Chapter 18
Collective Intentionality and Practical Reason

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Abstract In this chapter I am interested in the conceptual relation between the claim that practical reason just is or reduces to instrumental reason (I will call this position "instrumentalism about practical reason") and the claim that the real problem of instrumental rationality is not its instrumentalism about practical reason but its "individualism about goals". I understand this to mean that the problem of instrumental rationality is not its consequentialist aspect that agents have preferences only over outcomes (but not over actions) but its individualist implication about motivation: that agents can be motivated only by their own desires. According to such an interpretation of the problem of instrumental rationality, collective intentionality is seen as providing the solution: it frees instrumentalism from its individualism while preserving its consequentialism. That is, the sort of normativity characteristic of collective intentionality will still be instrumental normativity. My aim in this chapter is twofold: I will first argue that instrumentalism about practical reason has fundamental difficulties in showing how reasons can be guiding for self-conscious rational beings. From there I depart to show, second, that this has to do with the fact that the instrumentalist concept of human self-relation as instrumentally normative fails to show how human agency can be what it must be in order to function well, i.e. to be unified. Therefore the sort of normativity characteristic of collective intentionality cannot be instrumental rationality.

1

Hans Bernhard Schmid (2009, p. 242), to my knowledge, is the only philosopher working on collective intentionality who explicitly expresses the idea that the real problem of instrumental rationality is not its instrumentalism about practical

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reason—the claim that practical reason is identical with or reduces to instrumental reason—but its "individualism about goals". The idea seems to be that there remains nothing problematic about instrumentalism once it has been made compatible with the claim that agents can be motivated by other people's desires or by desires that they share with others. If desires can be shared with others, the deliberation of others does not merely function as a further fact in one's own deliberation but must be taken into account as part of one's shared deliberation with those others.

So Schmid (2009, esp. ch. 7 and 8) challenges individualism about ends by motivating the two claims that people can be moved to act by other people's intentions and desires *directly* (i.e. without those desires having to be based, ultimately, on one's own desires), and that people can deliberate and intend together without treating each other as mere means. I am very sympathetic to attempts to show how desires, intentions, and their objects can be shared.[1] What I want to question in this chapter is rather whether instrumentalism about practical reason can really be made more plausible by challenging its individualism about ends. I will argue that there is something about instrumentalism about practical reason that makes it ill suited for the idea of sharing reasons.

I think that other philosophers can be interpreted as sharing an important implication of Schmid's claim that instrumentalism about practical reason is not the problem but rather its individualism about ends. The implication of this claim, as I understand it, is that the kind of normativity constitutive of collective intentionality is the same kind of normativity that is constitutive of individual intentionality, namely instrumental or means-to-end rationality. Postema (1995, p. 48), for example, argues that instrumental rationality is not a special mark of the singular or individual perspective compared to the plural perspective, which seems to bring him close to Schmid's view—for if instrumental rationality is not what essentially distinguishes the singular from the plural perspective, it certainly cannot be what makes the singular perspective problematic compared to the plural perspective. Rather the difference between the singular and the plural perspective consists in, according to Postema (ibid., p. 48), "the respective conceptions of the deliberative unit of agency". To deliberate from the plural perspective is to deliberate from the perspective of an integrated whole of which both one's own deliberations and those of the other agent(s) are internally related parts.

Other philosophers, most notably Michael Bratman, seem to accept Schmid's conclusion that instrumental rationality is the kind of normativity essential for collective intentionality. Bratman (2004, p. 10) emphasises that plans can be shared without sharing non-instrumental reasons, i.e., merely "by way of bargaining and compromise" for which instrumental rationality is constitutive.

[1]Note that sharing intentions differs from sharing desires in that intentions are subject to stronger constraints of rationality than desires are, as Bratman (1987) has shown. As a unified rational agent one cannot intend to do something which one is sure that one cannot do or which conflicts with the realisation of other intentions. Consequently sharing intentions requires more work of coordination and structuring between distinct agents than does the sharing of desires.

Of course one difficulty here is that much depends on how exactly we are to understand the position of instrumentalists about practical reason, and the literature on the topic is anything but homogeneous or uncontroversial. I will try to give the least contentious description of the main claims of this position possible. Instrumentalism about practical reason has it, firstly, that practical reasoning is exclusively a matter of means-to-end reasoning, that is reasoning about sufficient means to one's ends, but not a matter of reasoning about ends themselves. Practical reason, according to this view, can help us figure out the instrumentally rational means to our ends, but it cannot tell us anything about the rationality of the ends themselves. It is important to note, secondly, that what the instrumentalist about practical reason denies is *not* that if one intends to do *A*, one has to take oneself to have a reason to do *A*. What she does deny is that the ultimate reasons for action are grounded in practical reason itself. According to the instrumentalist, reasons are grounded in desires. The fundamental problem here is that it is anything but clear what the instrumentalist means by claiming that reasons are grounded in desires, and so what the correct description of the view of the instrumentalist's *opponent* is. In the next section I am going to raise some preliminary doubts concerning what might seem at first glance a straightforward view about the normative scope of practical reason.

2

The instrumentalist's position receives its force from a worry that relates to their claim of the nature of reasons, but is seldom clearly stated. I suggest that this worry, as outlined in the following, can be generalised to the notion of shared ends, when it comes to the question of *collective* practical reason. For, as previously shown, instrumentalists investigating the normative character of shared or collective ends do not see instrumentalism *as such* threatening the analysis of collective practical reason, but only its individualism about ends. I shall therefore assume that the instrumentalist's worry concerning reasons applies to both, individual and collective practical reasoning. Accordingly, the term "agent" will be used to refer to both individual and group agents, and the term "end" to both individual and shared ends.

The instrumentalist's worry is that having an end does not necessarily give the agent a normative or justifying reason to take the means to her end, because reasons defined in terms of desires might well be reasons for a bad or stupid end. From this, the instrumentalist seems to infer that our ends, insofar as they are motivating forces, can only give us instrumental but not normative reasons for action, since rationality cannot prescribe which desires we ought to have. An argument along these lines is given by John Broome (1999) who distinguishes between reasons-relations of "narrow scope" and of "wide scope". "Wide scope" reasons-relations provide agents with merely instrumental but no normative reasons. The "wide scope" instrumental

reasons at work in practical reasoning are considered somehow akin to requirements of rationality that do not tell us what we ought to do (hence the term "wide-scope").[2]

Accordingly, the instrumental principle that tells us to take the means to our ends is understood as a disjunctive requirement of rationality with which the agent can comply *either* by realising her (part of the shared) end *or* by giving up her (part of the shared) end. All that the agent has to make sure is that her pattern of mental attitudes satisfies this requirement of rationality.[3] Whether she gives up her (part of the shared) end or whether she actually realises her (part of the shared) end does *not* affect her status of rational agent, as long as she has the right combination of mental attitudes.

However, on this conception of practical reason, it is not clear how reasons can actually *guide* the agent's behaviour. The advice that one should *either* keep one's end and then realise it *or* give it up is no real guidance at all with respect to the primary question whether to keep the end or to give it up. It becomes instrumental guidance only once the agent has decided (but on what grounds?) to keep her end: *then* she is rationally required to take the means to her end.

So the worry that our desires and ends need not give us normative reasons for action is expressive of the instrumentalist assumption that practical reason cannot tell us anything about the ends we should have since rational deliberation about ends is not possible.

3

The instrumentalist's motivation for thinking that practical reason can tell us nothing about the ends we rationally ought to choose may have to do with the instrumentalist's assumption that the 'ought' of practical reason merely refers to the fact that one should satisfy the desires of one's actual or given motivational set. A central controversy is what status these desires or motives are supposed to have.

Hume and some of his instrumentalist followers may be read as arguing that in order to avoid an endless regress with regard to action explanation one must posit

[2]Cf. Schmid's (2009, pp. 53–54) brief discussion of Broome's idea of requirement of rationality in the context of collective intentionality.

[3]The fact that instrumental consistency of one's mental attitudes can conflict with *practical coherence* indicates that instrumental rationality may not be the fundamentally interesting concept for practical rationality. Consider the following example: the means one takes to realise one's ambition to make a career in a certain profession are sensitive to how this affects one's other values and ends, for example the value of integrity. Perhaps one realises that pursuing a specific career requires actions of a kind that one cannot reconcile with one's self-conception as a person of integrity. Even though one's mental attitudes would be consistent if one pursued an end by way of a non-justifiable means this does not mean that one's action would also be coherent. It is not coherent for an agent to violate deep-seated personal commitments by so acting. So it seems that it is coherence rather than means-to-end consistency that enables an agent to act as one, or in a non-conflicted way.

some natural psychological (or physiological) state as regress stopper. Such ultimate and unmotivated psychological states are typically, and quite understandably, considered to be non-cognitive types of desires. This construal is the root of the instrumentalist's worry that having an end does not give us a normative reason for action. If our ends are ultimately based in some non-cognitive psychological or physiological state, then, so she argues, they surely cannot give us normative reasons for action. The agent will just have them without any possibility of further justifying them.

Now this brings us to the heart of the problem I want to discuss. If desires are non-cognitive forces mostly not under our control in any interesting sense, how are they liable to *explain* actions done for reasons?[4, 5] If desire is understood in terms of something like an orectic state or physiological disposition, then surely our giving reasons in explaining action gets mystified if our action explanation bottoms out in an historical development of desire. I think that the Humean tradition of letting chains of action explanation bottom out in "unmotivated desires" is particularly sensitive to this kind of criticism. The most plausible way to understand the notion "unmotivated desires", so it seems, is to understand it in terms of non-cognitive desires. But if this is right, then the instrumentalist position seems to collapse, since it undercuts the claim that reasons are desires, and with it the support of the claim that the norms of practical reason do not pertain to ends.

Basically, I see two challenges arising from this for the instrumentalist. First, how does she distinguish between different sorts of *non-cognitive* desires, desires that are (the ultimate) stable features of the agent's basic motivational set, on the one hand, and desires that arise from fleeting but perhaps recurring bodily changes, on the other hand? Second, how does she explain the emergence of cognitive desires from ultimate non-cognitive ones? Unless desires are potentially cognitive in the sense of being reason-responsive, it is not clear how they can serve as reasons for action.

Sometimes the instrumentalist tries to clarify her claim that desires are reasons by contrasting her view with that of her[6] opponents, who may be broadly referred

[4]Unmotivated desires are not the sort of thing we should accept as natural regress stoppers for action explanation since if unmotivated desires explain some behaviour at all they do not explain it in the right way, i.e. in such a way as to pick out the behaviour as an action instead of a mere reaction or an effect of a cause. This is why I think that the behaviour of Davidson's (1963) famous mountain climber who lets go of her fellow climber as a result of a nervous fit caused by the desire to let go should not be described as an action.

[5]Here I merely wish to draw our attention to the important fact that actions done for reasons are unlike other things we do, such as digesting food or perceiving that the cat sleeps on the mat. Of course we can cite perceptual beliefs that are not really under our control in the explanation of things that we or intelligent animals do. But my point is that when we hold such a perceptual belief it is not under our control in the sense that we do not really hold it for reasons and therefore are not responsible for it in the same way we are responsible for beliefs that we hold for reasons such as e.g. "I believe that my father cheats on my mother".

[6]In what follows I will use the feminine pronoun to refer to the instrumentalist, and the masculine pronoun to refer to her Kantian opponent. This is merely a technical device of presentation, i.e. of clearly keeping the two accounts separate, and carries no meaning in itself.

to as 'Kantians'. According to the instrumentalist, 'Kantians' regard reasons as desire-independent principles prescribing an action directly without referring to the agent's desires or interests. Reasons so understood are thus grounded in *reason itself*. Kantians are particularly known to hold this view with regard to the domain of moral action and reasoning. Instrumentalists interpret it in the sense that the agent of a moral action must not be motivated by the action's content or the end for which it is done, but *solely* by the moral worth (that is, out of respect for the law) of doing it. Obviously, this seems to be too strong a requirement for a general theory of practical reasoning since not all practical reasons are moral reasons. Moreover, this makes it seem as if reasons in the Kantian understanding were wholly disinterested. Reasons so conceived, the instrumentalist argues, are external and have nothing to do with the agent's own motivations and desires. I think this construal of the opponent's position should be rejected because it forces us to choose between two extreme views of reasons that are equally implausible. The choice is, so it seems, between reasons whose normative force renders their motivational force incomprehensible (the Kantian *externalist* position) and reasons with an exclusively motivating force whose binding force must as a result remain a mystery (the instrumentalist *internalist* position).[7]

Barbara Herman's (1996) analysis of desires offers a way out of this dilemma between desire-dependent reasons on the one hand and desire-independent reasons on the other hand by showing in what sense reasons or rational motives are both internal (desire-dependent) and external (desire-independent). More precisely, Herman proposes that desires should not be understood as non-cognitive and unmediated internal passions or psychological states one just has, but rather as states potentially open to *evaluative regulation and transformation by practical reason*. From the fact that practical reason must be unconditional, it does not follow that the agent's motives for action must themselves be entirely "extramaterial" and "in complete separation from the empirical life of the human agent" (Herman 1996, p. 43). In other words, even though the *authority* of our will is unconditional this does not mean, as Herman (1996, p. 43) puts it, that our *effective* motives have to be morally unconditional or good, as well. So if we think of desires (and emotions) more in the sense of calm passions that are potentially open to regulation by reason, the opposition between motivation grounded in desires and motivation grounded in reason itself is undercut.

If this is correct then the instrumentalist's concern with her opponent's construal of moral motivation can be dispelled. Christine Korsgaard (2008, pp. 216–29)

[7]Internalism about reasons is a metaphysical position about the conceptual link between reasons and motivation. A consideration is a reason in the internalist sense for a particular person to do *A* if the consideration is a reason for the agent to *A* and it being a reason depends on its ability to potentially motivate the agent to *A*. Something is an external reason if being a reason does not depend on its ability to motivate the agent to *A*. Although I cannot show this in detail here I think we must give up such a divided view of reasons in favour of understanding reasons neither as wholly internal nor as wholly external but as both internal and external.

demonstrates in more detail how this can be done. The instrumentalist's concern is, as we have seen above, that the Kantian takes an agent as acting morally well *only* if she is motivated by the moral worth (or respect for the moral law) of performing this action *rather* than by the action's content or the end for which it is done. Korsgaard convincingly argues that these two kinds of motivation do not exclude one another: morally good action and rational action in general involve *both* being moved by love or desire *and* being moved by one's awareness of the goodness of one's motivation, i.e. the awareness that doing a certain act for the sake of a certain end is also worth doing for its own sake.[8] An action is worth performing for its own sake if one can will a certain act as a means to a certain end for its own sake.[9]

Consider the description of Jill's possible action "I will take a week off from work in order to help my sister". We can understand Jill wanting to take a week off from work in order to help her sister, both because she loves her sister and because she thinks that helping her sister justifies taking a week off from work. Taking a week off from work in order to help one's sister is good for its own sake or at least permissible (under favourable circumstances).[10] Good action by its very nature is neither motivated merely by awareness of what is worth doing for its own sake nor merely by the end that the action serves or the action's content (Korsgaard 2008, p. 226).[11]

How does this help us reassess the position of the instrumentalist's opponent? I think we should understand his denying that reasons are desires in the first place as denying that reasons exclusively refer to the psychological or purely subjective inner world of an agent's mind. Reasons, he might argue, need to be shareable. Therefore, they cannot be confined to an agent's states of mind. On the other hand, an agent's desires must certainly play an essential role in his being motivated to act. How can these two constraints on reasons be reconciled? The following example may help answer this question. Suppose I think that it is a good thing that a city is friendly to cyclists, i.e. that it provides a sufficient number of safe routes for

[8]Good action differs from right action in that it not only requires that the action is right, i.e. as duty demands (the notorious example is that of keeping a promise), but also good in that the agent who does it does it with a good motive, namely for its own sake, and therefore does it virtuously.

[9]An anonymous referee has pointed out to me that the instrumentalist can accept the form of words here, even though the instrumentalist will hold that awareness of the action's being worth doing for its own sake amounts to just recognizing it as the object of a telic or non-cognitive desire. But this is exactly what the Kantian rejects as incomprehensible: how can such clearly reason-responsive recognition be the object of a non-cognitive desire?

[10]Note that it is the whole means-to-end maxim that is a candidate for being good for its own sake (i.e. taking a week off in order to help one's sister), and not just the end of helping one's sister.

[11]My reply to an anonymous referee who argued that we should cite the desire in response to *why*-questions (instead of what someone did, i.e. what act she performed for the sake of what end) is this: I contend that in the paradigmatic case, there is no difference between action explanation and action justification. We cite the end (which the agent would not pursue unless she had a desire for it) that the action serves and the (moral or non-moral) value the agent thinks her action has as a whole. Cf. also Korsgaard (2008, pp. 218–27).

cyclists (all else equal). This is my reason for supporting a referendum that tries to achieve this aim. It seems that the instrumentalist would have to describe my reasoning here in the following way[12]: (1) "I want that my city becomes friendly to cyclists and their concerns. (2) The referendum is a means to satisfy my desire. (3) Therefore, I will support the referendum." Assuming that my desire just is my reason to support the referendum, however, the instrumentalist would have to say that the fact that I want my city to become cyclist friendly is my reason to support the referendum. But this seems a wrong description of my reason. Describing someone as taking *the fact that she wants something* as a reason for supporting the referendum depicts her as implausibly self-centered. The mere fact that I want something does not seem the best of candidates for marking some consideration out as a reason. Importantly, the same holds for shared desires if one assumes that practical reason just is instrumental reason or that desires just are reasons. In that case, the fact that we want our city to become cyclist friendly is our reason to support the referendum. This is why I think that introducing shared ends does not help making instrumentalism about practical reason more plausible. Introducing shared ends merely pushes egoism to another level, namely that of the collective.

Moreover, the instrumentalist's view of reasons makes it seem as if one finds something good or valuable *because* one desires it. But surely this cannot be right: We do not find something good, when we find it good, because we desire it—we desire many things that we acknowledge are *not* good—but we desire something because we think it is good (for us).

Taking this relation between values and desires into consideration, the instrumentalist's opponent has the resources to account for the guiding force of reasons. His position, properly assessed, is to hold that we desire something because we consider it good (and not the other way around). Thus, his accounting for the agent's reasoning in the scenario of the cyclists' planning a referendum is far more plausible than it appears in the instrumentalist version: (1) "It is a good thing that a city is friendly to cyclists and their concerns. (2) Because of (1), I desire it to be the case that my city is friendly to cyclists and their concerns. (3) The referendum is a means to that end. (4) Because of (2) and (3), I will support the referendum." Thus, it is the fact expressed in clause (1) that establishes a good reason for me or for us to support the referendum. More precisely, it is the fact that this is *important* or *matters* to me or to us that motivates our supporting the referendum.

Whence does this mattering-relation, as I will call it, receive its justification? That is, why does having a cyclist friendly city matter? It matters to the people of the city because it is expected to make the city safer for cyclists and further people's health if they are thereby encouraged to go by bicycle rather than by car.

[12]The following example is in the spirit of Schueler (2003, pp. 59–60). See also Korsgaard (2009, p. 210).

What is more, pollution may be reduced by people changing their driving habits. Of course whether the city will *actually* become safer for cyclists when more cyclist routes are constructed is largely an empirical question. Nevertheless, the important philosophical point remains intact: *voting for the referendum in order to promote safety for cyclists, to further people's health, and to reduce pollution* is an action maxim whose end(s) are, to put it with Richardson (1997, p. 55), "appropriately regulating the manner and extent of the pursuit". In other words, the maxim "I will vote for the referendum in order to promote safety for cyclists, to further people's health, and to reduce pollution" is considered good or justifiable as a whole.

This is the sense in which reasons are desire-independent: rather than expressing an agent's desires they point to an agent's relation to a fact she values and that therefore matters to her. This value relation, or "mattering-relation", can be expressed in a principle of action. Although the maxim "I will do act *a* for the sake of end *e* because it is good as a whole" depicts the instrumental or means-to-end *structure* inherent in intention and action,[13] it also provides the structural resources for the evaluation and explanation of action. That is, for an action to be considered good or intelligible, the entire means-to-end relation—in our example voting for the referendum in order to promote safety for cyclists, to further people's health, and to reduce pollution—must be justifiable in some sense. This is the way in which reasons are external or desire-independent: the relation they express is desirable or valuable *not because* I or we desire it but because the relation's parts, i.e. the means (or act) and end (or purpose), are related in the right way, i.e. as good for its own sake or as justifiable in some sense.[14] By this, however, I do not mean that the relation has *intrinsic* worth independently of the agent. This brings us to the sense in which reasons *are* desire-dependent for the Kantian non-instrumentalist, even though he denies the instrumentalist claim that reasons reduce to desires. In this *other* sense of desire-dependency, *reasons can matter only* for sentient beings with desires (in our example, desires for health and an intact environment), for beings to whom things can matter, that is, who can take interest in things.

We can now further characterise this twofold nature of reasons with Korsgaard (2009, p. 105 and pp. 122–24) who argues that a practical reason is never just an incentive alone, but a *conjunction* of an incentive and a principle of choice in the following sense. (i) A reason is an incentive because a reason must respond to our sentient nature as animals with desires. It is under the aspect of incentive that the agent is presented with an action that she might perform since her desires or inclinations reach out for incentives, so to speak, or features that make an object

[13] By this I merely wish to repeat Anscombe's (1963) insight that the structure inherent in action is a teleological or means-to-end structure. But the instrumental order inherent in action does not serve as an independent argument for restricting the normative scope of practical reason to instrumental reason.

[14] Cf. Korsgaard (2008, pp. 227–28).

attractive and desirable. (ii) A reason is a principle of choice because it is with regard to such a principle that the agent eventually chooses to do the action—when she chooses it. As a principle of choice a reason is an action description expressed by the form 'I will take the means *m* to the end *e* for its own sake'. More specifically, we can understand this not merely instrumentally normative principle that is constitutive of good action along the lines of Korsgaard's (2008, p. 217) Aristotelian idea of the "*orthos logos*": "A good action is one that embodies the *orthos logos* or right principle: it is done at the right time, in the right way, to the right object, and (. . .) with the right aim." In my view, if all of these parameters are satisfied the action can be willed or valued as good or justified *for its own sake*. If only some of the parameters are fulfilled, I would say that the action may still be permissible or intelligible in some sense: then it can be willed as justifiable but not as right or good for its own sake.[15] In a nutshell, we can say that to endorse a desire as a reason is to consider the desire's end or object as rightly or at least justifiably regulating how the means are pursued. So my disagreement with the instrumentalist can be boiled down to the following two considerations.

First, a reason understood as a justifying or mattering-relation concerns the question, roughly, whether the end justifies the means, whereas the instrumentalist-relation, as we might call it, is concerned with the question what the sufficient means are to realise the given (shared) end. The difference between the Kantian asking whether the end justifies the means and the instrumentalist asking whether the means is sufficient for the given end is that citing the sufficient means for effectively achieving the end need not make the whole action intelligible (let alone, good)—after all, the end may not support the act. As we shall see, it is really this different focus of the instrumentalist who takes the end as given, that renders it unintelligible how reasons can be shareable.

Second, contrary to what the instrumentalist argues rational deliberation about ends—deliberation that is not merely concerned with how to *effectively* realise some given end but with *what* ends we should pursue—is possible if one assumes that ends can more or less appropriately regulate means where such appropriateness involves more than considerations of instrumental efficiency, namely something of the Aristotelian idea of acting well.

[15]Thus, an action is right and not merely justified if it is justifiable *for its own sake*. This helps us see how the action principle described here can be regarded as the intermediate link between the fact of pure practical reason (rightness) and social norms (justifiability) as it draws our attention to the conceptual distinction between rightness and justifiability. One could e.g. argue with Heath (1997, p. 469) that an action is right only if it is justifiable now with respect to a system of shared social norms and "if it would *remain justified* under any *improvement* of this system". The improvement of the system could then be spelled out in terms of something like a democratic procedure, as Heath suggests, that draws our attention to the rational quality of the principles of choice by which we determine social norms.

4

I think there is one last reply by the instrumentalist to challenge my argument. She could argue that she in fact concurs with me that desires are not identical with reasons in the sense that desires are treated *as* reasons. That is, the instrumentalist would thereby agree that we need *some* action principle or law to guide our actions but she could deny that this is the moral law or some principle of the sort of the *orthos logos*.

This means that the issue now is *not* the familiar one against the Humean instrumentalist who seems to fully allow her desires to determine what she does *without* treating them as reasons for action. Unlike the Humean instrumentalist, our instrumentalist is assumed to grant some sort of *endorsement* of the agent with her desires as reasons or principles. The interesting question now is *what kind* of action principle the instrumentalist can be said to endorse and what guiding force such a principle can have for the agent. From all that I know, I think there is only one way to understand it, namely as some version of the principle of prudent self-love: "I will satisfy my prudent desires, i.e. those which have the best consequences."

The first thing that strikes us here is that by accepting some such principle, the instrumentalist seems to *tacitly* assume a substantive theory of rationality, namely one that tells us that acting rationally means pursuing those ends or satisfying those desires that promote the best consequences in the long run. If this is correct, however, then the instrumentalist cannot *also* argue that practical reason just is or can be reduced to instrumental reason.[16] Instrumental reason alone tells us nothing about which ends we should pursue. So the instrumentalist is faced with something like a dilemma.

On the one hand, if she stays true to her instrumentalist claim that practical reason just is instrumental reason, then she *cannot* say that in the pursuit of our (shared) ends we desire what we think are *good* ends, in the sense of rational ends, because she has no standard by which she could judge which end is good or rational and which is not. To reply that we in fact desire what is rational or good for us would be question-begging.

On the other hand, if the instrumentalist wants to account for the guiding role of desires as reasons, then she no longer is a true instrumentalist, as we have seen, because now she actually defends some substantive view about what one has good reason to do, that is, what ends or objects one has good reason to pursue—for example those that maximise satisfaction of one's prudent individual or shared desires.[17]

[16]For such an argument see Korsgaard (2003).

[17]The instrumentalist adheres to a normative theory of rationality to the extent that she has a view about what it is rational to want. For example, taking drugs would not belong to those things that it is rational to want, according to the instrumentalist.

Our discussion so far suggests that when Schmid claims that the problem of instrumentalism is its individualism about ends, what he *actually* means is that something like the principle of prudent self-love as the paradigmatic action principle should be rejected by showing that ends can be shared. But I tried to show that unlike the Kantian, the instrumentalist cannot account for the nature of good action (and therefore, as we shall see, she cannot show how reasons are shareable) and merely pushes its self-centered element to the level of the group.

But there is still the option for Schmid to show how instrumental rationality can accommodate the idea of agents deliberating together or sharing ends such that instrumentalism is no problem. In the next two sections I will examine this option in more detail. More precisely, I will critically discuss Schmid's (2009, pp. 242–44, 2011) claim that the way in which individuals are normatively related to themselves when pursuing an end or to each other when sharing an intention or a desire is purely instrumental.

5

Schmid (2003, 2009, 2011) has convincingly argued that the problem of instrumental rationality is that it instructs us to treat others and their deliberations as mere means or restrictions to our own deliberations. Not unlike Postema (1995), Schmid argues in favour of regarding human instrumental reasoning as capable of integrating other people's perspectives without treating each other as mere means. In other words, Schmid argues that in sharing an end with you, I do not treat you as a mere tool to *my* interests, because my interests, just like yours, are part of *our* interests. By sharing ends with you, I do not treat you and your deliberations as mere constraints on my own since your deliberations and actions are part of what enables *us* to achieve the shared end.

Schmid's point is that you are not used by me as a means to an end that *you share with me* for the same reason that you do not *treat yourself as a means simply by pursuing your own end*. I am very sympathetic to this line of reasoning.

What I consider to be problematic is that Schmid goes on to argue that it remains nevertheless true that I am interested in your reasons—we are members of the same group sharing an intention or desire—merely as instrumental reasons, i.e., in their role as means to realise our shared end. When agents pursue shared ends, they are concerned with each other's instrumental rationality, just as they are concerned with their own instrumental rationality when pursuing individual ends (Schmid 2009, p. 243). In the interpersonal or social case you and I are normatively connected to each other in virtue of our sharing an end, while in the intrapersonal case I and my future self are normatively connected to the individual goal, that is, here one must take one's own will as normative for oneself (Schmid 2011, p. 50). Nevertheless, the normative expectations either towards oneself or towards others are first and

foremost instrumentally normative (Schmid 2011, p. 51).[18] It is this claim that I want to challenge here.

I will show that it makes little sense to ascribe to an animal in general instrumental or efficacious rationality as the primary relation in which it stands to itself and others, without being clear about what the underlying ascription of *non-instrumental normativity* is. With regard to *human* animals, my point is that the primary relation the agent has to herself and to others is the mattering-relation and not the instrumentalist-relation. The ascription of failures in a human agent's efficacy depends for its intelligibility on what one thinks counts as her own behaviour in the first place.[19]

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What I want to say is that an animal's practical irrationality does not reduce to failures in efficacy. Without some knowledge about *what the animal ought to do, as the animal it is*, we cannot say anything about the efficacy of such an animal's behaviour. Human animals have in common with non-human higher animals[20] that they do not have to learn that physical and psychic sensations of pleasure and pain are good or bad sorts of things for them. However, unlike non-human animals, *self-conscious* human animals have to learn to act for good reasons, that is, for considerations about whether some end justifies taking the means to it. That is, we have to learn which instances of good sorts of things are good and which are not. Such learning, however, wouldn't be possible if none of our desires were reason-responsive where 'reason' means more than 'instrumental reason'. Non-human animals, whose ends are largely given to them by their instincts (or by training), do not need to be able to rationally deliberate about ends. I think that is why they cannot, unlike human animals, share ends.[21] For ends to be shareable, the human agent must be capable of regarding the end not as given but as part of a mattering-

[18]Thereby I take Schmid to think that he has demonstrated that instrumentalism is not a problem after all, but only its individualism about ends.

[19]My argument here is greatly indebted to Korsgaard's thinking about autonomy and efficacy in her 2009 book *Self-Constitution*, pp. 81–108.

[20]By "higher" or "intelligent" animals I mean animals that are endowed with intelligence such that they can cognize the world, that they can make experiences in the world, and can learn from them. Such an animal can put together cause and effect, generalise from particulars, and it can pursue the means that she has learned or instinctively knows will bring about the desired end (most reliably).

[21]Of course non-human animals or insects are "social" or organized in such a way that they automatically fulfil their function in a colony or some sort of community (think of bees building a honey comb together or of wolfs hunting in packs). Although I cannot argue for this here, sharing an end and engaging in joint intentional action is an essentially different thing with respect to self-conscious human animals because they are aware of what they have in common with others of their kind.

relation that can be the object of her *principled* choice, that is, of a choice whose object is an entire means-to-end maxim that the agent can, as a result, share both with herself and others. Actions that are chosen in the sense described above are inherently open to participation by other self-conscious animals since they are, as Korsgaard (2009, pp. 163 and 146) puts it, "for the good of the whole" instead of "for its own good". I take this to mean that desires considered by themselves, without any relation to non-instrumental practical reason, are really for their own good in the sense that they compel the agent to satisfy each one of them. Desires lack the power to unify.[22] Since desires by themselves, whether shared or not, cannot unify, freeing instrumentalism from its individualism about ends will not render instrumentalism more plausible.

Now we can better understand what it means to say that there is a sense in which reasons are grounded in reason itself rather than in desires. Since reason itself is directed at the good for the whole, desires themselves alone cannot properly guide an agent since guidance requires unification. To repeat, to act for reasons on the Kantian view is not to treat one's ends as settled by one's given desires but as open to rational deliberation that is not just concerned with taking an instrumentally sufficient means to some end but with the whole action description, i.e. the means-to-end relation that describes the action. Not surprisingly, it turns out that whole actions (and not just ends) must be the objects of agents that must act as one or as a unified person.

Instrumentalism about practical reason that is only concerned with taking the instrumentally rational means to one's ends is therefore ill-suited to accommodate the idea of sharing reasons since it cannot account for the idea of good action that incorporates both means and end. We can also see this by considering the following: The way in which one can be right or wrong as far as instrumental rationality is concerned is that one can either achieve one's ends or one can fail to achieve one's ends. Success or failure in this case need be of no concern for others apart from the agent herself. Of course, it *may* be of others' concern if they share an end with the agent, the success of whose realisation partly depends on the agent and her contribution to the shared end. The decisive point is that, on the purely instrumentalist view of practical reason, others are not necessarily *committing a wrong* if they decide that the respective agent's contributions to the shared end are no longer needed and upon a carefully performed cost/benefit analysis exclude her from their community. This is an illustration of the way in which instrumentalism is not good for the whole. On the conception of practical reason that I have attributed to the instrumentalist's opponent, however, the agent would have a claim not to be treated in this way even if she didn't share a particular end with the other members of the community. Excluding a person from a community on the grounds that her

[22]The Kantian, as I understand him, is not saying that the desires we can treat as (potential) reasons for action are themselves arrived at by reasoning. What he says is that guidance in action requires the power of practical reason that is not identical with instrumental reason: desires must be open to rational evaluation that is not exhausted by concerns about instrumental efficacy.

contribution to the shared end is not needed (all else equal) counts as unjustifiable since thereby the person would be treated as a mere means. These considerations lead me to agree with Kratochwil (1989, p. 148) who argues that

> [I]t is our common conception of the freedom and responsibility of moral agents that *precedes*, and has to be logically prior to, any attainment or utility of goals that agents choose to undertake, singly or in conjunction.

I understand this as another way of saying that the primary way in which human beings are related to themselves and to each other cannot be instrumental normativity.[23] The concept of human agency is not intelligible unless the concept of moral responsibility is logically prior to that of instrumental rationality. But if this is correct then the authority of a human agent's will cannot be primarily instrumentally normative as Schmid seems to suggest.

The notion of responsibility finally leads us to explain the sense in which the normativity entailed in human agency is *not merely natural* compared to that entailed in animal agency more generally (cf. Korsgaard 2011). Here the fact of pure practical reason comes in. Perceptions of a creature that is not only sentient but also *self-conscious* with an evaluative self-conception will naturally have moral feelings besides bodily and perceptual feelings.[24] These moral feelings have their origin in the feeling of respect for the moral law, which is a law about how the animal *should be related to herself and to others*, namely as unified or good for the whole. Self-conscious animals must bridge the gap that self-consciousness confronts them with in order to act for reasons; to act for reasons ("Can I endorse this desire as a non-instrumental reason?"), in a way, is to act as a unified whole, i.e. to act *with oneself*. So what primarily holds the agent together when she acts for reasons is not an instrumental relation that connects her to her end, as Schmid seems to argue, but a mattering relation to herself and others.[25] The feeling of respect for the moral law is a feeling of responsibility. So the human animal stands in a mattering-relation to herself and others which is not naturally good but normatively good,

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[23] Another way to demonstrate that instrumental rationality is not an independent form of rationality is to ask what it could mean to say that some action is instrumentally virtuous. While it makes perfect sense to speak of intellectual and moral or practical virtue, it is not clear what instrumental virtue by itself could mean. This is because within a certain range of practicability we can simply take *any* means to *any* ends.

[24] Here, I refer to the kind of self-consciousness that only gradually develops in human beings and that non-human beings lack. Self-consciousness so understood is not exhausted by the animal recognising her own attitudes but involves the animal's awareness of how her attitudes influence her own actions, which allows (or rather, makes necessary) that the animal forms an attitude towards the fact that she is being moved in a certain way. Here lies the potential for moral awareness, the awareness of right and wrong. Cf. Korsgaard (2007, p. 21).

[25] So other people's reasons are not normative for me insofar as they share some particular end with me, as Schmid claims. They are normative for me because as sentient moral beings they have certain moral claims on me whether or not they share some end with me. Cf. also Korsgaard (2009, pp. 201f.).

that is, *conferred* by the animal on herself. After all, the moral law is one that the self-conscious animal gives to herself.

If my argument is on the right track, we can conclude that pursuing a shared goal, *pace* Schmid, cannot transform an otherwise solitary relation into a socially normative one. It is not clear how collective intentionality in the form of social normativity can be constructed out of otherwise solitary relations. Human self-relation must be inherently shareable. As a consequence, there is no *principled* distinction between a rational animal's individual ends, i.e. the ends she can share with herself, and the ends she can share with others. Thus instrumentalism cannot be saved by introducing the concept of shared ends. Rather, the solution must lie in abandoning the idea that instrumental reason is all that practical reason amounts to and with it the instrumentalist concept of human self-relation, since it fails to show how human agency can be what it must be in order to function well: it must unify the agent with herself and others.

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