

psychological strength. But he insists on the distinction between the strength of conception-dependent and principle-dependent desires and the regulative priority—Butler would say the authority—that their corresponding principles have for ideal agents. What characterizes these agents is that the psychological strength of their conception-dependent and principle-dependent desires exactly parallels the regulative priority of the corresponding principles of practical reason. Thus, as ideally reasonable persons, we have the capacity to stand above and to assess our object-dependent desires. This gives us an elective power to determine from which of those desires, if any, we shall act. Next time I consider how this election is done: i.e., by incorporating the desire into the maxim from which we propose to act (Rel 6:28) and then checking whether the maxim is morally permissible by using the CI-procedure, as I shall call it.

This conception of ourselves as reasonable agents with elective wills contrasts sharply with Wolff's conception. Kant's complaint against Wolff is that he simply ignores the principles appropriate to a pure will and so his view allows no place for a conception of moral obligation rooted in pure practical reason.

§4. The Main Argument of *Groundwork* I

1. Let's look briefly at the main argument in *Groundwork* I as found in I: 8–17 (397–402). It goes as follows. (The asterisks before 1, 2, and 10 indicate these as Kant's three propositions; they appear in the order in which he introduces them.)

- *1. A good will is a will the actions of which accord with duty, not from inclination but from duty (out of duty). (paragraphs 11, end [399])
- *2. Actions done from duty have their moral worth from the principle of volition from which they are done, and not from the purposes (objectives, states of affairs, or ends) the inclination to bring about which initially prompted the agent to consider doing the action. (paragraph 14 [399–400])
3. The will must always act from some principle of volition. (paragraphs 2 [393–394], 14 [399–400])

4. There are two kinds of principles of volition, formal and material, which are mutually exclusive and exhaustive. (paragraph 14 [399–400])
5. No material principle of volition is the principle of volition of an action done from duty. (from the definition of a material principle of volition and *2 above)
6. An action done from duty is an action done from a formal principle of volition. (from *2 through 5)
7. There is only one formal principle of volition, and this principle is the moral law. (paragraph 17 [402])
8. Respect is, by definition, the recognition of a principle of volition as law for us, that is, as directly determining our will without reference to what is wanted by our inclinations. (paragraph 16n. [401])
9. The object of respect is the moral law. (paragraphs 15 [400–401], 16n. [401])
- *10. Actions done from duty are actions done from respect (or out of respect) for the moral law (paragraph 15 [400–401], (from 6 through 9))
11. A good will is a will the actions of which accord with duty, not from inclination, but from respect for the moral law. (from *1, *10 above)

2. Several comments: Lines 3 through 9 inclusive above try to fill in what seem to be the steps in Kant's reasoning as based on the premises indicated by asterisks. However, not much depends on the rendering given being exactly right. His reasoning can no doubt be put in other ways.

Further, the aim of the argument, which seems valid, is to find the supreme principle of morality (the moral law). It starts from ordinary commonsense moral knowledge and moves to philosophical knowledge by elucidating the underlying principle found in our everyday judgments about the moral worth of actions. I do not examine the argument, for if I have it more or less right, its form and purpose are reasonably clear. But I should note that Kant views Chapters I and II of the *Groundwork* as purely analytic, as showing by the development of the universally accepted concept of morality that autonomy of the will is its foundation (*Gr* II:90 [444–445]).