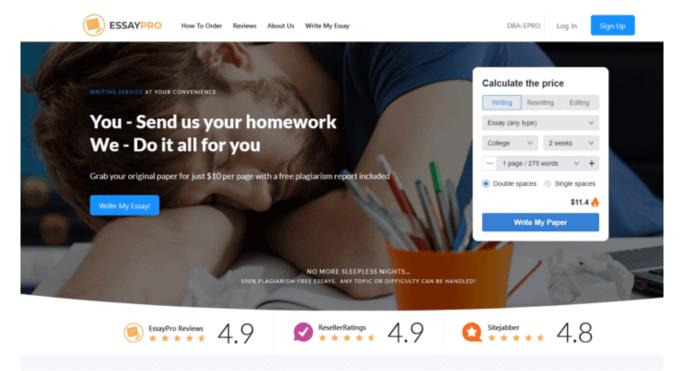
Outlines of a Value Typology Based on Decision Theory's Social Motives



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Values and their Collisions: Outlines of a Value Typology Based on Decision Theory's Social Motives

ABSTRACT: Several years ago, I outlined a project to delineate ideological and scientific elements of our knowledge about values. I began by studying the typical configurations of values, their typical collisions, and some typical world-view-related standpoints as theoretical background. I now present the theoretical premises of my inquiry, the applied methods, and some of the results. I have tried to support the choice of variables used, make sensible the reliable limits of the findings, and underline some interconnections as well as some collisions between moral and/or ideological standpoints.

Among values, and apart from the aesthetic (artistic) values, we can distinguish between ideological and moral ones. The ideological values (or social-political ones) concern and/or regulate the coexistence of larger groups of humans, while those considered moral ones are realized in the <u>immediate</u> interpersonal relationships. But there are weighty arguments suggesting their treatment in common or in parallel:

(i) In the case of some systems of thought, the separation of moral values from the social political ones seems quite artificial (e.g. Aristotelian, Christian, utilitarian, liberal);

(ii) Recent psychological research in the direction inaugurated by Piaget and Kohlberg supports the hypothesis that the lower phases of the moral development are constant across societies and ethic groups, while in the superior phases there is a culture-(respectively, society-) related differentiation. Higher level moral attitudes seem significantly related to the accepted political values (Kurt Bergling, 1981 (1)). (2)

(iii) In the case of many historical systems of thought (philosophies) the moral world-view is axiologically more elaborated than the political one. (The conceptions about the ontology of values, values' social functions and effects or values' acquirement are much more evident in the former.) Further, the moral inquiry is more nuanced in the elaboration of typologies and it is more concerned with the relations between cognitive sphere and values than the social-political thinking is.

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I would distinguish 3 levels in approaching the moral phenomena:

(i) Moral (of object-language)

The level of valuations (good-wrong, just-unjust etc.) and norms, including laic knowledge about rewards and punishments, or about value legitimising and the metaphysical nature of good and evil. This can be considered the everyday moral conscience of the society, the object of anthropological, sociological, historical descriptions.

(ii) Ethical (of meta-language)

The level of categories introduced by ethics to study and to compare the specificities of moral systems, of the auto-reflection and self-defending argumentation of value hierarchies.

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