

Literatur zu moralischen Dilemmata
Bibliography on Moral Dilemmas

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Alphabetische Ordnung / alphabetical order: <http://www.ethikseite.de/bib/bdilem.pdf>

Chronologische Ordnung / reverse chronological order: <http://www.ethikseite.de/bib/cdilem.pdf>

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¹ “The article focuses on the definition of constitutional conflicts as moral dilemmas. It discusses the conception of tragic conflicts by which “loss” is a distinctive feature that identifies both moral and constitutional dilemmas. It also asserts the peculiarity of constitutional conflicts vis-à-vis moral dilemmas, as well as the possibility of legal solutions to constitutional conflicts.”

² “In symmetrical moral dilemmas, the agent faces a choice between two incompatible actions, which are equally justified on the basis of the same value. These cases are generally discounted as spurious or irrelevant on the assumption that, when there is no failure of commensurability, choice between symmetrical requirements is indifferent and can be determined by randomization. Alternatively, this article argues that the appeal to randomization allows the agent to overcome a deliberative impasse, but it does not really resolve the moral dilemma. This is because randomization fails to provide the agent with a genuine reason for action. The argument is based on an account of arbitrariness as a threat to the agent’s authorship on action. By focusing on lack of authorship, rather than on failure of commensurability, we gain the adequate perspective to assess the philosophical significance of moral dilemmas, their impact on the agential integrity, and their consequences for ethical theory.”

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³ “By looking at the situations faced by the protagonists of two classic plays (in purely philosophical terms rather than literary-critical or historical), I try to shed light on what it means to face an insoluble moral dilemma, what it might mean to deal with it, and how the dilemma can reveal certain crucial information about the decision-maker (i) to us readers-spectators, (ii) to other characters in the play who witness, or are implicated by, the incident, (iii) as well as, and perhaps most importantly, to the protagonist himself. In so doing, I distinguish the above dilemmas from moral-prudential dilemmas and from apparent dilemmas constituted by the mere lack of epistemological access. Indeed, I generally resist the various reductive approaches characteristic of much analytic moral philosophy, and challenge the notion of a uniquely right answer to which all rational moral agents can be held accountable.”

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⁴ “This paper concerns one of the undecided disputes of modern moral philosophy: the possibility of moral dilemmas. Whereas proponents of the possibility of moral dilemmas often appeal to moral experience, many opponents refer to ethical theory and deontic logic. My aim in this paper is to clarify some of the tension between moral experience and ethical theory with respect to moral dilemmas. In Part One I try to show that a number of logical arguments against the possibility of moral dilemmas, though apparently very different, turn out to be basically the same, as they are all based on the following concept of ‘ought’: if A ought to be done, doing B is impermissible and doing A itself is permissible. In Part Two I present an overview of several definitions of moral dilemmas that have been given by proponents of moral dilemmas: definitions that define moral dilemmas in terms of oughts and definitions that define them in terms of reasons. I conclude that, while ‘reason’ is too weak, ‘ought’ is too strong a concept to define moral dilemmas with. In this way, the arguments from Part One create a logical problem for proponents of the possibility of moral dilemmas to define moral dilemmas.”

⁵ “Moral conflicts occur in theories that involve more than one principle. I examine basic ways of dealing with moral dilemmas in medical ethics and in ethics generally, and propose a different approach based on a principle I call the “mutuality principle”. It is offered as an addition to Tom Beauchamp and James Childress’ principlism. The principle calls for the mutual enhancement of basic moral values. After explaining the principle and its strengths, I test it by way of an examination of three responses-in the recent Festschrift for Dr Raanon Gillon-to a case involving parental refusal of a blood transfusion. The strongest response is the one that comes closest to the requirements of the mutuality principle but yet falls short. I argue that the mutuality principle provides an explicit future orientation in principlism and gives it greater moral coherence.”

⁶ Contents: Preface. Introduction. 1. Gratian and his Glossators on conflicts in the natural law. 2. Twenty moral dilemmas from two early 13th-century summaries of theology: William of Auxerre’s Summa aurea and the Franciscan Summa Halesiana. 3. Raymond Lull and moral ensnarement in the Vita coetanea. 4. Thomas Aquinas, moral dilemmas, and a missing article from Quodlibet XII. 5. Thomas Aquinas on failures of practical reasoning: why synderesis doesn’t inoculate agents against malformed conscience dilemmas. 6. Moral dilemmas in the early Thomistic tradition: Johannes Capreolus and the deceiving demon dilemma. Conclusion. Bibliography. Index.

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⁷ “On the face of it, normative conflicts are commonplace. Yet standard deontic logic declares them to be logically impossible. That prompts the question, What are the proper principles of normative reasoning if such conflicts are possible? This paper examines several alternatives that have been proposed for a logic of ‘ought’ that can accommodate normative conflicts, and finds all of them unsatisfactory as measured against three criteria of adequacy. It then introduces a new logic that does meet all three criteria, and so allows for the possibility of genuine normative conflicts.”

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⁸ “The claim that human agents are vulnerable to tragic conflict, situations in which one cannot help but do wrong, is a commonplace in contemporary moral philosophy. This book draws on Thomas Aquinas’s moral thought in order to delineate an alternative view. While affirming that the human good can be attained only through difficulty, including the difficulty of moral conflict, it argues that Aquinas’s understanding of a natural, hierarchical ordering of human goods allows for the rational resolution of moral conflict in a way that avoids tragic necessity.”

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⁹ “Ruth Marcus has offered an account of moral dilemmas in which the presence of dilemmas acts as a motivating force, pushing us to try to minimize predicaments of moral conflict. In this paper, I defend a Marcus-style account of dilemmas against two objections: first, that if dilemmas are real, we are forced to blame those who have done their best, and second, that in some cases, even a stripped down version of blame seems inappropriate. My account highlights the importance of collective responsibility in understanding dilemmas, and I suggest that it sheds light on understanding moral progress.”

¹⁰ “On an expressivist view, ethical claims are understood as expressions of our attitudes, desires, and feelings. A famous puzzle for this view concerns the use of logic in ethical reasoning, and two standard treatments try to solve the puzzle by explaining logical inconsistency in terms of conflicting attitudes. I argue, however, that this general strategy fails: because we can reason effectively even in the presence of conflicting moral attitudes – in cases of moral dilemmas – avoiding these conflicts cannot be a ground for correct moral reasoning. The result is a dilemma for expressivists: if they take all kinds of attitudes to be under consideration, then conflict cannot play the required role, since attitudes can fail to be compatible in cases of moral conflict. If they restrict attention to ‘all-in attitudes’ or to intentions or plans, then there is an important notion of obligation, used in standard arguments – one for which conflicts are allowed – that they fail to capture. I explain why expressivists should be especially tolerant of conflicting attitudes, and I conclude that they should pursue a different strategy for grounding logical normativity.”

¹¹ “In 1963 Roderick Chisholm proposed a category of acts called “offences” to capture what he called acts of “permissive ill-doing.” Chisholm’s proposal has proven to be controversial. Here I propose that some progress can be made in validating acts of offence by focusing upon moral dilemmas. Given the problems

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which have been alleged to beset moral dilemmas, this may initially seem like a puzzling strategy. However, I will call attention to a type of moral dilemma unlike what is standardly discussed in the literature and attempt to show that those who acknowledge that such dilemmas are possible are likewise obliged to acknowledge that acts of offence are possible. My suggestion, then, is that, since the former are plausible to acknowledge, so are the latter.”

¹² “In all situations of choice, we face a question that I call “the obvious question”: what shall we do? But sometimes we also face, or should face, a different question, which I call “the tragic question”: is any of the alternatives open to us free from serious moral wrongdoing? Discussing cases of tragic conflict from literature, philosophy, and contemporary life, I argue that it is valuable to face the tragic question where it is pertinent, because facing it helps us think how we might design a society where such unpalatable choices do not confront people, or confront them less often. Cost-benefit analysis helps us answer the obvious question; but it does not help us either pose or answer the tragic question, and it frequently obscures the presence of a tragic situation, by suggesting that the obvious question is the only pertinent question. I apply these reflections to thinking about basic entitlements of citizens, such as might be embodied in constitutional guarantees.”

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¹⁴ “A tragic dilemma is thought to arise when an agent, through no fault of her own, finds herself in a situation where she must choose between two courses of action, both of which it would be wrong to undertake. I focus on tragic dilemmas that are resolvable, that is, where a reason can be given in favour of one course of action over another, and my aim is to examine whether Hursthouse’s virtue-ethical account of right action succeeds in avoiding two problems presented by tragic dilemmas. The first of these is that they produce the seemingly contradictory conclusion that an agent, in doing what she ought to do, acts wrongly, making it appropriate for her to feel guilt. The second is the paradox of moral luck, which consists in the conflict between the intuition that an agent cannot be held responsible for actions that are not fully voluntary, and the fact that she may nevertheless believe that she has done something morally reprehensible. I argue that if we accept Hursthouse’s separation of action guidance and action assessment, her account succeeds in solving the problem of contradiction. However, it does not completely avoid the problem of moral luck. I argue, against Hursthouse, that the virtuous agent can emerge from a tragic dilemma having acted well, and that this is the conclusion we must arrive at if we want to avoid the problem of contradiction and of moral luck.”

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¹⁵ “The paper is concerned with the question of the existence of moral dilemmas, conceived of as situations involving a subject in a conflict of non-overridden moral obligations. I reject some of the presuppositions underlying discussions of this question and argue that certain morally relevant choices cannot be evaluated in relation to an all-things-considered moral obligation as permissible or impermissible, right or wrong. In arguing for the inadequacy of our ordinary moral predicates for fully capturing the nature of such choices, I argue that they are, in certain respects, inexpressible.”

¹⁶ „Der heutige Mensch steht im Spannungsfeld von zunehmender Individualisierung und fortschreitender Globalisierung. Ein funktionierendes Ethikmodell muß diesen neuen Bedingungen Rechnung tragen. Ansätze bieten in sehr ähnlicher Weise eine auf Aristoteles zurückgreifende Tugendethik und kommunitaristische Moralentwürfe. Doch beide, Kommunitarismus und Tugendethik, widersetzen sich oftmals gerade der Universalisierung. Die Vermittlung von Werten innerhalb einer überschaubaren Gemeinschaft steht im Vordergrund. Unterschiede zu anderen ethischen Auffassungen in anderen Gemeinschaften werden ohne weiteres akzeptiert. Können Tugendethik und Kommunitarismus somit wirklich eine tragfähige Basis für ein modernes Moralkonzept bieten? Die Arbeit beschäftigt sich mit dieser zentralen Frage und prüft die Alltagstauglichkeit beider Ethikkonzepte anhand der in aktuellen Debatten diskutierten Phänomene, wie dem der moralischen Dilemmata. Es zeigt sich, daß die tugendethisch-kommunitaristische Denkrichtung hier interessante und neue Impulse geben kann.“

¹⁷ “Some philosophers – notably Bernard Williams, Martha Nussbaum and Ruth Barcan Marcus – argue that agents in moral dilemmas are blameworthy whatever they do. I begin by uncovering the connection these philosophers are presupposing between the agent’s judgement of wrongdoing and her tendency to self-blame. Next, I argue that while dilemmatic choosers cannot help but see themselves as wrongdoers, they both can and should divorce this judgement from an ascription of self-blame. As I argue, dilemmatic choosers are morally sui generis in that their actions result in a diminishment of their personal integrity with no corresponding failure of character. It is this that makes them non-blameworthy wrongdoers. This

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way of seeing the problem should provide dilemmatic choosers with a novel conception of their own moral psychology, one that allows them to view their actions in a manner that is given neither to moral insensitivity nor to pathological self-accusation.”

¹⁸ “I distinguish two different arguments against cognitivism in Bernard Williams’s writings on moral dilemmas. The first turns on there being a truth of the matter about what we ought to do in a moral dilemma. That argument can be met by appealing to our epistemic shortcomings and to pro tanto obligations. However, those responses make no headway with the second argument, which concerns the rationality of the moral regret that we feel in dilemma situations. I show how the rationality of moral regret can be explained on an ‘independent desire’ model. And I show how Williams’s second argument only appears to have force because of a certain faulty way of conceiving the issue over cognitivism. But Williams’s argument rightly alerts us to the rational role of desire in our moral thought.”