Philosophy report for Forum – November 2023

Our Philosophy Group topic for the month of November was about Meta Ethics.

Meta-ethics is a major field of inquiry in philosophy. The 'meta' in 'meta-ethics' signifies 'above' or 'beyond'. Meta-ethics is the attempt to answer questions about ethics.

Philosophers working in this area are not so much concerned with whether specific acts are ethical. These questions are the domain of an allied field of enquiry known as 'Normative Ethics' & 'Applied Ethics'.

One way to get a feel for what meta-ethics is about is to ask yourself five key questions about morality:

Where? What? Why? When? How?

Each of these questions uncovers important aspects of meta-ethical enquiry. Where do ethics come from?

What do moral terms refer to when we make moral pronouncements?

When are we engaging in moral deliberation and when are we not?

How do we justify our moral judgments?

Since the time of the ancient Greeks, moral philosophers have been grappling with these questions.

Our group meeting considered some of the terminology in the framework of Meta Ethics beginning with the two main categories: **Cognitivism & Non-Cognitivism.**

Our group's cognition was certainly stretched, as we negotiated the definitions in various sub-groups of Meta Ethics! Nonetheless, a fascinating line of enquiry & worthy of further investigation in the New Year!

Do come and join us on the 4th Tuesday of the month at 10am at Enterprise House. 23rd January – Eastern/Western philosophy. 27th February – The French philosopher, Michel Focault.

Wishing you all a Meta Ethical Christmas and New Year!

Mike Gilsenan