

# Raz on practical reason and political morality

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‘At this stage in the development of his thought, there are dense connections among all parts of Raz’s system. One cannot understand [...] law unless one understands that it claims authority; one cannot understand authority unless one understands the way it serves reason; one cannot understand reason unless one understands [...] action and value [...] A fuller evaluation of that work is eagerly awaited’ – Leslie Green<sup>1</sup>

## I. Introduction

This article provides the first evaluation of the relationship between Raz’s theories of practical reason and political morality<sup>2</sup>. By doing so, it responds to Green’s call in 2005, as noted above, for a ‘fuller’ evaluation of Raz’s writings over the last thirty or so years, as well as the lack of any other such response in legal, moral, or political philosophy over the subsequent years<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> L. Green, ‘Three Themes from Raz’, *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, 25:3 (2005), 523.

<sup>2</sup> I draw in particular on the following works: *Practical Reason and Norms* (Oxford: OUP, 1999); *The Morality of Freedom* (Oxford: OUP, 1986); *Engaging Reason: On the Theory of Value and Action* (Oxford: OUP, 1999); ‘Facing Up: A Reply’, *Southern California Law Review* (62), 1153-1235; *Ethics in the Public Domain: Essays in the Morality of Law and Politics* (Oxford: OUP, 1994); *Value, Respect, and Attachment* (Cambridge: CUP, 2001); *The Practice of Value* (Oxford: OUP, 2003); ‘Philosophy and the Practice of Freedom: An Interview with Joseph Raz’, *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*, 9:1 (2006), 71-84; *Between Authority and Interpretation: On the Theory of Law and Practical Reason* (Oxford: OUP, 2009); and *From Normativity to Responsibility* (Oxford: OUP, 2011). In what follows, I abbreviate these as *PRN*, *MOF*, *ER*, *FU*, *EPD*, *VRA*, *PV*, *PPF*, *BAI*, and *FNR*.

<sup>3</sup> As things stand, the literature on Raz’s work focusses only on a range of particular issues, rather than the coherence of the overall project that connects them. Legal philosophers, for example, look at his theories of authority and interpretation; political philosophers his positions on autonomy and multiculturalism; and moral philosophers his account of reasons and values – a tendency noted by Green in *ibid*, 523, and illustrated by the two edited collections on his work: L.H. Meyer, S.L. Paulson, T.W. Pogge (Eds.), *Rights, Culture, and the Law: Themes from the Legal and Political Philosophy of Joseph Raz* (Oxford: OUP, 2003); and R.J. Wallace, P. Pettit, S. Scheffler, M. Smith, *Reason and Value: Themes from the Moral Philosophy of Joseph Raz* (Oxford: OUP, 2004). The only partial exception to this tendency is a recent special edition of *Ethics* focussed on the relationship between some of Raz’s recent writings on practical reason and his normative doctrine of ‘respect’ for both values and ‘valuers’<sup>3</sup>. Yet that is only a very partial exception, given the narrow focus involved. The editors of this edition note in their introduction that ‘Raz’s seminal work in legal and political philosophy has been complemented in recent years with writings on value’, which crucially ‘have implications for what it means to show respect for persons’. But the fundamental dependence of political philosophy on practical reason in Raz is not *new*. It has just become increasingly important, as Raz’s writings on practical reason have grown, that that dependence should be investigated in its own right. See K. Brownlee & Z. Stemplowska, ‘Introduction’, *Ethics*, 120:2 (2010), 209.

Why do we need such an evaluation? For at least two reasons. First, in the wider context of Raz's 'practical philosophy' – a term he uses to encompass all of moral, political, and legal philosophy – his theory of practical reason is supposed to *ground* his theory of political morality. As Green notes, *reason* and *value* are the fundamental concepts for Raz's political philosophy, not *liberty* and *equality*<sup>4</sup>. Second, his theory of practical reason, rather than underpinning his political philosophy in the intended way, actually turns out to *undermine* it. As will be explained, three under-examined features of that theory – *desires*, *goals*, and *competitive pluralism* – combine in such a way as to make it both *permissible* (given the nature of reasons) and *likely* (given the nature of values) that we will not act in accordance with what Raz calls our *autonomy-based duty* to provide *everybody* in our society with what he deems to be an *adequate range of valuable life-options*.

This claim, that Raz's theory of practical reason undermines his theory of political morality, is the central argument of this article, and it is worth illustrating in advance just how that undermining occurs, before setting out the details of those two theories. Consider the following three scenarios. First, a modern country in which a minority *religion*, in order to thrive, requires an appropriate building to be constructed in whichever towns or cities contain a significant number of its adherents. Second, a modern country in which a minority *culture*, in order to thrive, requires an alternative education system to be publicly supported on its behalf. Third, a modern country in which a minority *art form*, in order to thrive, requires significant public funding for whatever venues and performances are deemed appropriate by its aficionados. What is Raz's vision in such cases? His vision, or prescription, under the noted duty to provide an *adequate range of life options*, is for *all* such forms of support to be

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<sup>4</sup> Green, *ibid*, 523.

ensured by the state, provided that, for each practice supported, there is at least one group who would benefit from its existence (i.e. we don't have to support practices without *any* devotees). By contrast, I argue that, *if* everyone conforms perfectly to his theory of practical reason, *then* whatever support is provided will fall significantly short of this level.

This shortfall occurs because, when conforming in this way, *most* individuals would push/call/vote for some such lower level; or, from a different angle, because *any given* individual is *likely* to push/call/vote for some such lower level, for reasons that will become clear in what follows. Admittedly, it is likely that *some* degree of support, for some *sub-set* of these practices, will be provided via *political compromise*, just as it is likely that some *further sub-set* will be provided, to at least *some* extent, via the *market*. Yet that is not enough for Raz, in the sense that is *less* than he thinks *political morality requires*. Consequently, I am claiming that, if people are *reasonable*, on the terms of his theory of practical reason, they are likely to be *immoral*, on the terms of his theory of political morality. That is the crux of my argument.

In what follows, this argument moves through three stages. First, I set out the key elements of Raz's theories of political morality and practical reason. Second, I explain how desires, goals, and competitive pluralism combine within the latter to undermine the former. Third, I consider the three arguments Raz provides us with for solving this problem, all of which have to do with the relative force of moral and non-moral reasons. The conclusion then reiterates the argument just described, whilst stressing that its scope should not be generalised to alternative (i.e. non-Razian) approaches to either practical reason or political morality.

## **II. Raz's Theory of Political Morality**

Raz's two key claims here are (1) that 'political morality is concerned primarily with protecting and promoting the *well-being* of people'<sup>5</sup>; and (2) that in modern societies this entails the securing of everyone's *autonomy* via three 'autonomy-based duties' – (a) 'toleration', (b) helping to create 'the inner capacities required for the conduct of an autonomous life', and (c) provision of 'an adequate range of options', such that each individual can make an autonomous choice amongst them<sup>6</sup>. This means, as Raz himself stresses, that the 'principle of autonomy, as I shall call the principle requiring people to secure the conditions of autonomy for all people, yields duties which go far beyond the negative duties of non-interference'<sup>7</sup>. Note though that it is not the first two of these autonomy-based-duties that cause the problem I have in mind here. It is only the third that matters - the duty to provide for *everyone* what Raz considers an *adequate* range of options - given that it is this duty (from now on ABD3) that ultimately leads, as indicated, to the described incompatibility between Raz's theories of practical reason and political morality.

Three aspects of ABD3 matter in particular: its *detail*, *demandingness*, and *fundamental importance*. Consider first its *detail*. The sorts of policies Raz has in mind are those described in the introduction. He envisages states doing everything they can to support as many valuable life options as possible (careers/religions/cultures/art-forms/etc.), including all sorts of minority options, in order for everyone to have the chance to live what he deems to be a fully autonomous life. This will involve, at a general level, the support of all relevant cultural groups and 'institutions', but also, at a more specific level, such things as the right to wear religious dress in school and work, the right for parents to decide whether or not their

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<sup>5</sup> *EPD*, v, emphasis added.

<sup>6</sup> *MOF*, 407-408

<sup>7</sup> *MOF*, 408.

children are educated ‘in the culture of their groups’, and the recognition of the customs and practices of those groups in law and public institutions<sup>8</sup>.

Now consider *demandingness*. Raz says that the policy of securing ‘valuable options’ should be adopted even when it leads to the complete transformation of a pre-existing neighbourhood or public space<sup>9</sup>, and even when it would lead to the ‘disappearance of a much-cherished existing form of a valuable activity or relationship’<sup>10</sup>. He also claims that this will often involve ‘*disproportionate* support’<sup>11</sup> for smaller groups, and that we should not ‘underestimate the *severity* of the distributional patterns which a morality of personal autonomy gives rise to’, as a result of its ‘requirement that an adequate range of diverse and valuable options be within the reach of all’<sup>12</sup>. Such demandingness is also clear from the description of ‘strong pluralism’ he sometimes gives to his position. As he explains, this position requires us to see the value in all sorts of rival ways of life, and to tolerate even those that we would rather see gone<sup>13</sup>. Though again, note that toleration is only part of it: as a result of ABD3, we are asked not just to *tolerate* ways of life of which we disapprove, but also to actively *support* them.

Finally, consider the *fundamental importance* of our autonomy-based duties. Raz says that ‘consideration of the protection and promotion of autonomy provides the basic grounds which determine issues of justice and distribution’<sup>14</sup>. This means that ‘government [...] has an obligation to create an environment providing individuals with an adequate range of

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<sup>8</sup> *EPD*, 189-190.

<sup>9</sup> *EPD*, 190.

<sup>10</sup> *EPD*, 24.

<sup>11</sup> *EPD*, 190, emphasis added.

<sup>12</sup> *EPD*, 122, emphasis added.

<sup>13</sup> On ‘strong pluralism’, see *EPD*, 166. On this aspect of toleration, see *MOF*, 401.

<sup>14</sup> *FU*, 1233.

options and the opportunities to choose them'<sup>15</sup>, and also that, because taxation is coercive, it is justified 'only inasmuch as it is useful for the promotion and protection of autonomy for all'<sup>16</sup>.

We have then a theory of political morality which, given ABD3, is both *demanding* and *fundamentally important*, relative to any other political ambitions we might have. The question now is whether this theory is compatible with his theory of practical reason.

### III. Raz's Theory of Practical Reason

The two central concepts in Raz's theory of practical reason, on which everything else in his practical philosophy depends, are *value* and *reason*<sup>17</sup>. He tells us that we should, and normally do, only pursue things in life that are genuinely valuable<sup>18</sup>. This is because values are universal - in the sense of being universally intelligible *as values*<sup>19</sup> - and objective - in the sense of being both universal and *independent* of our will<sup>20</sup>. As such, when it is possible for us to engage with them, they provide us with reasons for action, and we are *reasonable* only when we act on those reasons (as well as *rational*, defined as a subordinate component of reasonableness regarding the attainability of the values we pursue, as well as the means we

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<sup>15</sup> *MOF*, 418. See also *EPD*, 23-24.

<sup>16</sup> *FU*, 1232.

<sup>17</sup> He sometimes refers to this bedrock as the 'value-reason nexus': *VRA*, 5.

<sup>18</sup> As regards the 'normally do' clause, the caveat is that, as a matter of fact, we can of course only act in pursuit of what we *believe* is valuable in a way that we *believe* is reasonable (given our grasp of the world and our place in it). Nevertheless, the assumption here is that we normally get it right in the sense of reasonably pursuing things which are of genuine value. My claim in this article, after all, is that, even if *each* of us is reasonable, *most* of us will fail to conform to ABD3. For an interesting discussion of how reasons can, separately, motivate, explain, and justify our actions, see M. Alvarez, *Kinds of Reasons: An essay in the philosophy of action* (Oxford: OUP, 2010, esp. ch. 2).

<sup>19</sup> For the claim that values make human action intelligible, see *ER*, 31. As an example of unintelligible action, Raz describes someone who, for no further reason, wants to paint potatoes green: *ER*, 56. For the claim that universality is an entailment of intelligibility, see *VRA* 42, 47.

<sup>20</sup> *ER*, 14-15, 324.

adopt to pursue them). By contrast, we are *unreasonable* when we aim to destroy, harm, or generally act against values, in a way that might happen when acting on hatred, laziness, cowardice, or any other urge or desire that does not itself pass the test of cognitive assessment (as well as *irrational*, given the way in which such actions go against our *real* interest in pursuing *genuine* values). For example, although I might yearn to murder my neighbour because of his garden radio, or long to paint a shed because I do not like the thought of the paint sitting, unfulfilled, in its tin, I can also see, when sane, that I would be unreasonable if acting on either urge. By contrast, if I painted the shed in order to preserve it from the weather, or killed my neighbour in the course of stopping him murdering his own family, then I would be acting in the pursuit of objective values, and so would have good reasons for my actions<sup>21</sup>.

With this bedrock of values and reasons established, Raz then adds three further theses to his theory of practical reason: *incommensurability*, *value-pluralism*, and *social-dependence*. First, *incommensurability*. Raz says that two values are incommensurable when (1) neither is better than the other, and (2) they are not of equal value. This is incommensurability as *incomparability*, and it occurs when any two options – leisure pursuits such as fox-hunting and chess, careers such as medicine and law, virtues such as bravery and compassion, and so on - lack a common measure<sup>22</sup>. Second, *value-pluralism*: the idea that many values in the world are not just incommensurable, and thus irreducible, but also *incompatible*, and not just because of a lack of time, space, or resources, but also because adopting one often requires you to neglect the other<sup>23</sup>. You cannot, for example, become both a nun and a mother. Third, *social-dependence*: the idea that most of our values can only be engaged with in the presence

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<sup>21</sup> See, for example, *MOF*, 140 and 303. His best extended discussion on the subject is *ER*, 46-66.

<sup>22</sup> *MOF*, 322.

<sup>23</sup> *MOF*, 395; *PV*, 43.

of a supporting ‘social practice’<sup>24</sup>. I cannot, for example, play chess on my own, or pursue medicine in a society that does not practice it, or pursue literature without literacy and a reading public, and so on. Yet note that this is not *relativism*. Values remain universal given that, even when social practices ‘create’ new values, those values will always be universally intelligible (assuming that they really *are* values) in the sense of being comprehensible as manifestations of one or more universally valuable (though still incommensurable) properties, such as ‘beauty’, ‘pleasure’, ‘ingenuity’, and so on<sup>25</sup>. Chess, for example, is a socially-created valuable pursuit, whilst concentration, patience, and competitiveness are not. In what follows, these three theses are crucial in explaining the conflict between political morality and practical reason I have in mind.

#### **IV. Political morality versus practical reason: Desires, Goals, and Competitive Pluralism**

This conflict occurs because three features of Raz’s theory of practical reasoning that we have yet to consider, though which depend upon the ideas of incommensurability, value-pluralism, and social-dependence just described, explain not just how we choose between these values, but also why it is both *permissible* and *likely* that we will not support ABD3.

These three features are *desires*, *goals*, and *competitive pluralism*, and their importance stems from the *under-determining* effects of incommensurability and value-pluralism on our decision-making. In short, because most of the values we are able to choose from are both incommensurable and incompatible, most of our significant choices are under-determined by

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<sup>24</sup> *PV*, 19.

<sup>25</sup> Raz says that ‘all values are either universal or subsumable under universal values’ in *VRA*, 46. For further elaboration on this position, see *ER*, 30-31, 207, 301, *VRA*, 43-44, and *PV*, 122; *VRA*, 43-44.



reason in the sense that it only delineates for us a set of eligible options, without telling us what to choose within that set. As Raz puts it at one point, ‘typically [...] agents are left with a number of options that are incommensurate in value [meaning that] reasons for actions are better characterised as making actions eligible rather than requiring their performance on pain of irrationality. In typical situations, reason does not determine what is to be done’<sup>26</sup>. So, in most situations, when conforming with Raz’s theory of practical reason, there will be several ‘reasonable options’, in virtue of the incommensurable values those options represent, rather than just one right thing to do. Some options will be ruled as unreasonable, and occasionally all but one, but typically a plurality will remain. As a result, further decision-making criteria are required, which is how desires, goals, and competitive pluralism come into play.

Consider first *desires*. As is clear from the theory set out above, if we are to act as we should, we must accept that desires are completely subject to rational assessment in the sense that some will be judged unreasonable (e.g. the desire to murder my neighbour, or ‘free’ some paint from a tin, as mentioned above) We need not dispute that claim here. We can accept Raz’s claims that they are revisable in the light of such assessment<sup>27</sup>; that they should and normally do tend to disappear once the belief that they are worthy disappears<sup>28</sup>; and that it makes sense in general to talk of the rationality of our emotions to the extent that they depend on the beliefs that underpin them<sup>29</sup>. The problem is that such assessment, although *necessary* for rational action, only rarely *determines* it. As a result, in the ordinary course of things, according to Raz, we simply find an option not excluded by reason, and which appeals to us,

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<sup>26</sup> *ER*, 65.

<sup>27</sup> *MOF*, 141; *EPD*, 37; *ER*, 56, 62, 284.

<sup>28</sup> *ER*, 53. *FU*, 1213.

<sup>29</sup> *ER*, 75.

and then pursue it<sup>30</sup>, regardless of whether we conceptualise such appeal in terms of our taste<sup>31</sup>, predilections<sup>32</sup>, character<sup>33</sup>, dispositions<sup>34</sup>, or chemistry<sup>35</sup>.

This is a problem when it comes to politics because it seems as though there is little we can say against someone who just *happens*, say, to *prefer* opera to all other art-forms, and who thus has no desire to support whatever minority forms would need to be supported on the terms of ABD3. Given that opera and those other art forms are *incommensurable*, we cannot accuse that person of *irrationality* in *not wanting* to support them. And clearly, because these art forms are *minority* art forms, it must already be the case that most people do, like this opera buff, just happen to prefer other things. As a result, not wanting to support minority art forms appears to be both *reasonable* and *likely* on the part of the majority.

This then takes us up to *goals*, which Raz describes as the central and long-term values we aim at in our life, such as ‘having a good career’ or ‘being a good parent’<sup>36</sup>. As such, they are the chief determinants of our well-being<sup>37</sup> and normally the chief determinants of our decisions between incommensurable values<sup>38</sup>. Yet they are also, and for the same reason, the most significant problem for Raz’s theory of political morality, and remain so even when we allow for the limitation that, just like desires, we are only supposed to pursue them if (1) they involve genuinely valuable things, and (2) it is rational for us to do so, given our place in the world<sup>39</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> *ER*, 66; *FU*, 1222.

<sup>31</sup> *PV*, 55. *ER*, 117. *BAI*, 369.

<sup>32</sup> *ER*, 117.

<sup>33</sup> *ER*, 9.

<sup>34</sup> *BAI*, 369.

<sup>35</sup> *ER*, 66.

<sup>36</sup> For examples of Raz’s concept of a goal, see *MOF*, 283 and 294

<sup>37</sup> *MOF*, 297; *FU*, 1214-1215. And *PPF*, 75.

<sup>38</sup> *MOF*, 290.

<sup>39</sup> See *MOF*, 300-301, 388; *VRA*, 19.

Consider here that, unlike desires, Raz claims not just that goals are values (and thus a direct source of reasons for action), but also that, as we adopt them, and as they develop, they create new values and reasons over time<sup>40</sup>. And indeed, not just *new* reasons, but also *stronger* ones, given that the more time and effort I have committed to a given goal, the more reason-giving force it has for me (assuming that it has remained rational, given both the world and its relationship to my other goals)<sup>41</sup>. On Raz's view, as a result, questions about what we ought to do are largely going to be answered by questions about what we already care about, understood here as questions about the goals to which we are already committed, and thus to which we are already attached<sup>42</sup>.

Note though that although we will often view the goals we have adopted (such as medicine or the priesthood) as particularly important values, or at least the most appropriate values 'for us', it is actually not necessary that we do so in order for them to cause problems for Raz's theory of political morality. For that to be the case, it is enough that we love and prioritise them in the same reason-permitted way we love and prioritise our children - namely, and as Raz explains, because they are *ours*<sup>43</sup>. When we care about something in this way it makes it a rational priority, such that we can, perfectly reasonably, *prioritise it relative to other values and the reasons they generate*<sup>44</sup>. For example, if things like career-choices and relationships count as central, well-being determining goals, then it follows that they can be reasonably prioritised over other values I might either choose to pursue or be asked to support.

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<sup>40</sup> *MOF*, 387.

<sup>41</sup> *MOF*, 388, and *VRA*, 19.

<sup>42</sup> *MOF*, 345.

<sup>43</sup> *EPD*, 184.

<sup>44</sup> *PV*, 145.

Imagine, for example, that I am a doctor and Muslim. In what way would I be unreasonable for wanting my government to fund hospitals and mosques? And imagine further that most people in my country are Muslims, and that most of them want the same kind of healthcare system my goals attract me to, whilst a minority exists that is both Christian and convinced by the merits of private health-care. In such circumstances it seems reasonable of the majority to try and get their way, just as it is likely that they will succeed.

Now consider that Raz stresses repeatedly just how dependent many goals are on supporting social practices<sup>45</sup>, a point which might be thought to strengthen the minority's position, given that it makes their political wishes all the more important in terms of their well-being. In fact the opposite is the case. If (1) both the majority *and* minority have a strong interest in the kinds of public goods required of their adopted goals (as they surely will), (2) cultural background remains the key influence on our choice of goals (as Raz says it is<sup>46</sup>), and (3) resources are scarce (as they always are), then that only makes it likelier that (4) the majority will direct funding towards *their* goods. After all, the *more important* those goods are to them, the *less likely* they are to be willing to compromise. All of which explains why goals pose such a problem for Raz's theory of political morality. Once the rationality, importance, and social-dependence that Raz ascribes to them are combined, they clearly lead to political outcomes that are far removed from those prescribed by that theory.

Or is this too extreme? Perhaps the majority, despite acting in accordance with Raz's theory of practical reason, would be willing to ensure what they, if not Raz, would deem a *sufficiency* of supporting practices for the minority, even if their own institutions and

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<sup>45</sup> *MOF*, 162, 308-309, 366; *EPD*, 121-122, 145, 155, 177; *ER*, 187; *PV*, 20-21. Scanlon seems to think much the same thing in *What We Owe to Each Other*, 122.

<sup>46</sup> *MOF*, 311.

practices are significantly less funded, or dominant, as a result. This, however, is where our third problem - *competitive pluralism* - kicks in, because it seems as though even Raz, implicitly, doubts the probability of that possibility. Consider here that we have already seen that most values are incommensurable, irreducible, and incompatible. The problem now is that they are also *competitive*, in the sense that engaging with or believing in some of them *entails* a belief in the *inferiority* of others. As Raz puts it at one point, his theory ‘admits the validity’ of virtues that tend to encourage intolerance of others<sup>47</sup>. And not just the ‘validity’: He also insists that if people are to succeed in their lives, then they *must* be committed to the values they have chosen to engage with, and so will often need to believe that those values really are *superior*<sup>48</sup>. This is why, if one accepts Raz’s theory of practical reason, then, as he admits, social tension and a ‘variety of dismissive attitudes’ between competing ways of life are inevitable<sup>49</sup>. And note: he *also* admits that ‘conceptions of the good encompass both private ideals [...] and societal conditions which contribute to them’<sup>50</sup>. All of which means that individuals are not just *reasonable* when they *desire* to support one art form rather than another, or when their *goals* lead them to support one religion rather than another, but also when they want those things to *triumph at the expense of others*, given the *competition* between the values those things involve.

Consider the following circle: conservatives opposing animal-rights protestors; animal-rights protestors opposing Muslims; Muslims opposing Christians; Christians opposing liberals; liberals opposing socialists; and socialists opposing conservatives. Consider, that is, how a liberal might oppose Muslims and Christians, as well as many conservatives, for their positions on homosexuality and family structure; just as a socialist would condemn both

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<sup>47</sup> *MOF*, 404.

<sup>48</sup> *EPD*, 180, emphasis added.

<sup>49</sup> *EPD*, 180.

<sup>50</sup> *MOF*, 135.

liberals and conservatives for their acceptance of capitalist ownership and its attendant inequalities. Or consider how these kinds of conflict play out when it comes to the legal status of kosher butchery, homosexual adoption, the public ownership of economic resources, or the existence and contents of national curriculums.

Of course, not all conflicts are the same. They are not all *zero-sum*, just as they are not all of *equal importance* to those who stand on either side of them. Nor is it impossible to imagine many of them resulting in various kinds of *compromise*, or at least some kind of mutual *toleration*, as far as the coercive power of the law is concerned. But again, *that is not enough for Raz*. On his theory of political morality, we are supposed to *support* the options required by all the many ways of life that combine to make up modern societies, in the way that, in some contemporary European societies, and as a result of democratic decision-making, Muslims are forced to financially support the upkeep of Christian churches, just as Christians are forced to financially support the practice of homosexual adoption.

Raz says at one point that his ‘strong pluralism’ is a pluralism that approves of ways of life that deny the truth of pluralism<sup>51</sup> and also that because autonomy requires so many options, it makes competitive pluralism inevitable<sup>52</sup>. Yet this only tells us that the more a state *tries* to pursue the autonomy-of-all, as Raz understands it, the more *resistance* it is likely to encounter. And remember: not just resistance as such, but *reasonable* resistance. Consider here again the position he takes on incommensurability:

‘Those [...] whose single-minded pursuit of a career led them to put a price on any human association lost the capacity for friendship [...] but they did not, just by doing so, act against reason [...] People who say,

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<sup>51</sup> *EPD*, 166.

<sup>52</sup> *MOF*, 406.

‘For me money is more important than friends’ are neither mistaken nor do they commit a wrong. They are simply incapable of having friends’<sup>53</sup>.

All of which means, again, that an individual is not just *reasonable*, given their *goals* and *desires*, for preferring and pursuing one set of *incommensurable values* (art-forms/cultures/religions/careers) over another, but also *likely*, given that pursuit, and also the *competitive* nature of those values (and thus the rivalry between this and other sets), to either *seek* political support for those values, or at the very least to *oppose* political support being given, instead, to their rivals<sup>54</sup>. Or, alternatively put, it is highly likely that, if everyone acts in accordance with Raz’s theory of practical reason, then the vast majority of them will oppose his theory of political morality.

## V. Raz’s solutions: An overview

Raz, however, makes various claims throughout his work that appear to head off this conclusion, the common theme of which is that practical reason does, despite these tendencies, direct us towards his political morality, given the special nature of *moral reasons*<sup>55</sup>. These claims can be distilled into three distinct arguments: (1) that reason

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<sup>53</sup> *MOF*, 353, emphasis added.

<sup>54</sup> If I am right, then this point about the tension between individual reasonableness and political morality might have implications for contemporary debates about ‘realism’ and ‘non-ideal theory’, though I cannot explore that here. For some early thoughts on those debates, see J. Floyd, ‘Should political philosophy be more realistic?’, *Res Publica*, 16:3 (2010); and J. Floyd, ‘Relative Value and Assorted Historical Lessons’, in J. Floyd & M. Stears (eds.), *Political Philosophy versus History?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011).

<sup>55</sup> Note that these are not the *only* possible arguments that can be brought in on Raz’s behalf. They are simply the arguments Raz himself produces of a kind that might do the work required. Or, put differently, the aim here is to find a Razian defence of Raz, in the sense of providing one or more arguments that are (a) drawn from his work, and (b) capable of rendering his theories of practical reason and political morality compatible. By contrast, one could imagine trying to underpin ABD3 by way of a general Rawlsian duty to create and uphold just institutions – a possibility suggested to me by an anonymous reviewer at this journal. Or, moving closer back to Raz, one could imagine working out a way in which governments, but not individuals, have a duty to deliver ABD3 – a second suggestion by the same reviewer. Or, moving closer again, perhaps we could edit his service conception of authority in such a way as to (a) make democracy the only legitimate system ‘around here’ and (b) make ABD3 a requirement of democratic process – this time an idea of my own. In the future, I should

*naturally* aligns us with morality's requirements, without our having to intentionally prioritise the latter; (2) that moral reasons are especially *attractive*, due to the special 'value of valuers'; and (3) that at least 'reasons of respect', as a special class of moral reasons, are *categorical*. In what follows I reject these arguments, though note that in doing so I will not be rejecting a claim that Raz correctly makes throughout his work, namely, that there is nothing *unreasonable* about acting on moral reasons. There is certainly nothing odd or irrational about the person who wants to help the downtrodden, or who wants to keep open her local community centre, or who wants to preserve great works of art. Clearly the well-being of others is perfectly *intelligible* as a universal *value*, and thus a source of *valid reasons* for those who are able to promote it. I deny only that people generally are either *required* or *likely*, if they act in accordance with Raz's theory of practical reason, to pursue one specific moral cause, namely, ABD3. Or, put differently, I claim only that, on his understanding of such things, most reasonable people will be immoral, not that those who are moral are unreasonable.

## **VI. Reasons to be moral, pt. 1: Natural alignment**

Consider the first of these three arguments: *natural alignment*. Raz says at one point that because individuals 'inevitably derive the goals by which they constitute their lives from the stock of social forms available to them [...] it is easy for people to find themselves with [...] goals which lead to a rough coincidence in their own lives of moral and personal concerns'<sup>56</sup>. For example, 'by being teachers, production workers, drivers, public servants, loyal friends and family people, loyal to their communities, nature loving, and so on, they will be pursuing

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like to explore all three ideas, though in doing so one has to be clear that each would involve significant changes to Raz's overall project. Changes on such a scale have not been considered here, given the project of achieving the compatibility between his theories of practical reason and political morality as they stand.

<sup>56</sup> *MOF*, 319.



their own goals, enhancing their own well-being, and also serving their communities'<sup>57</sup>. He even goes so far as to say that the 'dependence of well-being on personal goals, and the dependence of these on social forms, *guarantees* the essential identity of people's responsiveness to their own well-being and to morality, *provided these social forms are morally sound*'<sup>58</sup>.

At first sight, the problem with this argument is that it only seems to hold if, by 'responsiveness', Raz means simply a willingness to support *some* valuable social practices. After all, supporting *my* culture/religion/art-form hardly entails support for *yours*, and may even *preclude* it, given competitive-pluralism, as explained above. Similarly, my being a good friend or family-person surely only pushes me towards helping and prioritising *my* friends and children, whilst being a good fireman/policeman/public-servant only requires that I uphold the law, put out fires, or administer existing policy. None of these things, it seems, directs us towards ABD3, by way of some 'invisible hand' of practical reason. In a recent interview, Raz was asked directly whether his morality might be too demanding, to which he replied by repeating his belief that there is no 'inherent' conflict between well-being and altruism, and that we will automatically serve both if our chosen goals 'involve caring about others'<sup>59</sup>. This much is true. The problem though, again, is that caring about *some* others hardly requires caring about *all* others, especially given that, the more I care about the few, the more I might want to prioritise them over the many. None of which, naturally, entails not caring *at all* about the rest of the world - it is just that, my wanting humanity to be free of, say, torture/starvation/repression/etc. falls a long way short of the kind of comprehensive

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<sup>57</sup> *MOF*, 319

<sup>58</sup> *MOF*, 319. I emphasise *guarantees* in this sentence; the remaining emphasis is Raz's.

<sup>59</sup> *PPF*, 76.

provision of supporting social practices (graffiti-art-centres, Methodist chapels, public show-jumping stables) that Raz envisages under ABD3.

Yet perhaps there is a stronger version of this argument. Perhaps, by focussing on the *potential* value of all these practices to *everyone*, we might say that for *any* individual to have an adequate range of options, *all* values must be supported. Or, put more directly to an individual practical-reasoner, asking as to why they ought to contribute to the upkeep of ABD3, we could say: because you *might* want to do *anything*, you *should* support *everything*. Think, though, of who this reasoner is likely to be. She or he, amongst other things, will be an *adult*, and adults already *know* what they want, at least in the sense that they can already identify a long list of things in which they will never be interested, and thus which they have no desire to maintain. Or is that putting it too strongly? After all, even the most conservative adult might still change their mind in the future regarding the goals they want to adopt, and thus the supporting practices they need. And consider, by being good friends and family members in the way Raz describes, wouldn't such adults also have an interest in maintaining a full spread of possible values for all of their nearest and dearest?

At this point we might object by saying that, even if that potential-engagement-value is attractive, we can't possibly support *all* the practices that people *might* be potentially interested in. But that is a cheap shot. It would be enough to say that we should support all the practices for which there are at least *some* devotees in our political community, especially given that it would be impossible to maintain many practices (art-forms/religions/cultures/languages) without at least some individuals currently committed to them. And that, crucially, would be exactly what Raz envisages for ABD3, in which case his argument is now looking a lot stronger than it did at first sight.

Remember though the thrust of Raz's theory of practical reason: we are *reasonable* just so long as we pursue a rationally-attainable sub-set of all the many incommensurable and incompatible values out there, and *unreasonable* if we destroy or act against them. This is why support for ABD3, given all the values we *might* legitimately pursue, is not *required* by reasonableness, but also why my argument in this article has focussed on the *likelihood* of people not supporting ABD3, given other features of our practical reasoning. This then makes our key question here as follows: would people *still* be likely to shirk ABD3, once apprised of the argument just explored regarding the potential engagement-value of a wider range of options? Or, more generously, we could put the question like this: If we ran a public campaign in which everyone was educated about value-pluralism, incommensurability, the detail of this argument regarding potential engagement-value, and the range of practices people are interested in beyond the mainstream/majority, would they still, *en masse*, reject ABD3 in the way I describe above?

I believe they would. What we need to remember now is the *demandingness* of ABD3 in terms of extensiveness, prioritisation, and the way it goes against a range of other values to which people are currently and strongly committed. Raz, as noted earlier, says that the efforts and redistributions required of ABD3 are *severe* and *hard*, and involve considerable upset to all sorts of established ways of life. This, in short, is why the market cannot achieve ABD3 by itself, but also why there would be *strong* (yet still perfectly *reasonable*) democratic resistance against it. But then we might ask: does ABD3 *have* to be so severe in its implications? A long answer to that question would involve social-scientific investigation into the range of values in which people are currently interested in a particular society, together with projections regarding the likely ramifications of meeting ABD in that context,

though the short answer, I believe, is that Raz is right: It *does* have to be so severe just so long as one is concerned with supporting *every one* of those values.

Zooming out for a moment, I take it that when we imagine that Raz's theory of political morality might somehow prove readily workable in a contemporary context, at least in the *natural* manner described, we are not really thinking about *his* theory at all, but rather some milder form of social-democracy in which an above-average number of practices garner the political support of representatives elected from a broad range of cultural backgrounds, and who enjoy the benefit of a highly educated (including culturally educated) wider population. Yet even that is somewhat short of ABD3. *Unless*, that is, we could run a public education campaign of the kind just mentioned that had access to even *stronger* reasons than those considered so far. It is with that possibility in mind that we turn to Raz's next argument.

## **VII. Reasons to be moral, pt. 2: the value of valuers**

This second argument says that moral reasons are somehow *especially attractive*. This would hold if the *values* underpinning those reasons are somehow especially important. For example, we might claim that our reasons for conforming with Raz' theory of political morality, as opposed to our own desires and goals, derive from a special class of values, such as 'intrinsic values', 'ultimate values', or the special value of 'valuers' (i.e. standardly capable human-beings)<sup>60</sup>. Yet we can clearly pursue intrinsic values, such as art, as well as ultimate values, such as 'a life with art', without acting in accordance with Raz's political morality. As a result, the question we need to answer is this: Is the third concept here – the

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<sup>60</sup> For the meaning of these terms, see: *MOF*, 178, 200; *ER*, 297; and *VRA*, 152-157.

value of 'valuers' - so great as to (1) give us *stronger reasons* than those generated by our desires and goals; and (2) give us reasons which point *in particular* towards ABD3.

One argument that answers affirmatively to both questions takes Kantian form. It says (1) that we are only *free* when we act *autonomously*, in the sense of being directed exclusively by our own *rationality*; (2) that we are only so-directed when we act in accordance with *morality*, as opposed to, say, our desires or fears; (3) that we only act in accordance with morality when we treat others as *ends* rather than *means*; (4) that treating them in this way requires provision of the conditions for *their own autonomy*; and (5) that realising ABD3 is an *essential part* of those conditions.

Now, part of the promise of this argument, given our ambition to be 'true to Raz' here, is that it puts 'autonomy' front-and-centre, by claiming that, in order to be autonomous ourselves, we need to facilitate the autonomy of others. Yet that promise is misleading. For Raz, being autonomous simply means being able to choose amongst genuine and rationally attainable values on the basis of our goals and desires. As a result, I remain autonomous even when focussed exclusively on my own goals, to which I am attracted and attached, rather than your goals (and their supporting practices), to which I am not attracted or attached, and by which I may well be repulsed (given competitive pluralism). Admittedly, if such 'exclusive' focus involved my thwarting or harming you in some way, then it might be true both that I am denying your autonomy and that by doing so I am denying my own autonomy (and consider: we might also say here I would be denying your and thus my 'value', or your and thus my 'humanity', etc.), but that is irrelevant here, because ABD3 requires much more than non-thwarting or the avoidance of harm

Consider then a second version of this argument, which takes its cue from Green, who explores the idea of the ‘value of valuers’ by focussing on the proposition that *valuers enhance values*, in the sense that suitably capable human beings make accessible, enrich, and advance the values available to us in the world<sup>61</sup>. As a result, the syllogistic route to ABD3 would be something like this: Because (1) ‘valuers’ of a range of values are required in order for *any of us* to have access to that range of values; and (2) our well-being is enhanced by being able to choose autonomously amongst an optimal range of values; we should (3) support the practices required of such values, and thereby conform with ABD3.

This argument, I think, is an interesting and important one, about which one could say a great deal, yet its problem is that it is essentially the argument regarding maximising the ‘potential engagement-value’ of all the values in the world that we considered in the first part of this section. And remember: the problem with *that* argument is that people are not just reasonable when opposing ABD3, given Raz’s theory of practical reason, but also *likely* to do so, given the *demandingness* of *precisely what Raz envisages* under that duty as a matter of policy, where demandingness indicates the scale of opposition between that policy and the pull of our existing desires, goals, and the way in which our currently adopted values oppose others via competitive pluralism. So, even if the claim that ‘valuers enhance values’ is capable of generating *some* political prescriptions (and it is for that reason that I say it should be further discussed), it still falls short of what ABD3 requires.

Consider then a third version of this argument. This argument makes ‘well-being’ the key idea behind the ‘value of valuers’, and says that ABD3 – the duty, remember, to support the practices and thus goals of others to the extent that Raz describes – is somehow required by

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<sup>61</sup> L. Green, ‘Two worries about Respect for Persons’, *Ethics*, 120 (2010), 212-231.

the value of the well-being of others (who are valuers). That claim, however, reveals a problem that applies to *all* versions of the argument that moral reasons are *somehow especially attractive*: the problem that, *even if we do care* about the well-being of our fellow valuers, we still do not need – given our own desires and goals, together with competitive pluralism – to support *all* of the things that Raz envisages under ABD3. This is because, in order to ensure that *everyone* has access to a *wide range* of valuable options, we do not need to provide state-funded support for *all* the values in which people are currently interested. Or, put differently – and thinking now of the first version of this argument we considered – we can provide that element of autonomy that requires an *adequate* range of options without providing the *extensive* range of options Raz describes, including the kinds of options that might be chosen by highly traditional parents. We might, for example, support multi-use community-centres, universal education with a national curriculum, and the kind of economic system that generates significant wealth for charities and private finance - and thus many of the practices Raz has in mind - without making the kinds of *severe* changes he discusses. As a result, we can respect the well-being of others - and indeed the autonomy of others, thinking now of the first version of this argument - by providing what is still an *adequate* set of options, *without* providing state-funded support for *all* of the options ABD3 requires, and thus the severe patterns of redistribution (land/institutions/resources/etc.) that Raz describes.

Remember here that ABD3 tells us to ensure provision of all of the supporting practices required of all the various goals in which individuals in our political community might be currently interested. And remember the two criteria mentioned earlier regarding the ‘special attractiveness of moral reasons’ argument we are now considering: that the ‘value of valuers’ would need to generate both (1) stronger reasons than those provided by our desires and goals, and (2) reasons that point in particular to ABD3. In each version of that argument

considered here I have granted (1) whilst denying (2), and I have done so in part because I wanted to consider arguments here that run as ‘true to Raz’ as possible. I have not, for example, denied the claim that an individual’s well-being requires some degree of public ‘recognition’ of their culture<sup>62</sup>, or the claim that a worthwhile life requires public support for at least some practices<sup>63</sup>. All I have claimed is that we can fully respect the ‘value of valuers’ without going as far as ABD3 requires. Or can we? The third and final argument in this section says that, in order to truly *respect* the value of valuers, we need to go further than the kind of *adequacy* that I have been saying would satisfy the moral reasons under discussion, and it is to that argument that we now turn.

### **VIII. Reasons to be moral, pt. 3: reasons of respect**

Consider finally Raz’s argument that at least some moral reasons are *categorical*, meaning that we should act on them regardless of our various goals and desires. One example of this is the reason we have to not murder people, though that will hardly underpin the duty we have in mind. The particular class of purportedly categorical reasons that might do so are what Raz calls ‘reasons of *respect*’, and in particular what he refers to as ‘respect for the preconditions which make valuable activities possible’<sup>64</sup>.

Raz makes several strong claims regarding both the nature and political implications of these reasons. As regards nature, he says that flouting ‘reasons of respect’ is wrong because they

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<sup>62</sup> *EPD*, 155.

<sup>63</sup> See D. McCabe, ‘Joseph Raz and the Contextual Argument for Liberal Perfectionism’, *Ethics*, 111 (2001), 503. For a more general argument against the dependence of well-being on culture, see J. Waldron, ‘Minority Cultures and the Cosmopolitan Alternative’, in W. Kymlicka (Ed.), *The rights of minority cultures* (Oxford: OUP, 1995), 93-121. For a response to this line of argument in defence of Raz, see W. Kymlicka, ‘Liberal Theories of Multiculturalism’, in *Rights, Culture, and the Law*.

<sup>64</sup> *ER*, 321-322, emphasis added.



are categorical<sup>65</sup>; that they are ‘*typical* purely categorical reasons’<sup>66</sup>; and that ‘respect due to [persons] is among the foundations of morality’<sup>67</sup>. As regards implications, he says on one occasion that the ‘state [...] in respecting people [...] has a duty [...] to facilitate their pursuit of their worthwhile goals’<sup>68</sup>; and that we as individuals must recognise this ‘duty of respect to other people [as manifested] in respect for their life and autonomy’<sup>69</sup>. And, on another occasion, that ‘There are values and principles [...] which apply to all [...] human societies at all times. These include duties of respect to people, which include [...] in contemporary conditions [...] a duty on states to see to it that their inhabitants have the conditions for leading worthwhile and fulfilling lives’<sup>70</sup>. It therefore seems clear that, although they are not the *only* route Raz describes towards justifying ABD3, given the past two arguments, reasons of respect do seem to be for him *sufficient* means by themselves for such justification.

There is however some confusion regarding the *status* of these reasons within Raz’s theory of practical reason. Given (1) value-pluralism and incommensurability, (2) his belief that ‘well-being cannot conflict with morality for it embraces it’<sup>71</sup>, and (3) his explicit concession that many moral acts are superogatory and thus clearly incommensurable with many non-moral reasons<sup>72</sup>, how is it possible that *any* moral reasons are *categorical* (as opposed to being merely of great ‘weight’), given that acting on them can, on occasion, undermine our well-being?<sup>73</sup> As Wallace notes, given this potential conflict, and the general shape of Raz’s theory of practical reason, such stringency (in the form of *categoricity*) is rather

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<sup>65</sup> VRA, 168.

<sup>66</sup> FNR, 184.

<sup>67</sup> 2010, 285.

<sup>68</sup> PPF, 75.

<sup>69</sup> PPF, 81.

<sup>70</sup> J. Raz, ‘Comments and Responses’, in *Rights, Culture, and the Law*, 266

<sup>71</sup> ER, 313.

<sup>72</sup> ER, 243. See also 313.

<sup>73</sup> ER, 321.

‘puzzling’<sup>74</sup>. Again, we might not think this much of a problem with something like the duty not to murder (if only because our well-being is not obviously at stake), but that is not the kind of duty we have in mind with ABD3. The question here is why reasons of respect, in particular, have the power to override considerations of our own well-being (as manifested, remember, by the reasonable pursuit of our existing desires and goals).

In order to try and solve this problem, we need to look at the *value* behind the duty of respect. Raz explains this value by saying that the ‘point’ of respect is to make engagement with value possible, for both ourselves and others<sup>75</sup> - an aim he describes as ‘not optional [but rather] required of us, of all of us, and regarding anything that is of value’<sup>76</sup>. But what does that mean? One interpretation is that the duty of respect is grounded in the potential engagement value, to just about anyone, of all the different practices supported by ABD3. Yet as we have already considered this value in earlier arguments, there is little point in revisiting it here.

A more pertinent point is that, with these comments, and indeed much of what Raz says about reasons of respect, there seems to be an elision between two *kinds* of respect – one of which involves the non-destruction of values and the other of which involves their protection and promotion. This is important given that the first kind is not just what most people have in mind when talking of, say, ‘respect for other cultures’, but also because it seems to give the particular duties Raz has in mind (including ABD3) more credence than they might deserve. After all, it seems very plausible indeed to say that we should not *disrespect* those values to which other people are attached, in the sense of harming or destroying them, even when they have nothing to do with our own goals and desires. For example, even if I do not like you, I

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<sup>74</sup> See: R.J. Wallace, ‘The Rightness of Acts and the Goodness of Lives’, in *Reason and Value*, 189.

<sup>75</sup> *PPF*, 82.

<sup>76</sup> *PPF*, 82.

should not be rude to you; just as, even if I do not like the picture you have just drawn, I should not vandalise it. But there is no need here to dispute that first kind of respect. The issue is whether the second kind is both plausibly categorical and capable of justifying ABD3.

Green provides the best exploration of this issue. One problem he points out is that, because people can become involved with just about any value, there is no limit as to what might be taken as a sign of disrespect<sup>77</sup>. A second is that, given competitive pluralism (though he does not use the term), it is hard to respect one value without disrespecting another<sup>78</sup>. Both of these problems - *limitlessness* and *incompatibility* - are important ones, and may well be enough to scupper Raz's efforts on this front, yet I will not rely upon them here in that way. A more significant problem pointed out by Green, I believe, is that, in moving from 'non-destruction' to the 'preservation' of the values of others, as Raz does in the elision described above, we are drawn 'closer to the engagement side of things and thus further from a reason that is categorical in form'<sup>79</sup>. That is, by moving from the first to the second kind of respect, it seems that we are really moving away from respect *altogether*, given the shape of Raz's theory of practical reason, and towards the kind of 'engagement' with values that he describes when talking about the pursuit of our own goals and desires.

This point is crucial. It means that, in addition to (1) the ordinary-language-departure worry about Raz's second kind of respect, and (2) the worry that the most forceful examples we can think of regarding disrespect involve actions that harm or destroy values, rather than merely not supporting them in the manner required by ABD3, we are also returned right back to (3)

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<sup>77</sup> 'Two Worries about Respect for Persons', 214.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, 214.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid*, 226

the worry that, as discussed throughout this article, and again at the start of this section, it seems implausible to say that reasons in favour of the second kind of respect are categorical, given their potential conflict with our well-being, as pursued through our goals and desires. Raz's elision between the two kinds of respect somewhat occludes these worries, especially when combined with the conviction that we should not disrespect the values of others in the first sense described – as, for example, the Taliban did when blowing up the Buddhas of Bamiyan – but it cannot remove them altogether.

Now, with these points in mind, it is worth looking at Raz's reply to Green. In contrast to the idea that the force of our language of respect derives from cases involving harm and destruction, as well as Green's claim that acts of promotion and protection are more properly understood as cases of engagement, Raz insists that it is *universal* that expressing respect involves *protecting* and *preserving*<sup>80</sup>. This, I think, is an extremely *bold* claim, though also one that illustrates the scale of the case he *has* to make in order to deploy reasons of respect as grounds for ABD3, given that, unless he can show that reasons of protection/promotion are both *universal* and universally *categorical*, he will simply be describing for us actions that reason renders *eligible*, but which it does not *require*.

Unfortunately, it is also a straightforwardly false claim. This is because, whilst not harming or destroying things of value may well be a universal norm, preserving and promoting things in which we have no interest, and with which we could even be in some kind of competition, is not. Consider here that the *optional* nature of any particular act of preservation/promotion becomes clear once we note the incommensurability of all the various things I *could* preserve/promote, even if I am already generally committed to *some* such action. Green gives

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<sup>80</sup> J. Raz, 'On Respect, Authority, and Neutrality: A Response', *Ethics*, 120 (2010), 284.

an example of this kind when he says that there is no good reason for me to fund the preservation of religious art that I do not like, when instead I could be saving what I consider to be a precious area of wilderness<sup>81</sup>. Yet this is just the tip of the iceberg. The deeper point here, as illustrated by the idea of someone *already considering* a particular area of wilderness *precious*, remains as follows: we are perfectly in conformity with Raz's theory of practical reason, and commit no act of disrespect in the first and ordinary sense of that term, simply by contributing exclusively to the set of 'supporting practices' with which our own goals and desires are already bound up.

Raz's reply to this example of Green's simply compounds that point. He says that with this particular example, 'there is no theoretical issue'<sup>82</sup>, and even grants (1) that 'reasons of respect do not trump all others', and (2) that 'not all reasons of respect constitute duties'<sup>83</sup>. And consider two further points. He says on one occasion that respect is 'less demanding than engagement'<sup>84</sup>, and on another that it is a duty 'we owe to all human beings in equal degree'<sup>85</sup>. How can we square all these claims? The way to do it, I think, is to say those reasons of respect that *are* categorical/duties/trumps are reasons of the *first* kind of respect (i.e. reasons not to destroy or harm value), whilst those that are not are reasons of the *second* kind (i.e. reasons to promote/preserve any particular set of values, including the values of others). If that is right, then it makes sense to say that reasons of respect of the first kind are both relatively undemanding *and* a duty we owe to everyone. Given the various pressures discussed, that seems the best way of organising 'reasons of respect' within the wider system of Raz's theory of practical reason – although of course, such organisation is not without its

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<sup>81</sup> 'Two Worries about Respect for Persons', 227.

<sup>82</sup> J. Raz, 'On Respect, Authority, and Neutrality', 282.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid*, 282.

<sup>84</sup> *PPF*, 82.

<sup>85</sup> *VRA*, 159.

consequences, of which the most important in this context is, *again*, that this renders ‘reasons of respect’ unable to support ABD3 in the sense of making it a genuine *duty*.

There is, however, one more point that needs to be made here for the sake of clarity, and it concerns the way in which my argument regarding reasons of respect differs from Green’s. What Green helps us to see, I think, is the way in which reasons of respect divide into those that are universally categorical (non-destruction of value) and those that are optional (promotion/preservation of the value of others). As a result, our reasons to guarantee every relevant supporting practice in our society in the way that Raz prescribes under ABD3, assuming that they are genuinely ‘reasons of respect’, are strictly optional reasons. By contrast, my argument here has been not just that ABD3 is *optional* in this way (and thus that non-conformity with it is *permissible*), but also that non-compliance with it is, across society as a whole, rather *likely*, for reasons discussed above connected with the nature of competitive pluralism and the legitimate force of our desires and goals. This is the case that I have been making from the beginning, and which survives this discussion of reasons of respect.

## **VIII. Conclusion**

I have argued that, if Raz is right about practical reason, then most of us, if we are reasonable, will not support his political morality, given its central inclusion of ABD3. Of course, if utilitarianism, say, is right about practical reason and political morality, then there is no ‘real’ conflict between those two things - but that is not what we have been investigating<sup>86</sup>. What

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<sup>86</sup> I have explored elsewhere some more general questions regarding how practical reason and political philosophy can be reconciled. See J. Floyd, *Is Political Philosophy Impossible?* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming). For similar questions when applied to Rawls, see J. Floyd, ‘Rawls’

we have been investigating is whether there is a way of stopping Raz's theory of practical reason from undermining his theory of political morality, and unfortunately there is not.

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Methodological Blueprint', *European Journal of Political Theory* (forthcoming). For a recent application of my answers to some of those questions, see J. Floyd, 'Normative Behaviourism and Global Political Principles', *Journal of International Political Theory* (forthcoming).