

## **A Study of Some of the Bentham's Positions in Metaethics**

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In this work, I would like to explore some reflections, which today could be described as concerning to metaethics, presented by Jeremy Bentham in three texts: the theory of fictions (ed. Ogden), Chrestomathia, and Deontology Together A Table of Springs of Actions. Many of the issues and problems of contemporary metaethics, somehow, are associated with Hume's ideas on morals, the famous humean theses: the is/ought problem, the connection between belief and desire, the passivity of speculative reason, the volitional basis of morals. Hume did not develop satisfactorily, neither a semantic of morals, nor an ontology of morals, nor a theory of practical reason. Bentham was admittedly influenced by the Hume's ideas on morals and, despite the labels such as a naive hedonist and a calculating fool, he undertook a great effort trying to give some consistency to humean theses and exploring their implications. Although the traditional reading of Bentham, ignoring some of these speculations, tends to assort his metaethics position as a reductionist naturalistic realism, a primary examination of his realist metaethics positions reveals affinities with both the noncognitivist sentimentalism and the fictionalism. Thus, taking a Bentham committed to the humean theses, I will try to characterize his positions within the three metaethics fields above mentioned, highlighting what for him were the deficiencies of Hume's moral philosophy, and showing the special treatment he gave to the humean theses.