# ʿAllama Tabatabaʾi's and Carla Bagnoli's Views on the Problem of the Nature of Moral Judgments

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## Abstract

ʿAllama Tabatabaʾi and Carla Bagnoli are among philosophers who believe in an integrative approach to non-realist cognitivism. In their view, the phenomenology of moral judgments indicates neither realism nor non-cognitivism. Believing that the nature of moral judgments is normative and practical, they do not deny the objectivity of moral judgments, and argue that they are cognitive, indicative, and have truth value. Tabatabaʾi presents the theory of figurative perceptions to justify his claim, and Bagnoli justifies it on the basis of constructivism. This paper will compare the two integrative views of Bagnoli and Tabatabaʾi. After exploring the problem of the nature of moral judgment, Tabatabaʾi's and Bagnoli's views are introduced and, in conclusion, it is argued that although Tabatabaʾi's theory of figurative perceptions lacks the perspicuity found in Bagnoli's works, they both have similar analyses of the phenomenology of moral judgments and they both use constructivism to justify their claims.

**Keywords**: Moral judgments, Constructivism, Figurative perception, Allama Tabatabaʾi, Carla Bagnoli.

## 1. Introduction

Seeing and touching granite makes us think that granite is hard. After watching an act of robbery, we might say that robbery is a bad action. What is the difference between these two sentences? The former is giving a judgment about physical facts, and the latter is giving a judgment about human actions. In each sentence, something is predicated on a subject, but can we say that both predicates are real? Granite and its hardness can be shown in the world, but is it possible to show the badness of robbery in the objective world? We find the hardness of granite by touching it, but how can we perceive the badness of robbery? The former set of questions, are metaphysical questions, and the latter set are epistemological ones. In moral philosophy, such judgments and sentences that are about human action (e.g., "Robbery is bad") are called moral and evaluative judgments.

Moral judgments have to do with the moral values or qualities of volitional acts. Moral and evaluative judgments are distinct from judgments about facts. Evaluative judgments are about "what ought to be there," while a factual judgment is about "what there is." Factual judgments are descriptive, while moral judgments are perspectival or critical and accordingly normative. Judgments about facts are logical in their nature, while judgments about behavior are judgmental and juridical in nature. When we see a volitional act, in fact, we use a moral criterion and then make a judgment about whether the act is in accordance with that criterion. As a result, it is clear that moral judgment is inferential and deductive (Mackenzie 1897, 114-26). Considering these differences, is it possible to say that the two statements "Robbery is bad" and "Granite is hard" are epistemologically and ontologically the same?

In the twentieth century, most analytical philosophers and philosophers of language thought that the main function of language (words and sentences) is to describe a fact, whether true or false. Such an analysis about the relation between language and facts made positivists believe that linguistic statements are either descriptive or evaluative. Descriptive statements are objects of experience and describe facts, while evaluative judgments just assert personal feelings and emotions (Searle 2011,  22-29). Later, J. L. Austin created a new classification by presenting his *Speech Act* theory. According to him, one's utterances can be divided into two main categories: *performative utterances* and *constative utterances*. Constative utterances are truth-apt, while performative utterances are either appropriate or inappropriate. He maintained that performative utterances are types of action, while constative utterances are types of description (Searle 2011, 16-19, 22-29).

These classifications led to the emergence of new positions in moral philosophy, such as realism, cognitivism, non-realism, and non-cognitivism.

Realists and cognitivists believed in the discovery of moral judgments by the subject and thought that the nature of moral judgments is constative. They maintained that these judgments are objective and truth-apt, and their truth is independent of our beliefs and feelings.[1] Non-cognitivists do not believe in the possibility of cognition of moral affairs and think that the subject develops moral judgments merely for motivating, guiding, and expressing feelings. In their view, moral judgments are performative and are totally related to the person rather than to external facts.

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1. For more elaboration on realism, see Swinburne (2020).

Cognitivists have suggested many properties for moral judgments, including objectivity, practicality, guidance, and being instrumental, descriptive, imperative, and constative. In their opinion, two properties of objectivity (belief in realism and cognitivism) and practicality (belief in non-cognitivism and non-realism) are antithetic and contradictory. Objectivity indicates realism of moral judgments, and being practical indicates their motivating function (Van Roojen 2018; Sayre-McCord 2015)

Gradually this meta-ethical disagreement and dilemma became a philosophical problem and created a dichotomy in moral philosophy. Some contemporary moral philosophers have tried to find a solution. They were looking for an integrative and just strategy and presented new hybrid theories. One of the most salient of these theories is the hybrid theory of *non-realist cognitivism*. Mackie's *error theory,* Skorupski's *cognitivist non-realism*, Terry Horgan and Mark Timmons' *non-descriptive cognitivism* (Van Roojen 2013), and probably Blackburn's *projectivism* are different accounts of non-realist cognitivism (Kim 2018).

Carla Bagnoli is one of the contemporary philosophers who is inclined to this theory. She tries to answer the question of the nature of moral judgments by presenting a new interpretation of non-realist cognitivism. Criticizing various views on realism and non-cognitivism, Bagnoli puts forward a constructivist account of moral judgment and argues that constructivism explains the nature of moral judgment better. She mentions advantages of constructivism over realism with regard to metaphysics of moral judgments (Bagnoli 2002, 2017, 2011). She maintains that in order to solve the mentioned problem, we should consider the relation between the subject and moral judgments, explain the epistemological process, and determine

how the subject achieves these judgments. To explain this relation, Bagnoli introduced the phenomenology hypothesis as the face value of this relation and presented the idea of constructivism to prove this hypothesis (Bagnoli 2007, 195-96)

By choosing this theory, Bagnoli has tried to present a reasonable basis for any moral extension and confirmation in giving moral judgments. In her view, moral judgments are constative propositions and their nature is normative and practical. She believes that the subject neither discovers moral judgments, as realists maintain, nor develops them, as non-cognitivists hold; rather, the subject constructs those judgments. In fact, after receiving the perceptions that have appeared to him, the subject constructs moral judgments through deliberation. Bagnoli clearly states that in constructivism and phenomenology, she is a follower of Kant and does not think that it is necessary to discuss moral ontology. She presents an interpretation, similar to Kant's interpretation, of the relation between the subject and the external world. She thinks that the subject's external basis in making moral judgments is merely in the world of appearances (Bagnoli 2002, 125; 2013a, 153-56; 2015).

Such an interpretation can be inferred from ʿAllama Tabatabaʾi's theory of *figurative* (*iʿtibārī*) *perceptions*, which is a defense of rationalism, theoretical principles, and philosophy against relativism and empiricism. Although he has not written much about ethics and moral judgments, his theory can be extended to include ethics. If we consider the issue from the viewpoint of moral philosophy, we realize that Tabatabaʾi's theory of figurative perceptions is deeply related to a hybrid view of non-realist cognitivism and comparable to Bagnoli's idea of constructivism.

In this paper, we first try to review Bagnoli's criticism of the previous theories and then present her view on the nature and genuine properties of moral judgments. After that, we will explain Tabatabaʾi's theory of figurative perceptions and then discuss his genuine view on the nature of moral judgments. Finally, we compare the two philosophers' ideas and conclude that these two views are closely related in their main elements and assumptions and are slightly different in their interpretations. Both philosophers use similar assumptions to provide metaphysical and epistemological explanations of moral judgments. Furthermore, they both believe in the importance of phenomenology for discerning the relation between the subject, judgments, and their development. They both introduce constructivism in support of their hypothesis but are slightly different in extending their hypotheses.

## 2. Bagnoli's View

As a meta-ethical moderate philosopher, Bagnoli believes in an integrated approach of non-realist cognitivism (Bagnoli 2002; 2007; 2013a; 2015). Regarding the nature of moral judgments, she maintains that they are logically constative propositions that are truth-apt and their function is normative and practical. Although she is a proponent of the objectivity of moral judgments, she gives it a new definition and does not believe in any realist definition of objectivity. By presenting the hypothesis of phenomenology, Bagnoli claims that the relation between the subject and the world is phenomenological and moral judgments are cognitive. Furthermore, by presenting the idea of constructivism—which is partly an integration of the two ideas of discovery and invention—as a complement to phenomenology, she proves her view on the nature of moral judgments. According to her, "Constructivism stakes out a middle ground between forms of realism that are committed to mind-independent normative truths and forms of

antirealism that deny there are any normative truths" (Bagnoli, 2017). To reach this rational position, she has criticized the other views (2002). To clarify her rational system, we will explore these criticisms below.

## 2.1 Bagnoli's Criticism of the Previous Views

Bagnoli believes that realism, cognitivism, non-cognitivism, and non-realism are all based on one problematic assumption. She writes:

> The reason lies in some tacit assumptions about the nature of ethical judgments and their aspirations. It is assumed that ethical judgments can legitimately aspire to objectivity only if there are values, moral properties and moral facts out there to be discovered. That is, it is assumed that ethical objectivity is vindicated only by ethical realism. (Bagnoli 2002, 125).

She thinks that this idea is incompatible with the belief that moral judgments are practical: "This thesis seems at odds with the claim that ethical judgments are practical: if values are independent of our capacity to arrive at them, it becomes mysterious how values could make claims on us, guide us, and motivate us to act" (Bagnoli 2002, 125).

Bagnoli has also criticized non-cognitivism and holds that its weakness is that it does not take into account the property of objectivity. According to her, neither realism nor non-cognitivism, even in their simpler forms, care about the idea of the rationality of moral judgments and their being experiential; because of that, in these two theories, the choice is mistakenly limited to the two alternatives of either non-cognitivism or realism. With respect to more balanced and sophisticated versions of realism and non-cognitivism—including McDowell's metaphor of vision and Simon Blackburn's metaphor of

projection—Bagnoli maintains that although they seem to explain moral phenomenology, they apply an inappropriate tool that radically discredits them (Bagnoli 2002; 2013b, 119-21; see also Miller 2003, 52, 243).

Criticizing Mackie's error theory, Bagnoli writes: "Error theory reduces the apparent objectivity of value properties to some patterns of objectification, discounts the deliverances of the inner view as not veridical, and thus fails to properly account for moral phenomenology" (Bagnoli 2002, 129). After this criticism, Bagnoli claims that the first step in solving this problem is to review the agent's method in communicating ethical situations, receiving and perceiving moral judgments, and the process of cognition and making moral judgments. According to her, the agent imagines and experiences moral judgments as important, authoritative, objective, and practical. In addition, she believes that the extent to which these judgments are established in the agent and understood by him shows his character and moral vision. So, in her opinion, the main questions are why the agent experiences these judgments in this way, and what kind of relationship is formed between the agent and the external world at the time of making moral judgments. In answering these questions, she presents the theory of phenomenology and says that the relationship is phenomenological. The next step is to prove the rationality and regularity of this hypothesis. To do so, she introduces the theory of constructivism.

## 2.2 The Nature of Moral Judgments

Bagnoli maintains that moral judgments at first appear to a subject in the form of norms—not in the form of a constative predicate or an emotional sentence. In fact, the subject has experienced these judgments as valid things that bring him awareness and guide him

through his life. As a result, the subject believes them. According to Bagnoli, the aim of moral judgments is to guide our behavior and attitudes and to show us some facts about how we should live. To this end, these judgments introduce some views and reasons so that they affect the subject's motivation (Bagnoli 2002, 125)

Our interpretation of these definitions is that moral judgments are in fact norms containing facts that are recognizable to the subject. On the other hand, the subject's method in perceiving these judgments is experiential and phenomenological.

Furthermore, in defending her perspective and its phenomenological hypothesis with respect to its ontology, Bagnoli believes that this theory not only does not have to represent an ontological justification but also it claims that there are regular moral truths (Bagnoli 2002, 135). She acknowledges that her phenomenology, like realism, does not infer moral truths from the subject's experience and rather tries to explain them in a way that they will be both reasonable and tangible for the subject. She does not claim that these judgments are dependent on the subject's internal feelings and emotions, while non-cognitivists believe so. In fact, in Bagnoli's phenomenological theory, moral judgments are explained in a way that makes them harmonious with ordinary experiences and other arenas of human life.

In explaining and proving her phenomenological theory, and in explaining the procedure of issuing a moral judgment, Bagnoli presents the idea of constructivism. Her purpose in choosing this idea is basically to defend her experiential interpretation of the normative relation that is created between the subject and his environment and moral judgments. In addition, she wants to defend the reasonability of

this theory. With respect to the role of constructivism in explaining the nature of moral judgments, Bagnoli writes:

> These kinds of constraints show that the products of our deliberation have authority over us and impose themselves to our attention when we are about to deliberate further. That is true also when we cannot respond to their claims. When we say that some value is objective, we often mean that it has a special kind of importance, that we cannot disregard it, or that by disregarding it, we subject ourselves to a special kind of sanction (a feeling of guilt, regret or remorse). (Bagnoli 2002, 133-34).

In Bagnoli's view, realists' discovery and non-cognitivists' invention are to be replaced by constructivism. She believes that constructivism is based on three elements: (1) the base of construction, (2) the object of construction, and (3) the method and requirements of construction. She explains that the base for construction is that the human being is living in a limited world and has to interact with it. For believing, feeling and practicing, he needs to have reasons. In Bagnoli's view, the objects of this construction are moral judgments that are made for the actions for doing which there are reasons; that is, moral judgments are about those suitable reactions. About the third element—i.e., the method and requirements of construction—she believes that they are stable and dependent on the subject's way of deliberation, but she emphasizes that we should not think that these requirements are personal and variable; rather, they are never subject-dependent and are just relevant to the subject's mental and intellectual system (Bagnoli 2002, 133-34).

### 2.3 Authentic Properties of Moral Judgments

Bagnoli thinks that the two properties concepts of "normative" and "practical" are appropriate presenters of moral judgments, and believes that these judgments influence the subject's motivation and

intention in a special way. She acknowledges that the subject experiences moral judgments as being normative and valid, because these judgments guide him in his life and form his life in a special way. In fact, the subject understands and admits these judgments in the form of authority, objectivity, normativity, meaningfulness and practicality (Bagnoli 2002, 133).

Bagnoli claims that in logical categorization, moral judgments are categorized as propositions that establish normative relations between the subject and the world. These propositions are truth-apt and the condition for their being true is dependent on their method of justification. In defending her claim, she says that when we say a moral judgment is true, it means that it has propositional, rather than factual, content. As a result, claims about truth-aptness of moral judgments do not lead to realism. In fact, she claims that the criterion for the truth of moral judgments is formal rather than factual. She thinks that moral truths are created as a result of activities by practical reason and that moral judgments do not get their content from external reality; rather, the subject makes this content in his practical reason (Bagnoli 2013a, 167-70).

By having propositional content, she means that in each judgment, there are implicit reasons and facts, and moral judgments are in fact expressions of these reasons. In other words, they present special responses and actions (attitudes) that are considered appropriate (desirable, obligatory, legal, permissible, recommended, etc.) based on some reasons, responses, and actions. In fact, believing in a moral judgment is to cite those reasons. Reasons, in the same way, indicate a judgment. These reasons illustrate the vague spaces of thoughts and critical discussions and help one in evaluating the situation (Bagnoli 2002, 131-32).

With respect to the complicated discussion about the content of reasons, Bagnoli believes that moral reasons consist of two parts: concept and content. The concept is stable and perceived via theoretical reason, while the content is created by feelings and practical reason. The concept of a moral judgment appears to us while it poses itself in a moral situation. In this moral situation, a kind of relation and analogy appears between the moral concept and judgments and the actual concept and judgments; for example, to understand the concept of faithlessness in moral terms, first we need to have a theoretical understanding of it.

Bagnoli holds that the concept of reason is a prior normative concept though she does not consider the content of reasons prior but rather variable. Bagnoli thinks that any rational moral agent who faces a moral situation starts deliberation and, through that deliberation, constructs a series of conditions. These conditions consist of contents of the reasons, mutual relations and normative forces that are changeable in different cases (Bagnoli 2002, 133; 2013b, 121-24).

The content of reasons and their normative force is related to the feelings and deliberative situation. Their content and normative force are constructed and determined through deliberation. These reasons become qualified, pure, explicit, and reformed through deliberation (Bagnoli 2000, 169-87). "The possibility of sharing reasons and thus the possibility and the expectation of convergence does not depend on having adopted a realist conception of truth, but on having formulated a judgment based on reasons" (Bagnoli 2002, 132).

With respect to moral judgments' being action-guiding and practical, Bagnoli believes that these judgments not only guide and motivate one to action but also they change one's attitude and

perception. In fact, Bagnoli's innovative idea is that moral judgments guide both actions and attitudes.

Bagnoli thinks that these properties of moral judgments are complementary and inseparable, and she explains that moral judgments' being action-guiding is the side effect of their being authoritative. The property of authoritativeness makes these judgments so valid and weighty that they change the subject's understanding of his facilities and options. On the one hand, if we think that moral judgments are merely a capacity to create reasons for actions, this will be suspicious; on the other hand, if we interpret their being action-guiding as a property that makes moral judgments practical ones, this will be delusive. Practical responses are not necessarily practical; they can be attitudes (intellectual ideas). Moral judgments are practical because they are, on the one hand, action guiding and, on the other hand, change our understanding of the kind of subject that we are (or ought to be) and our life style (Bagnoli 2002, 131).

Thus, contrary to realists who think that judgments are merely a reason-giving capacity for actions and contrary to non-cognitivists for whom moral judgments' being action-guiding is a property that makes these judgments practical, Bagnoli believes that these properties are complementary and inseparable.

In responding to the question about the objectivity of moral judgments, Bagnoli refers to their normativity and authority, and states that when we say a value is objective, we mean that it has a special kind of influence that we cannot ignore or if we ignore, we are threatened by special kinds of punishment (feeling guilt, remorse, or

regret).[1] Moral judgments are objective because they have special validity; they command subjects effectively and, as a result, they are unavoidable (Bagnoli 2012, 65- 67).

Bagnoli says that the claim that moral judgments command us and we cannot easily reject them can justify the claim that they are valid for us. Sometimes a moral judgment is so valid that it is even considered objective; that is, we cannot disregard it. Such a judgment can provide obligatory force for all times. Violating a moral judgment has important consequences for humans' nobility and their attitude. According to her idea, respect is a mental position through which a subject understands the obligatory force of moral judgments in the best way (see Bagnoli 2003). In fact, when we understand the authority of moral reasons, we acknowledge their objectivity (Bagnoli 2002, 133-34; 2012, 65- 67).

## 3. Tabatabaʾi's Perspective

In the second volume of his *Principles of Philosophy and the Method of Realism*, Tabatabaʾi discusses the objections raised by some skeptics against the *principle of verification*. Since the skeptics claim that perception is based on experience, they believe that perceptions will change according to different environments and situations and people with different levels of moral training, accept or create different forms of thought and conclude, "Scientific truths are created by us; they are dependent on us and do not have an unchangeable stability" (Tabatabaʾi 1374b Sh, 143,144).

Another reason that led Tabatabaʾi to such a conclusion was the disagreement between experiential and intellectual logic over

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1. With regard to the objectivity of moral judgments, Bagnoli is influenced by Kant (see Bagnoli 2012a, 23-24; 2015, 13-20)

*universal intellectual principles*. In this essay, Tabatabaʾi mentions the views of some modern philosophers and psychologists on the advent of intellectual principles. They claim that intellectual principles, which are primary self-evident propositions, are not the same for all human beings and differ in each person according to his or her specific characteristics and circumstances (Tabatabaʾi 1374b Sh, 143-44).

In some respects, Tabatabaʾi accepts their view and in some other respects he rejects it. On the one hand, he accepts that knowledge is the product of cooperation between sensation and reason, and he acknowledges that reason and intellectual perceptions do not have their complete forms since the beginning; rather, they develop gradually. On the other hand, he disagrees with the idea that intellectual principles are subject to the principle of adaptation to the environment; in fact, to avoid this problem, he divides perceptions into two categories: *factual perceptions* (notions and perceptions that are derived from experience) and *figurative perceptions* (notions and perceptions that are derived from factual perceptions). He challenges relativism and skepticism through this division and provides some reasons that help establishing the bases of science.

Tabatabaʾi believes that "prior to any philosophical theory, any law of logic, and any scientific rule, we must acknowledge the existence of reason and absolute theoretical perceptions" (Tabatabaʾi 1374b Sh, 156). He also maintains that reason and theoretical perceptions develop gradually. In fact, he believes in the existence of continuous processes of comprehending, discovering theoretical perceptions, and intellectual judgments. So, it can be concluded that, according to him, human reason has two distinct areas: theoretical and practical, each of which have different duties and functions. The question here is which

area, in Tabatabaʾi's view, is responsible for comprehending, discovering, or inventing factual and figurative judgments. Since we are talking here about figurative perceptions, we keep our focus on figurative judgments.

### 3.1 Figurative Perceptions

According to some of Tabatabaʾi's statements, figurative judgments are merely practical thoughts that are subordinate to vital needs and environmental factors and are developed just because of these needs (e.g., Tabatabaʾi 1374b Sh, 143). But one can claim that since Tabatabaʾi himself insists that they are perceptions and divides them into two categories in terms of their meaning—figurative perceptions that stand in contrast to essence and are called "secondary intelligibles" (general meaning), and figurative perceptions that are necessary for the activities of human faculties and are called "practical figurative perceptions" (specific meaning)—(Tabatabaʾi 1374b Sh, 185, Motahhari's note). It can be concluded that in the general meaning, not only figurative judgments have their roots in the objective world and are based on factual judgments but also they originate from theoretical reason. Moreover, based on the fact that general figurative perceptions are the theoretical base for issuing practical and specific figurative judgments, it can be said that in the theory of figurative perceptions both practical and theoretical reasons are at work and perceptions and perceived relations in theoretical reason are the base for issuing figurative judgments in practical reason.

In the sixth essay of his *The Principles of Philosophy,* Tabatabaʾi states that *constructing* is an intellectual process similar to analogy and metaphorizing. In analogy, with respect to the similarities and relations between a lion and a warrior, for example, the mind

attributes the concept of bravery to the warrior. Tabatabaʾi confirms the similarity between the process of analogy and that of constructing and defines constructing as follows: "Giving something's limits to another thing that lacks those limits" (Tabatabaʾi 1374b Sh, 161; 2007, 347-51); that is, to give something's limits or its judgment to something else through manipulating imagination (Javadi 1375 Sh, 152). In other words, through reason, feelings, and emotions, the agent is able to understand the similarities and parallels between the warrior and the lion, and then he attributes the same characteristics and notion to the warrior.

More specifically, theoretical reason understands a kind of relation or similarity between two external things. Reason does not comprehend this relation in terms of imagination but rather supposes it through understanding common traits between them, and then practical reason starts to construct according to emotions and feelings and issues the judgments. The nature of figurative judgments is evaluative in theoretical reason and obligatory in practical reason.

### 3.2 Nature of Moral Propositions

To learn Tabatabaʾiʾs understanding of the nature of moral propositions, we need to find the position of these propositions in his categorization. If we suppose that moral propositions are factual, then it should be said that Tabatabaʾi is a realist in ethics and believes that there are moral facts in the external world. He thinks that moral concepts are primary intelligibles that are cognitive and have the characteristics of hyperrealism. Therefore, these propositions are logically constative and truth-apt. As a result, Tabatabaʾi can be considered as a cognitivist, realist philosopher.

However, if we take into account that he considers moral propositions figurative judgments, we are faced with a challenging and complicated problem. To consider this problem, three suppositions are possible: first, moral propositions are secondary intelligibles, which stand in contrast to quiddity (figurative judgments in the general sense); second, moral propositions are imaginations (figurative judgments in the specific sense); and, third, moral propositions are based upon philosophical secondary intelligibles in the realm of theoretical reason and primary perceptions (figurative judgments in the general sense) and in the realm of practical reason, they are imaginations (figurative judgments in the specific meaning or logical secondary intelligibles that are products of mind).

If we accept the first supposition, we should say that Tabatabaʾi is at least an indisputable cognitivist or even a realist, because he thinks that figurative concepts are a kind of perception and that they have been abstracted from the external world and thus cannot be considered independent of it. Based on this supposition, it is difficult to justify the role of feelings (which is confirmed by Tabatabaʾi).

If we accept the second supposition, our discussion will be more complicated. At first, we think that figurative perceptions have been produced by feelings and are causally subordinate to the agent's feelings. In this sense, we can hardly say that figurative perceptions are a kind of perception or cognition, and it is possible to charge this theory with relativism. So, we can say that, according to this theory, Tabatabaʾi is a non-cognitivist.

The third supposition is even more complicated. In this synthesis, Tabatabaʾi's view is introduced as an example of a hybrid meta-ethical theory; that is, a cognitivist, non-realist theory. According to this supposition, on the one hand, Tabatabaʾi says that figurative

perceptions are constructed upon philosophical secondary intelligibles and are cognitive, while, on the other hand, he focuses on the basic role of the agent's feelings.

To explain more, we should consider Tabatabaʾi's theory of figurative perceptions in moral philosophy. In Tabatabaʾi's view, two kinds of falsity are distinguished: real falsity and romantic falsity (metaphor and analogy). The first kind is when the mental idea does not correspond to the external reality. In the second kind, however, although the rule of correspondence is not observed conclusively, the intellectual idea needs a kind of similarity and its aim is to stir emotions. According to Tabatabaʾi, real falsity is not effective, but romantic falsity motivates internal feelings for which there will be external effects (Tabatabaʾi 1374b Sh, 160-61).

As we mentioned before, in Tabatabaʾi's view, the process of constructing is similar to that of analogy and, therefore, we can conclude that in his idea, the criterion of satisfiability and truth in figurative perceptions is different from that in factual judgments; thus, he extends the realm of the criterion of truth. Although he thinks that the nature of factual affirmations is definitely constative, the nature of figurative affirmations is performative-figurative in one sense and constative in another sense, because he maintains that although figurative judgments do not directly correspond to reality, they do so indirectly. In other words, they tell us about the relation between an objective reality and an objective thing.

In his conclusion, Tabatabaʾi, in some cases, emphasizes the objective aspects of figurative judgments and, in some other cases, emphasizes their theoretical, practical, and motivational aspects:

1) Figurative perceptions with concepts that have a real base are based on facts; that is, when we give an imaginary limit to an instance, there is another real instance that is the source of that imaginary limit. For example, if we say that a brave person is a lion, there is a real lion from which the limits of being a lion is taken. In the process of constructing, no new concept is produced, but rather we construct a concept with an example. When we say that there is a figurative perception in our mind, we do not mean that we have a new imaginative concept; rather, we just mean that our mind has attributed its previous concepts to new instances through figurative descriptions (Tabatabaʾi 1374b Sh, 345-50). As we mentioned before, in these two cases, Tabatabaʾi maintains that figurative judgments are objective and tries to prove a real base for them.

2) Although figurative perceptions are unreal and imaginative, they have real effects. The purpose of constructing these meanings is to actualize their real effects. It must be noted that the relation between these figurative judgments and the external world is considered from an aspect other than referring them to factual concept. In fact, the human being's deficiency and his need to achieve teleological perfection force him to imagine and affirm these meanings. So, they can be considered relevant to the external world with respect to their external effects (Tabatabaʾi 1374a Sh, 8: 62-4).

3) The final aim in figurative perceptions is to motivate the agent to act: "Figurative perceptions are idealistic or propositional meanings that will not be actualized out of the action. They are nothing but a metaphor about the thing in itself and applying that metaphor in different kinds of actions" (Tabatabaʾi 1384, 256-59).

Based on what was said, it seems that the third supposition (Tabatabaʾi's Theory of figurative perceptions is a hybrid, non-realist, and cognitivist theory) can be confirmed. Although he accepts the objectivity of moral judgments, he considers them essentially normative and practical.

## 4. Comparison and Conclusion

Tabatabaʾi and Bagnoli have a lot in common: they are both critical of realism and non-cognitivism, while they accept some aspects of those theories. Although they do not accept the realists' ontological and epistemological dogmatism, they agree with them about the objectivity of moral judgments. Furthermore, although they deny moral judgments' being non-cognitive and maintain that the agent is dependent on the external world in perception and the issuance of moral judgments, they accept, like non-cognitivists, the practical and motivational aspects of these judgments. With some innovations, Tabatabaʾi and Bagnoli are able to present a mixture of these two positions. They accept the balanced position of non-realist cognitivism and put forward the hypothesis of phenomenology in the interpretation of the agent's relation to moral situations and how to understand moral judgments. However, they disagree over how these judgments appear. Here Tabatabaʾi has a more explicit picture of this phenomenological experience and this is why some call him a perfect realist. Bagnoli, on the other hand, has taken Kant's idea of phenomenology as a model and refrains from talking about how moral judgments appear to the agent.

In Bagnoli's idea, the right way to consider the nature of moral judgments is to look at the way the agent communicates with these judgments. She believes that this relation is phenomenological and

moral concepts and affirmations appear for the agent during his natural life. It should be noted that according to her idea, moral judgments are not necessarily descriptive of external facts. She believes that the agent finds the phenomenological concept of these judgments in his theoretical reason and constructs their content in practical reason through deliberation and with the help of feelings.

Although it cannot be claimed that Tabatabaʾi's theory of figurative perceptions are explicitly concerned with the nature of moral judgments, it can point us to his view on this issue. Tabatabaʾi, like Bagnoli, first explains how the agent interacts with figurative judgments. He claims that there are relations between two real things that lead to judgments that affirm these relations. These primary perceptions occur in theoretical reason. To explain more, he points to the intellectual action of analogy and says that constructivism is similar to analogy. It seems that Tabatabaʾi, like Bagnoli, does not think that ontological discussion is necessary here. Although Tabatabaʾi and Bagnoli have their interpretations of moral epistemology, they present a new account of the criteria for satisfiability. Bagnoli thinks that moral judgments are cognitive and they can be either true or false, because they implicitly indicate stable moral reasons. Tabatabaʾi explains that figurative judgments are cognitive and the criterion for satisfiability is analogy between two real things and two real concepts. He believes that figurative judgments and concepts are based on factual affirmations. After claiming that human reason and deliberation are developmental, he says that figurative judgments, in their specific sense (obligatory figurative judgments), are based on figurative judgments in their general sense (evaluative figurative judgments). In addition, figurative judgments in their general meaning are based on factual judgments. Therefore, both philosophers say that moral judgments are cognitive and can be either true or false.

The main characteristic of moral judgments in Bagnoli's view is their normativity (reason-giving) and practicability (action-guiding). She proves their objectivity through referring to their motivating and inevitable force. Tabatabaʾi, on the other hand, talks about the base and objects of figurative perceptions; thus, like Bagnoli, he accepts that figurative judgments are practical and motivational.

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