

Reason, Value, and Duty

Prichard's Dilemma

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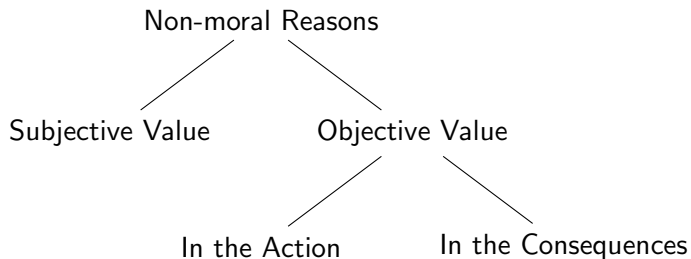
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The Second Horn



Subjective Value

- **Desires** are psychological states that have an **object**, a **positive weight**, and **motivational power**:
 - When we desire something there is something we desire (its **object**)
 - Desires recommend their object to a certain degree (its **positive weight**)
 - Desires can move us to act (its **motivational power**)
- If conflicting or absent desire can open the question whether we should do what we took to be our duty, a desire to do that thing might close the question for us

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Objective Value of the Action's Effects

- x 's doing A in circumstances C brings some good into being
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Two Objections

Prichard makes two objections to the suppressed premise:

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- 2 The principle conflicts with our moral intuitions (we judge that we ought to act justly even if so acting will produce less good than acting unjustly)

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Objective Value of the Action Itself



Whether or not an action is good depends upon its motive. This is the basis of a dilemma:

- 1 If the motive is a **sense of obligation**, then far from explaining obligation in terms of the goodness of the action, we are explaining the goodness of an action in terms of obligation
- 2 If the motive is a **desire**, then while it may explain why we want to perform the action, it cannot explain why we ought to perform it

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Dissolution

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