interesting definitions of "emotive synonymy" and concludes that it is rather absurd to hold that no terms are emotive synonyms.

Stroll concludes with a well-taken plea for more empirical studies of the use of ethical language. His general evaluation of the emotive theory is that its more radical formulations are untenable, whereas its less radical formulations, while better defensible and worth while as subtle accounts of ethical debate and various features of the use of ethical terms, turn out to be little different from some traditional naturalisms.

One would wish that his bibliography included reference to discussions by W. F. R. Hardie, Bertrand Russell, J. E. Ledden, and A. E. Duncan-Jones (as reported by Broad in the *Proceedings* of the Aristotelian Society, 1933-1934).

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AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF THE EXPRESSIONS "TRUE," "PERFECTLY CERTAIN" AND "EXTREMELY PROBABLE." By ARNE NAESS. Oslo, I Kommisjon Hos Jacob Dybwad, 1953. Pp. 41.

This paper is an original, odd, suggestive, tantalizing, careful, puzzling piece of work. It starts from the observation that assertions about the current or ordinary use of words are empirical ones; proceeds to investigate some chosen assertions of this type, using a carefully framed questionnaire and analyzing the answers statistically; and hints that the results of this and similar future investigations "are relevant to a great number of questions now treated by analytical philosophy" (p. 5). Exactly what Mr. Naess takes to be their relevance is, to one's sorrow, left unclear—"The question of relevancy is complicated," he says (p. 37), "and needs consideration which makes it undesirable to take it up in this article." But once this single, though substantial, reservation has been made, one can go on to applaud a good deal in the work. What makes it so puzzling and tantalizing is Naess's vagueness about the point of the investigation for philosophy. The actual empirical study is original in conception and carefully conducted, and it leads to suggestive results.

Naess is well aware, to begin with, of the difficulty of composing an unexceptionable questionnaire. Questions can very easily be "loaded" as a result of the philosophical predilections of the framer. "Scoring,"

too, is a problem: results require a certain amount of analysis, and "the interpretation made by the analyst of the answer may be inadequate, because of his inability to be unbiased, having through years of study and talking acquired a system of professional prejudices" (p. 30). These traps he largely avoids by confining himself to questions of the form "Does A, in your view, express the same assertion as B?"— the criterion for deciding that two sentences "express the same assertion" being that you cannot "imagine possible (but perhaps not actual) circumstances (conditions, existing state of affairs) of such a kind that if they were present you would accept A as warranted but reject B, or vice versa" (p. 38). This form of question proves quite a delicate instrument for showing up certain points of usage—particularly in connection with the problems raised by the application of the terms "true" and "certain" to scientific theories (pp. 13, 16-17) and predictions (pp. 21-23) as contrasted with statements of present fact. It also enables Naess to indicate how far people vary in their answers to the question "Does 'It is true that X' express the same assertion as 'It is perfectly certain that X'?" according to the type of the sentence X—present fact, more or less remote prediction, scientific theory or whatever. This at any rate suggests one solid philosophical moral, viz., that philosophical doctrines about the relation of truth to certainty and probability cannot hope for universal acceptance so long as they are stated in a completely general form (cf. p. 26).

In a few places, nevertheless, it does seem Mr. Naess's own "philosophical prejudices" have influenced his interpretation of the results. The only place in which this arouses real disquiet is the final section of all: here he offers some hypotheses about the extent to which certain pairs of sentences (e.g., "p" and "It is true that p") *mean the same* in current usage, basing his hypotheses solely on the evidence of the questionnaire. But "identity of expressed assertion," as he has carefully defined it, may be a necessary condition of identity of meaning, without guaranteeing it. It might, for instance, be established that all proper occasions for the use of the sentence "It is true that p," and no others, were also proper occasions for the use of the sentence "It is perfectly certain that p," yet identity of meaning would still not have been established. For this normally requires identity, not only of proper occasions of use, but also of entailments or "logical powers"; and what *follows from* statements about the certainty of p is different from what follows from the corresponding statements about the truth of p, even if we allow that the proper occasions for making the statements may be exactly the same. One gets the impression both here and generally

that [Mr. Naess has been operating with an oversimple model for the functioning of language and that his experiment was designed in the first place to handle only idealized "descriptive" statements.

It was probably wise of Naess to start by presenting his material, as he does, in such a way as to move "from the simple to the complicated and from the less controversial to the more controversial" (p. 6). Still, in this field controversy cannot be entirely avoided, and one must hope that, before Naess gets too immersed in the practical work of framing and using more and more similar questionnaires, he will sit down and tell us what exactly they *are* designed to prove. Until this is done, it will be easy for philosophers to ignore his work. "Even if 25.8 % of persons were found to give the sum of two and two as five," they will argue, "that would leave the correctness of the formula '2 + 2 = 4' in formal arithmetic unaffected: surely also, the fact that quite a number of people were prepared to give some sense to the statement 'Jones knows the time assiduously' would not destroy the familiar, established use of terms, which rules out the collocation of such a verb and such an adverb?" And it would be a pity if Naess's work were to be entirely ignored, for, reading through the paper, one certainly feels that the reactions of his answerers prove *something* about the nature of our concepts. It may be that the point would become clearer if one undertook not statistical enquiries, using short questionnaires and large groups of answerers, but detailed investigations of the usage of very small groups of persons—that, after all, was Socrates' method. Naess is keen to treat his work scientifically, and indeed to construct "a scientific discipline of cognitive communication" (p. 5); but this science, like other human sciences, calls for case studies as well as statistical surveys, and some of its more important morals do not come out clearly if one uses statistical methods alone. Let us hope that case studies too are on Mr. Naess's program. At the moment, all one can do about the larger aspects of his work is to suspend judgment.

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LA PHILOSOPHIE POLITIQUE DE PLATON DANS LES "LOIS." By MAURICE VANHOUTTE. (Bibliothèque Philosophique de Louvain, XIV.) Louvain, Publications Universitaires de Louvain, 1954. Pp. ix, 466. Fr. B. 195, $3.90.

It is probably true to say that Plato's *Laws* have received attention from scholars more often because they were regarded as supplying evidence of importance for particular problems than because of any