HARE ON MORAL UNIVERSALIZABILITY : A CRITICAL SURVEY

KANTI LAL DAS

It is customarily held that moral expressions are nothing but the outcome of a certain kind of attitude. But the question is how does a moral attitude differ from a non-moral-attitude? One plausible reply is that unlike a non-moral attitude a moral attitude is over-riding. A moral attitude usually interferes action. But the modern minds think otherwise. They conceive that one of the salient features of moral attitude is that it has got the property of universalizabiltiy. For example, 'If it is good for x, it is equally good for anyone else in the same relevant circumstances'. Here the phrase 'anyone else' has got the mark of universalizability. Since moral terms are supposed to be universalizable, one moral term can be replaced by other. This makes sense to say that if a statement is analytically fit for any moral term, it must also be analytically fit for every other moral term too. But this may not be the case in non-moral terms.

R.M. Hare in his book *Freedom and Reason* has claimed that moral judgements are universalizable. In explicating moral concept of universalizability, Hare recalls Kant. Like Kant, Hare goes on to say that the key concept of moral universalizability constitutes a test by means of which we come to know whether a principle on which we propose to act is or is not a moral principle. Kant in his *Groundwork* says." Act only on the maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.'[1] We think that the basis of moral universalizability is originated from Kantian ethics. At the same time we also think that Hare's theory of moral universalizability is very much Kantian in nature. Hare claims that the fundamental principle of morality is that : whatever rule any agent applies to other persons, he must also apply to himself and vice-versa. By invoking the

Indian Philosophical Quarterly XXVIII No 3
July 2001

principle of moral universalizability, Hare calls upon the requirement of rationality on the part of the moral agent. But we think that such type of plea deviates Hare from Kant. If Hare conceives that moral universalizability is solely based on the will of the agent, then his theory turns into subjective in character. Like Kant, Hare does not conceive that a universalizable moral judgement is the outcome of moral practice, rather he wants to maintain that a universalizable moral judgement is one 'which the agent does will to accept as universal practice.'

According to Hare when a man thinks morally, he is 'compelled to universalize his volitions'[2] This compulsion is, of course, a logical compulsion which can not be misapprehended. Hare says, ".....if all that a person is concerned with is how to promote the interests of, e.g; his family, let him by all means discuss this question to his heart's content; but let him not confuse this sort of question with that which is troubling the man who asks ' what ought a man (any man) to do when faced with circumstances like this ?" [3]

Although Hare recalls Kant in explicating his concept of moral universalizabiltiy, but unlike Kant and many others Hare's notion of moral universalizabiltiy is formal as he borrowed the concept of predicate logic in formulating his argument. Kant elsewhere, of course, applies the concept of modal logic. When Kant says, "It is impossible .....except "a good will",[4] he was very much aware of the implication of modal logic. But like Hare, we think, Kant does not use the concept of predicate logic. Hare, however, tries to establish his argument of moral universalizability rather indirectly. His logical argument can be stated like the following :

Any judgement having descriptive meaning must be universalizable.

Moral judgements do have descriptive meaning.

Therefore, moral judgements are universalizable.

The legitimacy of the above argument, however, hinges on the specific answers of the following questions :

(i) What does Hare mean by descriptive meaning?

(ii) In what sense or senses moral judgements do have descriptive meaning ?

(iii) In what sense a moral judgement having descriptive meaning is universalizable?

The legitimate replies to these questions will prove that moral judgements are universalizable. Let us examine these questions in turn after Hare.

In interpretating descriptive meaning, Hare, at the very outset, starts with descriptive judgement. "A judgement is descriptive", says Hare, "if in it the predicate or predicates are descriptive terms and the mode is indicative". [5] It is said that barring descriptive judgements, we have other judgements, say, e.g; imperative judgements in which predicates are also to be descriptive terms. But like a descriptive judgment, an imperative judgement lacks indicative mode. For example, the word 'silent' in the imperative sentence 'Be silent' is rated as a descriptive term, but the sentence under consideration should not be rated as a descriptive judgement as it lacks indicative mode. Other important aspect of a descriptive judgement, says Hare, is that barring one place predicate, it may have relational predicate. The predicate 'hit', e.g; used in the sentence 'John hit James' is understood as a two-place relational predicate as it is predicated of the ordered pair of the subjects John and James.

So far we have examined after Hare the notion of descriptive meaning with regard to descriptive judgement and also the nature of predicate terms by means of which a descriptive judgement is composed . Let us pass on to the question (ii).

According to Hare moral utterances are essentially imperatives. But he tells us that moral imperatives are universalizable. According to Hare, the singular imperative, say, e.g; 'I say to John : Shut the door!' is not universalizable as it actually means : John shut the door here and now'. In the case of singular imperatives, the imperative terms are solely associated with the singular person and hence it cannot earn the status of universalizability. But when we say that 'John ought to shut the door', we are in effect inclined to say: Let everyone in John's circumstances shut the door. Hare opines that every moral utterance must possess two salient features, viz; prescriptivity and universalizability.

What Hare claims in the above is that barring singular imperatives all other imperatives are universalizable as they do have descriptive meaning like a descriptive judgement. Let us examine in what senses imperatives do have descriptive meaning? Hare attempts to show in a number of ways in what senses imperatives do have descriptive meaning common to indicative. At the very outset

Hare attempts to make it clear by making a distinction between phrastic and neustic. According to Hare there must have some common element between the imperative, e.g; 'shut the door', and the indicative e.g; 'you are going to shut the door' as both are about the same thing, namely, 'your shutting the door in the immediate future'. This common part is called by Hare the phrastic. Hare says, ' I shall call the part of the sentence that is common to both moods ('your shutting the door in the immediate future') the *phrastic*; and the part that is different in the case of commands and statements ('yes' or please',) the *neustic* "[6] Phrastic means 'to point out' or 'to indicate' and neustic means 'to nod assent'. Hare conceives that both phrastic and neustic are used indifferently of imperative and indicative speech. Following the very meaning of the words *phrastic* and *neustic*, the utterance of the sentence containing these words can be linguistically paraphrased as:[7].

(i) The speaker points out or indicates what he is going to state to be the case or command to be made the case.

(ii) He nods, as if to say, 'It is the case or do it'.

Thus it appears from the above that it is mainly for the phrastic part that an imperative possesses descriptive meaning and thereby claims to be universalizable.

Barring the above, Hare also conceives some other common grounds between indicatives and imperatives. He goes on to say that at times it appears to be the case that the assent of both indicatives and imperatives is similar. For example when I said 'you are going to shut the door', and you replied 'yes', this would be a sign of assent. This type of assent appears at par with the assent arising from imperatives, say, e.g; when I said 'shut the door', and you replied, yes sir.

Secondly: Hare conceives that the sign of negation 'not' has had the part of the phrastic of both indicatives and imperatives. The sentence: You are not going to shut the door', can be linguistically paraphrased at par with: 'Your not shutting the door in the immediate future, Yes. Similarly, 'Do not shut the door' can be linguistically paraphrased at par with 'Your not shutting the door in the immediate future, please. The negation sign 'not' has also got the same use in the case of neustic. It appears in the case of modal sentence containing the word 'may'. The modal sentence: 'You may shut the door' equally means: 'I do not tell you not to shut the door' and this in turn ultimately be transformed into : 'You not shutting

the door in the immediate future, not please'. Similarly, the modal sentence; 'You may be going to shut the door' can finally be transformed into; 'Your not shutting the door in the immediate future, not-yes'.

Thirdly, Hare observes that like the negative sign 'not' the other logical connectives, say, e.g; 'and', either-or', 'if-then' etc; can also be regarded as part of the phrastic of sentence. They have also common basis between indicatives and imperative. The same is true also in the case of quantifiers, mainly 'all' (in symbol '(x)'); and 'some' (in symbol '($x)'). Ordinarily, it may appear that the use of these words in the case of indicatives differs from the use of these words in the case of imperatives. But Hare tells us that this surface disparity of use is mainly caused by an accident of grammar. He, however, conceives that "by using the ordinary logical connectives, as they are used in the indicative mood, in the phrastics of our remodelled imperative sentences, we could do with the revised imperative mood everything that we now do with the natural one."[8] Accordingly, it would be possible for us to have an indicative sentence instead of a simple command. The simple command: 'Shut the door or put the door in position, said to John', can linguistically be transcribed into an indicative sentence: "John is going to shut the door or put the door stop in position" true.

Fourthly, the principle of contradiction can equally be brought into play in the phrastic of both indicatives and imperatives. Like two indicatives, two imperatives can also be shown to be contradictory with each other. The simple indicatives : 'You are going to shut the door'; is contradictory to 'You are not going to shut the door'. Likewise the simple imperative : 'Shut the door' is contradictory to 'Do not shut the door'. Hare opines that at times the contradiction of simple imperatives does not seem apparent. In a situation like this it would be possible for us, says Hare, to have the contradictory form with some other considerations.

Fifthly, The law of excluded middle, in symbol (pv~p), can also be brought to bear in the case of imperatives. Hare opines that one's non-utterance of the sentence: 'Shut the door' does not clearly indicate: 'Do not shut the door'. It may even mean: You may either shut the door or not shut the door' or it can say nothing at all. Similarly, one's non-utterance of the sentence: 'You are not going to shut the door' does not clearly indicate: You are not going to shut the door'. Rather it may

even mean: 'You may be going to shut the door or you may be going not to shut the door' or it can say nothing at all. But the situation would be completely different if anybody is being asked: Are you going to shut the door or not? In this situation, if he is willing to reply, he must have to reply in the form of 'pv~p', i.e, 'Either I am going to shut the door or I am not'. Likewise, if he asked: 'Shall you shut the door or not?, he has to reply : 'Either shut it or do not shut it'.

Finally, like indicatives the entailment relation also holds good in the case of imperatives. To say that P entails q, (in symbol 'p → q',) is to say that it would logically be impossible that p is true but q is false. [in symbol - M (p.-q)]. Morally it is said that a sentence p entails a sentence q if the fact that a person assents to p but dissents from q is a sufficient criterion for saying that he has misunderstood one or other of the sentences. If imperatives are supposed to be universalizable as indicatives, then they have the logical force of 'all'. Accordingly, if one understands the meaning of the would 'all' (in symbol ('x')'), used in the sentence: Take all the boxes to the station and also understands the meaning of the imperative: This is one of the boxes; but at the same breath refuses to assent the imperative: Take this box to the station, it logically means to say that he fails to make out any of these three sentences used in the argument. The failure is simple for the fact that in this argument the principle of entailment does not hold good.

So far we have, after Hare, examined the various ways in which both indicatives and imperatives have common phrastic element. This phrastic part is related to a possible state of affairs. For example, there underlies a possible state of affairs referred to by the phrastic: Your shutting the door in the immediate future. This reference is by no means held up by other means as both indicatives and imperatives have to refer to a state of affairs which they are about. Should we then say that imperatives like indicatives are verifiable as they are related to a state of affairs? One can raise a quip by saying that although the phrastic part of both indicatives and imperatives are related to a state of affairs, it is by no means at par with the statement as understood by the logicians. Anticipating this objection, Hare, then, goes on to say that 'it would be unfortunate if the verification criterion were thought to impugn the meaningfulness of all but indicative sentences - as if 'shut the door was as meaningless as 'Frump the bump."[9]

The above consideration makes it clear in what respects imperatives do have descriptive meaning and how many different ways imperatives remain at par with indicatives. Let us pass on to the question (iii).

Let us first examine in what sense a descriptive judgement is claimed to be universalizable. Then we pass on to examine the point that a moral judgement (i.e; an imperative) having descriptive meaning must also be universalizable. Let us examine the following argument:

This is red.

Therefore: Everything like this in the relevant respect is red.

Here the lone premise 'This is red' is considered to be a descriptive statement. It entails the conclusion : Everything like this in the relevant respect is red : Here the expression 'relevant respect' is important to be clarified as it holds the key role in legitimizing the above argument. Alternatively, it can best be approached by saying that the concept of universalizability primarily hinges on the expression 'relevant respect' as used in the conclusion. It means that a person who under certain circumstances is entitled to call a thing red is also equally entitled to call every other thing red in the *same* circumstances. Here the verbal (linguistic) force of the conclusion is logically entailed by the verbal force of the premise. Accordingly, to assent the premise and to deny the conclusion leads one into inconsistency. That is, to admit that 'this is red' and to deny that 'some other thing which resembles it in the relevant respect is red: is nothing but simply to misuse the word 'red'. That is why the word 'red', says Hare, is supposed to be a descriptive term. Hare says, "...to say that something is red is to say that it is of a certain kind, and so to imply that anything which is of that same kind is red.[10]"

One may, of course, suspect the legitimacy of the above argument by saying that the conclusion of the above argument is not universalizable as it contains the singular term 'this'. The term 'this' in 'Everything like this in the relevant respects is red' appears to be a singular term. Hare rules out this objection. He says that although the word 'this' is a singular term, it is governed by the word 'like'. Hare says, "...when a singular term is governed by the word 'like' or its equivalent, it has the property of being turnable into a universal term by substituting for 'like this'; a term which describes the respects in which the thing in question is being

said to be like this."[11] This means : there is a property such that the predicate 'red' has got it and such that everything which has it is red. Logically, it can best be approached by saying that : there is a property 'x' such that 'R' (Red) possesses 'x' and for all values of y, if y possesses x, then y is similar or resembles to R. In the latter interpretation the singular term 'this' is not found and hence it should be considered as universalizable.

The property which is ascribed in the descriptive term 'red' is redness. When we come to know what sort of the predicate term 'red' is, we ipso-facto come to know that it is a descriptive word. According to Hare the proposition 'There is a property such that everything which has it is red' is trivial as the word 'red' being a descriptive word is trivial and the judgement in which the word 'red' is applied must be universalizable in a trivial sense.

Hare conceives that any singular descriptive judgement is universalizable in a trivial sense. For him to commit a singular descriptive judgement is to commit that everything exactly similar to a descriptive term in the relevant respects must possess the property attributed to it. But the expression 'exactly similar' is wearisome to define. It is really obstinate to say under what circumstance one thing is exactly similar to something else. Is it practically possible to dig out two cases which are relevantly or exactly similar? Mickie says, "...in practice no two cases will ever be exactly alike, even if they were, they would still be numerically different just because they are two. Universalizavility would be trivial and useless, therefore, if we could not rule out many of the inevitable differences as irrelevant."[12]

Hare, however, claims that the problem of detecting two similar objects in the relevant circumstance does not come into being if the very meaning of the descriptive term is properly exemplified. The concept of similarity is supposed to be the important feature of detecting descriptive meaning. Here says, "...a descriptive meaning-rule is one which lays it down that we may apply our expression to objects which are similar to each other in certain respects."[13] So to claim that singular descriptive judgement is universalizable is to claim that the meaning-rules for the descriptive term or terms are universal rules of a certain type. So the tribulation of identifying two similar objects is the tribulation of resolving the unique meaning in which the speaker is using the descriptive term. When I say 'x

is red', I am also equally obliged to say that anything which is exactly similar to x in the relevant respect is red. But if I am asked what I actually mean by the phrase 'the relevant respect' I may plausibly reply that it is about x that makes me call it red. This way of interpretation is nothing but the definition of red.

But the predicate 'red', being a colour term, may not, at times be well defined. It may happen that one who calls a thing, red, may not be regarded as red by somebody else. The disagreement, however, may not be about colour-vision; but simply for the use of the word 'red'. Hare overcomes this predicament by saying that by using the word 'red' on any occasion, the speaker must have had same feature of an object in mind to which he is drawing attention in using the word in question. In this process of having knowledge of an object, he may be ambivalent about the precise boundaries of the concept which is being empolyed. But there must be *something* about the object in question which ultimately empowers him to call that object 'red'. Hare conceives that if anybody fails to follow the due course of procedure that one needs to have, then what he intends to say would have no descriptive meaning at all.

As far as triviality is concerned another objection may be raised against Hare's concept of universalizabiltiy of descriptive judgement. It is claimed that the so-called universal proposition generated by any singular descriptive judgement is a mere matter of the meaning of the descriptive terms contained in the judgement. It cannot be a matter of substance. When Hare holds that 'x is red anything which is similar to x is red too', he is employing some universal rules by using thedescriptive term 'red'. But it is objetced that the so-called universal - rule gives rise only to the meaning of red. It is a verbal explantation of how the word 'red is being used. Hare, however, forestalls the logical force of this objection. He holds that unlike the evaluative terms the meaning rule of descriptive term is verbal. He conceives that the universal rules which are being employed in all descriptive expressions are meaning-rules. These meaning - rules are supposed to be universal. So the logical argument of descriptive universalizability can be stated as follows:

Every descriptive term must possess meaning rules.

Meaning-rules are universalizable.

Therefore, every descriptive term is universalizable.

When Hare claims that a singular descriptive judgement logically entails a universal judgement, he actually intends to say that the meaning rule (verbal or linguistic) of a singular descriptive judgement leads to the meaning-rule of a universal judgement. So the entailment relation between the above mentioned judgements hinges on linguistic explanation. It is true to say that in most philosophical contexts such type of verbal explanation appears to be unworthy; but it deserves a special attention in evaluating the universalizability of value judgements. Hare says, "The way which I have chosen of explaning what I mean by this is by saying that the feature of value judgements which I shall call universalizability is simply that which they share with descriptive judgements; namely the fact that they both carry descriptive meaning."[14] But the fact is that unlike the meaning-rules of descriptive judgements, the discernment of meaning-rules of value judgements are much more complicated. Let us pass on to examine the point in what sense moral judgements are universalizable like descriptive judgements.

Hare conceives that moral judgements are universalizable simply because like descriptive judgements moral judgements do have descriptive meaning. This is categorically stated by the 'phrastic' term. When we claim that 'x is red', we are equally committed to saying that 'everyting which is like x in the relevant respects is red'. Similarly, in the case of moral judgement when we say that 'x is good', we are equally obliged to say that 'anything which is similar to x in the relevant respects is good'. But there underlies a subtle distinction. The distinction is that in the former case the universal rules which determine the descriptive meaning are mere meaning-rules. But in the latter case the universal rules which determine the descriptive meaning are not mere meaning rules, but moral principles of substance. That is why Hare introduces the term 'Neustic'. A naturalist, however, does not meet with this point as he thinks that the rules which determine value-words are completely descriptive meaning - rules. He understands a value - term at par with a descriptive term. Hare, however, tells us that to understand a value word at par with a descriptive word does not mean to say that it is the sole view of naturalism. Even Moore, being a non - naturalist descriptivist, has understood value - words at par with descriptive terms whose meanings are uniquely determined by the sort of descriptive meaning rules. However there we find a subtle distinction between

a naturalist and a non - naturalist descriptivist. A non-naturalist holds that the feature of a value - word is *sui generis*; whereas a naturalist maintains that such feature can also be described by non-evaluative terms.

Hare is neither a naturalist, nor a non - naturalist; but a prescriptivist. Being a prescriptivist, Hare introduces the doctrine of universal prescriptivism - a doctrine which is combined by both universalism (i.e; the view that moral judgements are universalizable) and prescriptivism (i,e; the view that moral judgements are at any rate prescriptive). In introducing the doctrine of prescriptivism, Hare does not rule out the descriptive element of moral judgement. This is much more understandable as being a universal prescriptivist, Hare does not or even perhaps can not rule out the descriptive element of moral judgement. This is made clear with the help of the following consideration. Suppose the symbol 'U' stands for the thesis: Moral judgements are universalizable. And the symbol 'P' stands for the thesis: Moral judgements are prescriptive. Hare's thesis of moral universalizability is the combination of both 'U and P'. Now the prescriptive character of moral judgements is twofold: the stronger and the weaker. Suppose 'd' stands for the stronger form of prescriptivity which asserts that the descriptive meaning of moral judgements exhausts their meaning. This theory is called descriptivism. And let 'd`'stands for the weaker form of prescriptivity which holds that moral judgements though they may posses other elements in their meaning, do have descriptive meaning. Being a universal prescriptivist, Hare affirms P, U and d`. He conceives that P, U and d` are mutually consistent. For him d` entails U is to say that moral judgements do have descriptive meaning and to say that they are universalizable. Again, 'P' is consistent with 'd`' is to say that a moral judgement is prescriptive but not to say that the prescriptive meaning is the sole meaning it has, rather it means that it does carry prescriptive meaning among others. This makes sense to say that the prescriptive meaning rules are not exhaustive in prescriptive judgement as understood by Hare. Hare, therefore, conceives that any combination of 'P' and 'U' or 'P' and 'd' is morally cogent. But he rules out the combination of 'P' and 'd' simply because it leads into inconsistency. 'd' entails the abandoment of P and hence both 'd and P' do not co-exist. But without 'P', says Hare, no moral judgement can be cogently established. So the logical argument with which we have started at the beginning can now be logically restated like the following :

Any judgement having descriptive meaning must be universalizable.
Moral judgements, though prescriptive, have descriptive meaning.
Therefore, moral judgements are universalizable.

Critical Observations :

Hare's concept of moral universalizability has been criticized by many. In *Freedom and Reason*, Hare conceives that any descriptive term must be universalizable. Elsewhere he seems to maintain that value terms are universalizable as they are both prescriptive and descriptive. He goes on to say 'that the feature of value judgements which I call universalizability is simply that which they share descriptive judgements; namely, the fact that both carry descriptive meaning.'[15] The peculiarity of moral terms, Hare understood, is that they are both prescriptive and universalizable. Certainly not as descriptive terms, without being prescriptive, are universalizable. Can we then say that the prescriptivity of moral terms ascribes universalizability? Certainly not as descriptive terms, without being prescriptive, are universalizable. So one thing seems to be logically clear that the concept of universalizability ascribes descriptivity. This is reflected by the combination of 'P and U' or 'P and 'd`'. Monro claims[16] that if presciptivity and universalizability (i.e; 'P and U') are supposed to be the only cogent criteria of imperative judgements as proposed by Hare, then why does he hold up the universalizability of singular imperatives? Singular imperatives, Monro observes, are both prescriptive and universalizable. So according to Monro, it is a mistake on the part of Hare for not considering the universalizability of singular imperatives.

In his *The Language of Morals* Hare conceives that both imperatives and descriptive utterances have two elements, viz, phrastic and neustic. According to Hare the command : 'Shut the door' can be rendered as : Your shutting the door in the immediate future, please; and the indicative utterance : You are going to shut the door, can be rendered as : Your shutting the door in the immediate future, yes. Here the common part is called phrastic and the uncommon part is called neustic. Phrastic part is considered by Hare as a descriptive phrase and it is common both in imperative as well as in indicative. The logical force of the phrastic part is' : If I say of a given state of affair that it is an instance of our shutting the door, I am equally committed to saying that another state of affair like the first in the relevant

respects is also such an instance. Monro claims that in this regard singular imperatives like other imperatives do have descriptive (phrastic) part and hence to be considered as universalizable.

It is further claimed that Hare is wrong in denying both descriptive meaning and universalizability to singular imperatives as a whole. He is also wrong, Monro conceives, in supposing that it is absence of descriptive meaning that distinguishes non-evaluative from evaluative propositions. It is further contended that Hare has not established that there are expressions that are prescriptive but not carry descriptive meaning as well. If there are indeed elements in expressions of which this is true, these elements are clearly common to both evaluative and non-evaluative prescriptions. Singular imperatives, then, are supposed to be universalizable as we are looking for. The only terms that lack descriptive universalizability would seem to be logically proper names and demonstrative pronouns as proposed by Russell. Mackie advances further. He says, "A judgement containing a proper name or indexical term...is universalizable if its proponent is willing to replace such singular terms with some general descriptions of persons, their relations, situations, and so on, and hence to assert the corresponding singular judgement with respect to any other individual case which satisfies that general description."[17]

Hare tells us that any expressions which are evaluative must also be prescriptive, but there are certain expressions which are prescriptive but not evaluative as they do not carry descriptive meaning. The 'nuestic' part of ordinary imperative is of this kind. But we think this remark of Hare appears to be mistaken as the term 'neustic' (please) is reportedly common to all prescriptive utterances, whether evaluative or non-evaluative. Hare's aim of phrastic-neustic distinction, we think, is to separate what is asserted or commanded from the asserting or commanding. In such a case it would observe that the neustic element in any sentence is not descriptive. But this may indeed be doubted simply because if anything counts as an instance of asserting or commanding, anything like it in the relevant respects must also be such an instance. So it is claimed that even if the neustic element lacks descriptive element, there still remains a sense in which it has got the mark of universalizability that attaches to description.

Hare claims that unlike singular imperatives, ought statements are

universalizable as they are commanded by reasons. It is due to the characteristic of reasons that if they apply to a particular occasion, they also apply to all relevantly similar occasions. To say that something is a reason for your action on a given occasion logically entails that it will also be a reason for a similar action on another relevantly similar occasion. This makes sense to say that the word 'reason' is consequentially universal. For example, if you choose a glass of bear at a party simply on the reason that the glass is flat, it consequentially means that at another party you would also like to choose a glass of bear on the relevant respects which is also flat. Now, the point is that if Hare conceives that 'ought' statements must be universalizable as it logically entails a command backed by a reason, then it can equally be claimed that this is also to be true in the case of singular imperatives. Elsewhere Hare goes on to say that in ought sentences there underlies some principles that we invoke, but he does not specify what the principle actually is.

It is also claimed that at times the disposition of ought statement and singular imperative statement remains to be the same. Suppose, e.g; I am directed by my instructor to use the starting handle in a situation which is quite contrary to the first. Reasonably, I seek clarification from my instructor by saying that yesterday in precisely the same situation I was directed not to use the starting-handle. In a situation like this my reaction remains the same whether I was instructed either by the sentence: Use the starting-handle! Or by the sentence: you ought to use the starting-handle. Hare admits the logical force of this argument. But he conceives that the logic of the above argument actually hinges on whether the nature of the instruction is arbitrary or not. He opines that if the instruction were supposed to be arbitrary, it would still be couched in the imperative. But equally, it could not be put in the form of an ought sentence Hare holds that if the use of the word 'ought' places people in bewilderment, it would be either logically illegitimate or idiosyncratic. But the problem is : if Hare is supposed to be right then 'you ought to use the startling -handle 'means the same as 'you just ought to use it without reason'. But this leads into contradiction as Hare claims that ought statement is backed by reason.

Another objection may be raised against the thesis of moral universalizability. One can say, since every action is unique, it would be impossible to pass from a

general principle about action done in relevantly similar circumstances. Hare, however, points out that the difficulty of describing adequately a particular action is that of finding a description specific enough to include all the morally relevant features. So Hare thinks that there underlies no incompatibility between a description being specified and its being universal in the sense of including only general terms without proper names and particular spatio-temporal indicators. As Hare says that the opposite of 'general' is 'specific, the opposite of 'universal' is 'singular'. So we think objection to universalizability on the above ground appears to have arisen from a confusion of these two distinct contrasts.

We think Hare's notion of 'P' and 'U' cited above are determined by the logic of moral terms; but if we take care of the content of 'P' and 'U' we conceive that it is definitely a matter for decision by the *person* who makes the moral judgement. That is why Murphy has rightly pointed out that Hare's theory of moral universalizability is subjective in character as it is solely based on the will of the agent. Murphy observes that this subjective nature of universalizability differs Hare from Kant as unlike Hare, Kant conceives that moral judgement is not determined by *moral practice.* According to Hare the universalizability of moral judgement is not determined by moral practice or by any objective state of affairs, but only by what the agent is or is not willing to put up with. In this regard, Hare's concept of moral universalizability is said to be private unlike Kant.

Moreover, at the very out set it is observed that Hare's notion of moral universalizability is formal. But should we then say that such a purely formal account gives rise to a correct analysis of what we ordinarily mean by moral judgement? According to Mackie, if we adhere to the view that 'any general universalizabile prescription can be moral, we thereby commit ourselves to endorsing all the maxims that would pass the last'. But Mackie opines that this will happen only if we confuse the use of 'moral' as a descriptive term. We think Hare has committed the mistake by confusing a moral term as a descriptive term. Mackie further claims that Hare's view that moral judgements are universalizabe as they have both prescriptive and descriptive meaning is misleading. Mackie is of the opinion that in the case of functional and egocentric descriptions Hare's principle of moral universalizability does not hold good. According to Mackie,

Hare is wrong in supposing that 'it is the characteristic or moral thought in general to give equal weight to the interests of all persons'. Therefore, Mackie concludes that Hare's principle of moral universalizability can not be accepted as it rules out the numerical differences between one individual and another.

Hare is partially right in claming that some commands expressed by singular imperatives are arbitrary unlike ought statement. But this is also supposed to be misleading as it will create a clear cut division between singular imperatives on the one hand and ought sentences on the other. We think there, of course, underlines a division, but it is not like as much what Hare thinks of it. It is really a mistake on the part of Hare to have claimed that all singular imperatives are no longer universalizabile. Hare makes this remark, we think, simply because he is biased by the canon of predicate logic. In predicate logic it is held that no universal proposition can be obtained from a singular proposition. But we think some singular imperatives deserve to be universalizable and perhaps a few are not. Hare conceives that the distinction between ought sentence and singular imperative lies otherwise. He may think that an imperative is used to give an order or instruction; whereas ought is characteristically used to give an advice or admonition. If x gives an order to y, this does not mean to say that there is no reason on the part of x, but it is not for the y, being a recipient of the order, to concern himself with the reason. In the order giving situtation it is the man who gives the order and who parallely takes the responsibility for the action. That is why, the reason for the action did not concern the agent. But in the case of ought sentences, the situation is completely different. If you accept advice your acceptance is backed up by your reason. Consequently the moral responsibility rests on you and also the principle behind it does concern you. Therefore, to accept advice is to accept the principle lurking behind the advice. On the other hand, to carry an order is not necessary to accept the principle behind advice. When a sub-ordinate asks his superior : Is that an order, sir ? it implies that he disapproves the action and therefore will not do it unless it has been ordered to him to do. It means that he really does not accept the principle behind the action. As a matter of fact he will not do it if he has merely been advised. This would perhaps be the logic on the part of Hare for not considering singular imperatives as universalizabile. But still we believe that if Hare conceives that all singular

imperatives without exception are not universalizable, then he has, of course, committed a mistake. Verbally it is hard to make such remark. It is misleading to say, without qualification, that singular imperatives are not - universalizable. These may, of course, have some singular imperatives which lack universalizability, e.g ; arbitrary commands or statements about random or whimsical actions. Being this it is harsh to deny that singular imperatives in general lack universalizability in moral context.

NOTES

1. Kant, Immanuel: *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Moral*, Translated and analyzed by H.J.Paton, Harper & Row, 1964, P.30.
2. Hare, R.M : *Freedom and Reason*, Clarandon press : Oxford, 1963, p. 199
3. *Ibid;* pp. 165-6.
4. Kant, Immanuel : *op.cit;* P. 61.
5. Hare, R.M: *op.cit;* p.10.
6. Hare, R. M : *The Language of Morals,* Clarandon Press Oxford, 1952,p.18.
7. *Ibid;* p 18.
8. *Ibid;* p 21.
9. *Ibid;* p 22.
10. *Freedom and Reason, op. cit.* P. 11.
11. *Ibid;* p 11.
12. Mickie, J.L : *Ethics*, Penguin Book, 1977, p. 83.
13. Hare, R.M : *Freedom and Reason*, op. cit; p. 13.
14. *Ibid;* p 15.
15. *Ibid;* p 15.

16. Monro, D.H. : *Empiricism & Ethics*, Cambridge University Press, 1967, p. 147-154.

17. Mickie, J.L. : *op. cit;* p.84.