vindication and rational choice remain identical for moral judgments, aesthetic judgments, and all other kinds of value judgments.

What, then, differentiates one normative point of view from another? The answer lies in the rules of relevance which are appropriate to each. To take one point of view rather than another is to decide to follow one set of rules of relevance rather than another. The canons of reasoning which define the two points of view do not vary in their rules of valid inference, but only in their rules of relevance. What makes a reason good in justifying a moral judgment is the same thing that does so in justifying an aesthetic judgment, *assuming that both reasons have already been found to be relevant to their respective judgments.* But if we ask what makes each reason relevant, we find that different features are appealed to. What makes a reason relevant to the justification of a value judgment is very different in the case of a moral and of an aesthetic judgment. When we justify our judgment that a certain novel is good on the ground that it inspires the reader to become a morally better person, our judgment is moral and not aesthetic. The standard referred to is one typically used in justifying moral judgments; we are judging the novel from the moral point of view. If on the other hand we judge it to be a good novel because its style is appropriate to its subject matter, our judgment is made from the aesthetic point of view. Exactly why one reason is a moral reason and the other aesthetic is a question I shall not attempt to answer, since it involves specifying the rules of relevance that define these particular points of view. What I do wish to make clear is that the difference between the two points of view lies in the relevance of the reasons accepted in justification of a given value judgment, not in the goodness of the reasons. We shall see in Part III that the ground for saying this is the fact that *all normative languages are used in fundamentally the same ways for the same purposes, but different normative languages are being used in these ways for these purposes.*

Before I examine the relation between a point of view and the various value systems which may be said to belong to it, one fur-

ther consideration about the relations among points of view should be brought out. This is the fact that points of view overlap and shade into one another. I was over-simplifying when I spoke as if one point of view can be sharply separated from all others. It is important to see that this is not always the case. Generally a rule of relevance which is included in the canons of reasoning that define one point of view is not included in the canons that define another point of view, but sometimes this does occur. When it does, the two points of view may be said to "overlap." The rule of relevance is common to both points of view. For example, it is relevant to justifying (validating) a rule from the moral point of view to consider its effects upon the welfare of people. This is also relevant to justifying a civil law from the political point of view. Here the moral and political points of view overlap. (The overlapping of points of view will be considered further in Chapter 11.)

To say that two points of view shade into one another is to say that one cannot always tell when a given instance of justifying a value judgment belongs to one point of view or the other (and hence cannot tell what sort of value judgment it is). For any two points of view P_1 and P_2, there will be clear-cut cases of reasoning that belong in P_1 and clear-cut cases that belong in P_2. But there may be cases of reasoning which we are not sure about placing in either P_1 or P_2, although we may be confident that they do not belong in any other points of view P_3, P_4, . . . P_n. For example, we might justify saying that a child acted wrongly in an unprovoked attack on another child on the ground that "people don't do that." This is clearly not an aesthetic or religious judgment. But is it a judgment from the moral point of view or from the point of view of etiquette or custom? There is no sharp division between the latter points of view in this situation; we must simply acknowledge that the judgment could be classified either way. All points of view are in this sense vague. We can *draw* dividing boundaries if we like, but it is doubtful whether doing so will serve any useful purpose. And in any case we would not be justified in criticizing others for drawing different boundaries. It is important to notice those respects in which two points of view are clearly distinct and those respects in which they shade into one another. But it is not necessary for the clarity or accuracy of our thinking to force a sharp distinction between points of view by stipulating what reasons shall definitely be included in one and excluded from the other.

I come now to the relation between points of view and value systems. What does it mean to say that a given value system "belongs to" a particular point of view? It means that the standards and rules which constitute the value system are, first of all, the standards and rules appealed to when value judgments are *verified* in accordance with a certain set of rules of relevance, and are secondly themselves *validated* in accordance with the same set of rules of relevance. Thus a value system is a moral value system (i.e., a system of moral standards and moral rules) when the rules of relevance that define the moral point of view govern the verifying process that appeals to those standards and rules, and the validation of those standards and rules themselves. It is rules of relevance (or more generally, the canons of reasoning) that define a point of view, not any specific standards or rules of conduct. As a result, it is perfectly possible for various systems of standards and rules of conduct to belong to one point of view. In such a case the same canons of reasoning would govern the justification of judgments, standards, and rules within each of the value systems concerned.

It is for this reason that it makes sense to speak of the moralities or moral codes of different societies. Each moral code is made up of different standards and rules arranged in different hierarchies of relative precedence. But each is a *moral* code, nonetheless. In each code value judgments are made and justified from the moral point of view. And this means that the framework within which verification and validation take place is determined by the canons of reasoning which define the moral point of view. To take the moral point of view is not to adopt a specific moral code. It is to be disposed to carry on normative reasoning or normative discourse in a certain way, according to certain rules of relevance and by using a certain normative language (as analyzed in Part III). Hence, we cannot say that some one standard, such as the greatest happiness principle, or some one rule, such as the Golden Rule, is *defining* of morality. We must be willing to speak (as we ordinarily do in our nonphilosophical moments, and as anthropologists and sociologists do) of the moral codes of headhunting societies and of juvenile street gangs, of the Greek moral code and of the Christian moral

code, of slave-morality and master-morality, of a liberal moral system and of a conservative moral system.

In a similar manner, there are many systems of aesthetic norms, many sets of political principles, many religions with different standards for the sacred, the holy, and the divine. What makes each of them value systems of a certain kind (aesthetic, political, or religious) is the canons of reasoning which govern the justification of the particular standards or rules of which they are composed. Theoretically, *any* standard for evaluating objects could serve as an aesthetic standard, *any* rule of conduct could be a moral rule. It is an empirical matter, not a matter of definition, that certain standards or rules are never moral but always aesthetic, or are never aesthetic but always moral, or are sometimes both aesthetic and moral. There is no inherent characteristic of a standard or rule which prevents it from belonging to a certain sort of value system or which necessitates that it belong to a certain sort. (This point will be explored further in Chapter 12.) The only thing that counts is the relevance of the standard or rule in the justification of value judgments and the sorts of reasons that are relevant to its validation. These are empirical matters in virtue of the fact that the rules of relevance involved are the rules implicitly or explicitly followed by people when they use a certain normative language, that is, when they actually carry on moral discourse, or aesthetic discourse, or political discourse.

B. In what sense can points of view be justified?

To show that a particular value system is a moral one (or an aesthetic one) is not to justify it in any way. It is only to classify it descriptively. This also holds for an individual standard or rule. To show that a standard is a moral standard is to contrast it with *nonmoral* standards. It is not to justify it as being moral (i.e., morally good) rather than *immoral* (i.e., morally bad.) The statement that any standard, rule, or value system belongs to one point of view rather than another never constitutes a reason for adopting the standard, rule, or system. We must not confuse specifying the *kind* of justification which is appropriate to something with actually justifying it. When we say that a standard, rule, or value system belongs to a certain point of view, we are saying that certain reasons and not others will be relevant to its justification. We are not *giving* such relevant reasons. In like manner, to justify a standard or rule is not to classify it as belonging to a certain point of view, even though we cannot justify it without presupposing a certain point of view (i.e., without having committed ourselves to following a set of canons of reasoning). We justify a standard or rule, as we saw in Chapter 3, by *validating* it. We justify a whole value system, as we shall see in Chapter 5, by *vindicating* it. The process of validation is always carried out within the framework of a point of view, but it is not part of that process to *state* that the standard or rule belongs to a certain point of view. (We shall see in Chapter 5 that vindication is not carried out within the framework of a point of view.)

It should be remarked that we never validate a point of view; it is not the sort of thing that can be validated. This is so because validating something presupposes a point of view. We can validate something only by following the canons of reasoning that set the framework of validation, and such canons are precisely what constitute a point of view. We validate standards and rules of a certain kind, not the criteria that determine what kind they are. We validate moral standards and rules, for instance, by appeal to other (higher) standards and rules in a moral value system. The canons of reasoning that govern the entire process define both the method of validation itself (through the rules of valid inference) and the point of view which tells us (through the rules of relevance) that the value system is a moral one. Without the canons of reasoning validation cannot occur. Consequently they cannot themselves be validated.

Can a point of view be justified in *any* sense? This question requires us to distinguish carefully four things.

1. Stating the canons of reasoning which define a point of view.
2. Deciding to adopt the canons of reasoning of a point of view (i.e., deciding to take the point of view).
3. Justifying the statements made in 1.
4. Justifying the decision made in 2.

It might at first appear that the task of 1 is simply to describe the rules which govern the way people think about a certain matter. But this is not quite accurate. The canons of reasoning which define a point of view do have an empirical base in the way people actually

carry on their reasoning. But these canons are normative: they establish norms for *correct* reasoning; they are *guides* for people to follow in their reasoning. Our task in 1 is *the explication of an ideal* which is only implicit in the reasoning of people. Consider the parallel between explicating the canons of reasoning implicit in a normative point of view and explicating those implicit in a non-normative point of view, such as the scientific.

To explicate the canons of scientific thinking is to state the rules of inference according to which scientists justify their assertions. This is not simply to describe how any particular scientist actually thinks; any particular scientist might make a mistake in his thinking. Nor is it to describe how all scientists or a statistically large majority of scientists actually think. For the rules of inference which we want to explicate are prescriptive rules, not generalizations. Their function is to *regulate* thought, not simply to express *regularities* in the way thinking is in fact done. No doubt these rules originally emerged from the patterns of thought actually present in the thinking of physicists, chemists, astronomers, and other scientists. But they now serve to guide that thinking, in the sense that they are the very rules by which scientists determine whether a mistake has been made, and whether a given argument is to be accepted as confirming a hypothesis. The canons of scientific reasoning are the rules which scientists themselves appeal to in *judging* (*evaluating*) the logical soundness, the warrantability, the intellectual acceptability, of the reasons they give as scientists in justifying their assertions. (We might call such judging "logical evaluation," that is, making value judgments from the logical point of view.) We might say that the canons of scientific reasoning are the rules of thinking which an *ideal* scientist would follow in justifying his assertions. They are the rules which anyone must follow *if he is to be fully rational* in his thinking about scientific matters. To explicate such rules is to state clearly and in specific detail how a scientist would reason if he never made a mistake, that is, if he always gave good reasons for his assertions. The same considerations would apply to explicating the canons of mathematical reasoning and of historical reasoning. (This defines, it seems to me, one of the main tasks of philosophy; the tasks, specifically, of the philosophy of science, the philosophy of mathematics, and the philosophy of history.)

It is in this sense that the task of 1, namely the statement of the canons of normative reasoning, consists in explicating an ideal. To state the canons of reasoning that define a normative point of view is to specify the rules of relevance and of valid inference which anyone would follow, *if he were fully rational*, in verifying and validating value judgments of a certain kind. They are the rules a person would follow if he were always to give good (and *a fortiori* relevant) reasons in justifying his judgments and in arguing against the judgments of others. It is the task of explicating the rules of valid inference that I am trying to accomplish in Chapters 3, 5, and 6 of this book. The steps of verification, validation, vindication, and rational choice, which make up the entire process of justifying value judgments, are all ideal procedures of reasoning. They are the procedures that must be followed if we wish to discover the most well founded value judgments there can be.

What, then, is the difference between 1 and 2, that is, between stating the canons of reasoning which define a point of view and deciding to adopt such canons? We are now in a position to locate precisely the respects in which they differ. To state the canons of reasoning is to *explicate* an ideal in the sense just explained. To decide to adopt such canons of reasoning is to *commit oneself* to an ideal. It is to decide to follow, to the best of our ability, the rules of relevance and valid inference specified in 1. For moral reasoning, the distinction may be stated as follows. To explicate the canons of moral reasoning (i.e., the canons of reasoning which define the moral point of view) is the task of the moral philosopher. To decide to justify one's moral judgments according to such canons is to adopt the role of the moral judge. The moral philosopher tells us what the moral point of view is; the moral judge takes that point of view. (A third role is that of the moral agent. His task is to live a moral life, i.e., to live in such a way that his conduct and character fulfill moral standards and rules.) The moral philosopher tries to state what makes a reason a good reason in moral argument. The moral judge tries to *give* good reasons in moral argument. It is the moral judge, not the moral philosopher, who carries on moral discourse. The moral philosopher carries on second-order (philosophical) discourse about moral discourse.

Now let us turn to the distinction between 3 (justifying the state-

ments made in 1, and 4 (justifying the decisions made in 2). The phrase "to justify a point of view" might mean either of these two things. It might mean "to justify an explication of the canons defining a point of view," or it might mean "to justify the decision to take a point of view." These two activities of justification, although logically connected, are not identical. And they are both to be distinguished from the justification of value judgments. Focussing our attention upon the moral point of view again, we can see immediately that the task of justifying value judgments is the task of the moral judge, and that this is very different from the task of justifying a person's decision to *become* a moral judge, that is, his decision to adopt the moral point of view. The moral judge has, by definition, already adopted the moral point of view. He is thinking *within* its framework. The person who must justify a decision to adopt the moral point of view is *outside* that framework. He is trying to decide whether there are good reasons to place himself within it. Hence the rules of reasoning which define that framework cannot serve to guide his decision. In short, the decision to adopt the moral point of view is not a moral decision.

The question we must answer concerning 3 is this: How is it possible—if it is possible at all—to justify the explication of the canons of reasoning which define a point of view? The canons of reasoning which would have to govern such a justification could not be the canons of reasoning which are explicated. The canons governing the explication of a point of view may be called the canons of *philosophical* reasoning. They are the rules and methods of reasoning which the philosopher (ideally) follows when he attempts to explicate the canons of all types or ways of reasoning (including his own). When the philosopher attempts to explicate the canons of scientific reasoning, mathematical reasoning, historical reasoning, or normative reasoning (including the moral, aesthetic, political, and so on), his method of explication is itself governed by canons of reasoning. These are the canons by reference to which one can decide whether a given explication is justified. What are these canons of philosophical reasoning?

This is by no means an easy question to answer, but I should like to offer the following account as at least a first step toward doing so. We might say that an explication is justified when it is shown to be

correct or accurate. The test for correctness or accuracy would be this—any person in any culture at any time in history, who understood what the statements expressing the explication asserted, on reflecting about the conditions under which he was willing to apply such terms as "sound," "warranted," "legitimate," "valid," "relevant," and "good" (or their equivalents in his own language) to reasons given for or against value judgments, would be disposed to admit that the explicated rules would govern the normative reasoning of a fully rational mind. Such an opinion would always be subject to correction in light of further reflection by others or by the person himself. I would add, as a further condition, that during his reflection the person maintain a high degree of objectivity. By this I mean that he exert every effort to prevent his own value judgments, standards, and rules from influencing his opinion. The key to this method is critical reflection concerning the conditions under which a person would be willing to claim that reasons offered in support of a value judgment were sound, warranted, legitimate, valid, relevant, or good, and, on the other hand, the conditions under which the person would reject offered reasons as unsound, unwarranted, illegitimate, invalid, irrelevant, or bad.

This method for determining the accuracy or correctness of an explication may be thought of as providing criteria which are endlessly corrigible. We might say that an explication is accurate or correct *to the extent that* (i) more persons, (ii) from more varied cultural and historical backgrounds, (iii) upon longer and more careful reflection, (iv) exercising greater and greater objectivity, (v) tend more and more to agree that the explicated rules do define what they would mean by a well established justification of a value judgment. Thus philosophers might gradually arrive at closer approximations to an ideal concept of rationality in the universe of normative discourse. (In this book I am offering my own conception of this ideal. It is expressed in the canons of reasoning set fourth as the fourfold process of verification, validation, vindication, and rational choice. I am claiming that this process is an accurate or correct explication of rational thinking when we try to justify our value judgments and prescriptions. This claim is open to the sort of correction which I have just indicated as being appropriate in philosophical discussion.)

It should be noted that even the most accurate explication of the canons of reasoning which define a point of view does not provide a justification of the value judgments made from that point of view. The explication states what an ideally rational justification of those value judgments consists in; it does not involve the actual justifying of the judgments. To explicate certain canons of reasoning is not to use those canons of reasoning in our thinking. To state what makes a reason a good reason for a value judgment is not to *give* a good reason for the judgment. What is more, the ability or inability to state correctly what makes a reason a good reason is neither causally nor logically connected with the ability or inability to give good reasons. We may, as moral judges, be unable always to follow the canons of reasoning which moral philosophers have correctly explicated. The correctness of the explication is no guarantee that moral judges will never make mistakes. Similarly we can be mistaken, as moral philosophers, about the canons of moral reasoning and still, as moral judges, be able to give good reasons for our judgments. In such a case the moral philosopher would simply not have a correct understanding of what makes the moral judge's good reasons good. Thus the accuracy or inaccuracy of an explication is irrelevant to the logical soundness of a justification for a value judgment. The fact that a person may be able to give a sound justification and not be able to state accurately what canons of reasoning he is following shows that philosophical acumen is not necessary for practical wisdom. (The parallel with regard to scientific reasoning makes the point even clearer, a good scientist need not be a good philosopher of science.)

Is there a similar independence between justifying an explication of a point of view and justifying the decision to take a point of view? That is, is there any logical connection between 3 and 4? We must not confuse 4 (justifying the decision to take a point of view) with justifying value judgments within the framework of a point of view. I have pointed out that the decision to take a point of view cannot be justified in terms of the canons of reasoning that define the point of view, since the decision to take the point of view is made outside its framework. We are still confronted with the question of how such a decision can be justified. An answer to this question can be found by considering the relation between 3 and 4. I shall argue

that 3 (an accurate explication of the canons of reasoning that define a point of view), does provide 4 (the justification for a decision to take that point of view.) In other words, although the justification of value judgments (within the framework of an already adopted point of view) is independent of 3, the justification of the decision to take a point of view is not independent of 3.

Deciding to take a point of view is deciding to reason in a certain way, namely according to the canons which define the point of view. How does one find out what these canons are? By means of the philosopher's explication of them. When the philosopher's explication is accurate, it tells us how we must think if we are to take the point of view. It tells us the rules of valid inference (common to all normative points of view) and the rules of relevance (unique to each point of view) which we must follow if we have decided to adopt the point of view. But as my analysis of 1 showed, the philosopher's explication is not merely a description of how people do think when they have adopted a point of view. It is the explication of an *ideal* way of thinking. It tells us how we would think (upon adopting a point of view) if we were fully rational. The canons of reasoning explicated by the philosopher guarantee that, if a person carries on his reasoning in accordance with them, his reasoning will always be logically sound. Now we can see why the decision to adopt a point of view is *always* justified. It is the decision to commit oneself to an ideal of rationality. Deciding to adopt a point of view is deciding to follow the canons of reasoning which define what it means to reason in the best (i.e., the most rational) way possible.

Another way to put this is as follows. What an accurate explication explicates is the ideal to which everyone who takes a certain point of view is committed in the act of taking it. To take the moral point of view, for example, is to commit oneself to the ideal of always giving good and relevant reasons when justifying moral judgments, moral prescriptions, moral standards, and moral rules. One might not be able to fulfill this ideal, but to have adopted the moral point of view is to have placed oneself in the position of striving to realize it and of having one's reasoning subject to correction in light of it. The decision to take the moral point of view is simply the decision to be as rational as one can concerning moral

matters. Such a decision is justified precisely because this is what the decision consists in. To decide *not* to take the moral point of view would be to decide not to be as rational as possible in moral matters. It would be a decision to be less than rational and hence would be an irrational decision.

The parallel with scientific reasoning will again be of help. To take the scientific point of view, we have seen, is to have our thinking about the world guided by the canons of scientific method. These canons define the ideal of scientific reasoning. They are the canons which anyone who does science must follow if his reasons are to be good reasons and if his inferences are to be valid inferences. Now what would it mean to *justify* the decision to take the scientific point of view? It would mean simply to give good reasons for deciding to follow the canons of scientific method. But once we see that these canons themselves define the ideal of rationality in science, we also see that the decision to follow these canons must by its very nature be justified. For if a person were to decide not to follow these canons, his decision would be a *paradigm* of what we mean by irrationality in empirical matters. To decide to adopt the scientific point of view is nothing else but to decide to be as rational as possible in gaining empirical knowledge about the world. What decision could be more rational, and hence more justified, than this? The same argument holds in the parallel case of normative reasoning. Deciding to adopt a normative point of view is nothing else but deciding to be as rational as possible about our value judgments and prescriptions. To decide not to adopt such a point of view is the very thing we *mean* by being irrational. Such a decision, in other words, would be a paradigm of an unjustified decision.

The demand for a justification of the decision to take a point of view is a peculiar demand. Once we understand the nature of the decision, *we see that it is not necessary to justify it.* We might express this by saying that the justification of the decision follows from its nature. Or we might prefer to say that such a decision *cannot* be justified, because we are unable to find any reasons outside of the nature of the decision itself to justify it. However, this does not mean that the decision is not justified; for no such justification is necessary. To demand justifying reasons here is to demand reasons

for being rational, and this is a meaningless demand. If a rational decision is a justified decision and a decision to be rational is a rational decision, then the decision at hand is as justified as it can ever be, simply because it is a decision to be rational. No further reasons (than the fact that it is a decision to be rational) can be given to justify it, but no further reasons need be given. To have shown that it is a decision to be rational is to have justified it in the only way it can be justified.

To take a point of view, then, is to adopt canons of reasoning as guides to the verification of value judgments and the validation of standards and rules. It is justified simply because it is a rational way of thinking. But we must draw a sharp contrast between justifying a point of view in this sense and justifying (vindicating) a value system. To vindicate a value system is not to justify canons of reasoning, but to use those canons in justifying the value system itself. The canons so used are rules of valid inference only. Rules of relevance do not apply, since in order to justify a particular value system (which belongs to a point of view) we must step *outside* the point of view. We justify a moral system, for example, by reference to a whole way of life, and a whole way of life includes all kinds of value systems, nonmoral as well as moral. The justification of a moral system as a whole is not a moral justification since it goes beyond the moral point of view. That point of view governs the verification of moral judgments by appeal to moral standards and rules, and the validation of those standards and rules by appeal to higher standards and rules. But to attempt to justify the entire set of standards and rules requires that we go beyond validation (and hence go beyond the moral point of view) to a different sort of process, namely vindication. I shall explain the nature of this shift from validation to vindication in the next chapter. For the present I only want to point out that vindication, the third step in normative justification, is a reasoning process that must transcend any given point of view, including the point of view of the value system which is being vindicated. In vindicating the value system, we must consider a whole way of life which cuts across many points of view. Consequently the canons of reasoning that define the process of vindication are the rules of inference which differentiate

normative from nonnormative reasoning. They are not the rules of relevance which differentiate one normative point of view from another.

We are dealing here with two social practices, each defined by its own set of rules. There is the social practice of a value system and there is the social practice of normative reasoning. The rules defining a value system are rules of conduct; the rules defining normative reasoning are rules of thought (or rules of inference). The latter rules are those which we *use* in justifying the former rules. The rules so used are themselves justified by means of a correct philosophical explication which shows that they embody an ideal of rationality. The difference between the two sets of rules is reflected in the different methods of justifying them: vindication in the one case and explication in the other. Both methods are practiced outside the framework of a point of view. When I discuss the process of vindication in the next chapter, it should be remembered that I am trying to explicate the rules of reasoning which govern our justification of a whole value system. I am not trying to justify the act of taking a point of view, nor am I engaging in the practice of vindication itself.

5 The justification of value judgments: vindication

A. *Validation and vindication*

I take the distinction between validation and vindication from Professor Herbert Feigl's essay, "Validation and Vindication: An Analysis of the Nature and the Limits of Ethical Arguments" (in Wilfred Sellars and John Hospers, eds., *Readings in Ethical Theory*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1952, pp. 667-680). Professor Feigl makes the distinction in the following way. We can validate our claims to knowledge, he says, only by referring to the basic rules of deductive and inductive logic. Similarly we can validate our moral judgments only by referring to the supreme norms of a given ethical system. The rules of logic and the supreme norms are the "validating principles" which constitute the "frame of validation" within which all validation must take place. Now suppose there is disagreement about these validating principles. How can such a disagreement be resolved? Not by rational argument, Feigl claims, because rational argument presupposes agreement on a set of validating principles. Feigl suggests three possible ways in which such disagreement can be "removed":