"Pluralist," "Partially Comprehensive Doctrines" and the Problem of Motivation

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Abstract

Recent scholarship has drawn attention to John Rawls's concern with stability—a concern that, as Rawls himself notes, motivated Part III of *A Theory of Justice* and many important changes in *Political Liberalism*. For Rawls, the possibility of achieving "stability for the right reasons" depends on citizens possessing sufficient moral motivation. I argue, however, that the moral psychology Rawls develops to show how such motivation would be cultivated and sustained does not cohere with his specific descriptions of the "pluralist," "partially comprehensive" doctrine. Considering Rawls's claims that "most" citizens—both in contemporary liberal democracies and in the well-ordered society—possess pluralist doctrines, these incompatibilities may critically undermine his stability arguments. Despite the enormous importance of these citizens and the potential difficulties they pose for Rawls's broader theoretical project, remarkably little attention has been paid to them. By critically examining these difficulties, this paper attempts to address this oversight.

> *However attractive a conception of justice might be on other grounds, it is seriously defective if the principles of moral psychology are such that it fails to engender in human beings the requisite desire to act upon it.*
>
> –John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, p.455/398

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In his introduction to *Political Liberalism*, John Rawls[1] discusses his enduring concern with stability—a concern that, as he himself notes, motivated Part III of *A Theory of Justice* and some of the most important changes in *Political Liberalism* (*PL*, xv-xvii). Rawls argues that the possibility of achieving "stability for the right reasons" depends on citizens possessing sufficient moral motivation. He thus develops his broader accounts of moral psychology and moral development in order to demonstrate how such motivation would be cultivated and sustained.

Nearly every criticism of Rawls's accounts of stability and moral psychology have focused on the difficulties these accounts face in accommodating citizens with "fully comprehensive and general views," and especially religious citizens.[2] This was not lost on Rawls. Indeed, in *Political Liberalism* (hereafter, *PL*) he expresses his sensitivity to these objections,

[1] The following abbreviations are used throughout: *Theory of Justice = TJ* (page references are given to both the 1971 and 1999 editions in the form 1971/1999); *Political Liberalism = PL*; *Collected Papers = CP*; *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement = JFR*. Paul Weithman's *Why Political Liberalism?* is also abbreviated throughout as *WPL*. Specific bibliographic information can be found in the references section.

[2] Emblematic of this line of criticism is Baier 1989 and Wolterstorff 1997. Paul Weithman also identifies Gray 2000, Klosko 1993, and Jones 1988, as examples of this kind of objection (WPL, 346*n*). For Weithman's own argument along these lines, see WPL, pp. 323-327, 312*ff*.

asserting that the very question of how a just society is "to be stable for the right reasons…should be more sharply put this way: How is it possible for those affirming a religious doctrine…also to hold a reasonable political conception that supports a just democratic regime?" (*PL*, xxxvii). Without taking any position on the relative merits of these religious objections, I argue that such a focus overlooks potentially more severe problems concerning another type of comprehensive doctrine Rawls discusses—namely, the "pluralist," "partially comprehensive"[3] (PPC) view.

The significance of the PPC view for Rawls's account cannot be overstated. He believes it to be the doctrine of "most" citizens, within both contemporary liberal democracies and the just society.[4] Moreover, according to Rawls, value pluralists are "critical" for effecting the societal transition from *modus vivendi* to overlapping consensus (*PL*, 208, 152&*n*, 159–160, 168; *CP*, 471–2; *JFR*, 33, 197–8). Consequently, the success of Rawls's broader stability arguments hinge on how effectively his account of moral psychology and development coheres with his descriptions of this view.

It is precisely on this point, however, that I believe Rawls fails to make a compelling case. I base this claim on three arguments, which I note here and develop in subsequent sections. The first contends that it is unclear how—or even that—Rawls's accounts of moral psychology and

[3] "Pluralist, partially comprehensive" is hereafter abbreviated to PPC. The PPC view is also referred to throughout as the "comprehensive pluralist view" (*PL*, 170), the "pluralist view" (*PL*, 145, 155), and "value pluralism" (following Weithman's adaptation {*WPL*, 305*ff*}).

[4] *PL*, 160, 208; *CP*, 471-2; *JFR*, 33, 193. Weithman confirms this (see *WPL*, 306). NB: Rawls alternately claims that those with PPC views comprise "most" and "many if not most" of the citizenry.

development (which inform his understanding of moral motivation) are compatible with his more specific descriptions of the PPC view. This problem is taken up in sections I and II.

The second argument contends that value pluralists are particularly susceptible to motivational deficits, and would be even in the context of an "overlapping consensus." The first part of this argument, elaborated in section III, reconstructs an account of motivation distinctive to the PPC view from Rawls's descriptions, distinguishing between two discrete motivational dispositions[5]—"active" and "passive." In section IV, I identify five reasons to doubt whether those with PPC views (whether "active" or "passive") can sustain allegiance to the political conception of justice in the way Rawls intends.

This leads to the final argument, taken up in sections IV and V: that, in lieu of a compelling response as to how such motivational issues can be redressed (or why they should be considered irrelevant), institutional coercion may be necessary to effect value pluralists' compliance to the principles of justice, even in a society underpinned by justice as fairness. If this is right, then we are left with reason to doubt whether "stability for the right reasons" is achievable.

Section I: The Comprehensive Pluralist View

Before we approach the problems PPC views might pose for Rawlsian stability, it will help to have a clearer understanding of the view itself. Rawls discusses the PPC view in various passages throughout his post-*Theory* works. From these discussions, we can broadly define it as

[5] I use the term "motivational sets" to refer to specific elements of motivation (e.g., ideals, beliefs, desires, coercive force), and the term "motivational dispositions" to refer to modalities of motivation (i.e., active and passive).

follows: the PPC view is only *partially comprehensive*,[6] meaning that it lacks any overarching principle, set of principles, or general moral doctrine with implications for the whole of one's life—something to the tune of a fully comprehensive religious doctrine with a central moral tenet like, e.g., the Ten Commandments of Judeo-Christian faiths (*PL*, 145, 99, 170, 175; *JFR*, 193–4). Relatedly, the PPC view is *pluralist* in that it is composed of several, potentially disparate[7] domains or accounts of values, none of which "presupposes the conclusions of [the] others" (*WPL*, 305). Put another way, each domain has values that only necessarily apply to that domain—e.g., one's political values, like justice as fairness, apply to the domain of the political; one's aesthetic values apply to the domain of the aesthetic; and so on (*PL*, 170; *WPL*, 305, 306). As Weithman describes, it is the conjunction of these several "freestanding"[8] accounts of values that constitutes the "comprehensive" view.

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[6] NB: The term "partially comprehensive views" encompasses PPC views, though is arguably not limited to it. Other partially comprehensive views may exist, including the incomplete monist views or the "null" views ("agnosticism" and "skepticism") that Rawls identifies (*PL*, p. 386*n*). However, once a citizen with an only partially comprehensive view adopts an account of values (e.g., the political conception) that is not already present or presupposed by the citizen's partially comprehensive doctrine, the doctrine *ipso facto* becomes "pluralist" (*PL*, 168; *WPL*, 306).

[7] There is almost certainly reason to question just how disparate the various domains of values in a typical citizen's PPC view would be. This line of questioning exceeds the scope of the present paper, however, suffice it to say that the coherence of Rawls's psychological account of this view warrants further research.

[8] Rawls uses the term "freestanding" to indicate that a given account of values is "not presented as derived from" any comprehensive doctrine" (*PL*, xlii).

What does such a view look like in practice? Imagine a person—let's call him Lawrence—who has certain religious values and commitments that he regards as separate from and potentially unrelated to his political values and commitments, which, in turn, he understands to be separate from and potentially unrelated to his broader ethical values and commitments, and so on. Thus, while at church or taking part in some religious activity, Lawrence acts from (specifically) religious values—perhaps those of compassion, devotion, etc.; while, at other times or in other contexts—say, in his capacity as a citizen—Lawrence acts in accordance with political values, like justice as fairness. In the other spheres of his life, still other domains of values come to bear—e.g., those of the aesthetic, or the familial. The key point is that the values, ideals, principles, etc., specified by each domain are, in general, narrowly regulative of Lawrence's activities and evaluative outlook within that domain.

Of course, despite usually remaining discrete from one another, overlap and conflict between domains inevitably occurs, even in the realm of ideal theory. And herein lies an important problem for value pluralists: unlike those with fully comprehensive doctrines (hereafter, FCDs), value pluralists cannot appeal to some absolute principle to settle disputes—e.g., the utilitarian principle of the greatest good for the greatest number or the Kantian categorical imperative. Instead, they must "balance" or "weigh" conflicting considerations against one another (*PL*, 145, 155, 170–1). Unfortunately, Rawls does not provide much explanation of what this kind of deliberative reasoning might entail. He "hopes" that "citizens will judge…that political values either outweigh or are normally…ordered prior to whatever nonpolitical values may conflict with them" (*PL*, 392, 155). This "hope" is based on the belief "that the values of the political are very great values and not easily overridden" (*PL* 169)—which, in turn, appeals to his conception of the person as essentially "reasonable" and "rational."

It remains to note a few other features of the PPC view that are directly relevant to my concerns in this paper. In a sense, these features are corollaries of the more basic characteristics already discussed. The first concerns how value pluralists come to accept the political conception of justice. As Rawls describes, being only partially comprehensive, the PPC view is "loose," mutable, and incomplete, and thus more readily capable of adopting new accounts of values—including, of course, the political conception. This adoption is explained in terms of "embedding" or "inserting" the political conception into the pluralist doctrine, as one freestanding account of values among others (*PL*, 102, 144–5, 160, 168, 170–1, 386–7, 392; *JFR*, 33, 193–4, 197). Notably, this mode of acceptance does not depend on there being a discernible connection or continuity between one's nonpolitical values and those of the political; a simple *prima facie* lack of conflict suffices (*PL*, 169, 140, 11).

In one sense, this appears to be an advantage of the PPC view inasmuch as it facilitates acceptance of the political conception by obviating the need for deeper justifications or inter-domain congruence. Indeed, as Rawls explains, regarding politics, value pluralists may simply accept justice as fairness as the right account, "and may not expect, or think they need, greater political understanding than that" (*PL*, 156).[9] In another sense, however, this mode of acceptance also suggests that value pluralists lack the kind of pre-political or *in se*[10] moral reasons for accepting or affirming the political conception that motivate citizens with FCDs. This is an important contrast: while, for citizens with FCDs, acceptance of the political conception "can be

[9] See also *WPL*, 306 and *PL*, 160.

[10] Following Ian MacMullen's usage of the term, I use "*in se*" to indicate reasons that exist in the absence of the law—i.e., pre-politically (p.110).

said to be *derived from* and to *depend solely on* the comprehensive doctrine"[11]; for value pluralists, acceptance comes "independent" of the nonpolitical values that comprise their (partially) comprehensive doctrines.[12]

This point requires further explanation. In lieu of reasons drawn from within their comprehensive doctrines, value pluralists must justify their allegiance to the political conception on the grounds of public reason alone (viz., by reference to the conceptions of citizen and society and/or to the good the political conception secures). Of course, these are public grounds that any reasonable citizen would be expected to similarly accept and share. In contrast to value pluralists, citizens with FCDs have additional, *nonpublic* moral reasons for endorsing the political conception. As Rawls describes, when "appealing to reasons based on the political conception, citizens [with FCDs] are appealing not only to what is publicly seen to be reasonable, but also to what all see as the correct moral reasons from within their own comprehensive view" (*PL*, 127). These nonpublic, *in se* moral reasons may be based on the belief, for example, that the political conception resembles their idea of "moral truth" (*PL*, 126–7); or that the ideal of citizenship accords with religious ideals of what it means to be a faithful adherent; or that as, say, Kantian liberals, they regard their comprehensive doctrine to be "the deductive basis of the political conception and in that way continuous with it" (*PL*, 169).[13] Whatever the reasoning, citizens with FCDs are ultimately able to justify their affirmation of the political conception on the grounds of their pre-/extra-political moral commitments and values, which gives their allegiance a deeper basis and sense of moral conviction. As we will see in section II, this proves to be

[11] Emphasis added; *PL*, 159. See also *PL*, 169-171.

[12] Regarding the latter point, see *PL*, 168, 208, 158-160; *CP*, 471-2; *JFR*, 197-8.

[13] See also *PL*, 145*ff*, 169-70, 392-3.

important for sustaining moral motivation and promoting social unity in the context of an overlapping consensus (*PL*, 392). The key point here is that value pluralists' allegiance to the political conception is less well-supported than that of citizens with FCDs.[14]

New questions might be raised here by distinguishing between the justificatory basis citizens have for accepting the political conception and the quite separate issue of motivation.[15] If value pluralists' acceptance and justification of the political conception are *not* based on reasons specified by their comprehensive doctrines, then what provides for their moral motivation? What impels them to sustain allegiance to the political conception, especially when conflict occurs between the principles and values of the political conception and their nonpolitical values, commitments, and desires?

One response may simply be that, assuming a "normal" lack of conflict between their nonpolitical and political values, value pluralists (at least initially) base acceptance and justification on an appreciation of how the political conception "works" and "the good" it accomplishes (*JFR*, 197; *PL*, 160). In time, so the argument goes, recognition of the "very great" values of, and goods "intrinsic" to,[16] the political conception will provide value pluralists with powerful (moral) reasons to continue affirming and acting from the principles of justice. But are these reasons alone—unaided by the kind of deep "religious, philosophical, and moral"

[14] Rawls intimates this distinction in his descriptions of value pluralist motivation (*PL*, 147, 160-2, 168, 83-6; *JFR*, 194-95). This claim is elaborated in section III.

[15] I am indebted to George Klosko for his help in articulating this point.

[16] Including enhanced and fair political cooperation, reciprocity, mutual "trust and confidence," and, by extension, a "harmonious" and stable society based on conceptions of citizen and society (*PL*, 163, 168-9, 208-209; *JFR*, 194-8).

convictions present in the motivational sets of citizens with FCDs—adequate sources of *moral* motivation? If so, how?

Section II: Rawls's General Account of Moral Motivation & the PPC View

Rawls answers to these questions are steeped in the moral psychology developed in *TJ* and *PL*.[17] This moral psychology employs ideas like, e.g., "congruence" and "conception-dependent desires" to show how the political conception might instill or inspire moral motivation in citizens. As I attempt to show, however, this account appears to only directly apply to citizens with FCDs—a shortcoming perhaps owed to Rawls's preoccupation with preempting the religious objections to *TJ*.[18] As such, Rawls's moral psychology does little to further our understanding of what motivates citizens *without* FCDs—specifically, for our purposes, value pluralists[19]—to accept and "act from" the principles of justice. Let's consider one example of this shortcoming in depth.

In *TJ*, Rawls understands acquiring a sense of justice (and the motivation to act from it) to be the end result of a three-stage moral development, which progresses through the moralities of "authority," "association," and "principles" (*TJ*, 462–478/405–420). These moralities endow our allegiance to the principles of justice with a kind of normative, social, and quasi-metaphysical weightiness, respectively. Thus, we are led to act justly, first, by filial devotion to

[17] Rawls outlines his moral psychology in *TJ*, ch.VIII and in *PL*, II:7. There are, of course, important differences between the two (discussed in the following), but much continuity as well.

[18] See *PL*, xxxvii-xxxviii. For the sake of space, I can do little more than suggest this as a potential explanation here.

[19] See footnote 6.

our parents; later, by the social expectations conferred by our associations and associates; and, finally, by recognizing the good intrinsic to the political conception of justice. Only at this last stage, so Rawls concludes, do we attain something like a complete "sense of justice."[20]

Among the various elements of Rawls's model of moral development that survive his political turn, two are particularly relevant to the present paper: the idea of "conception-dependent desires" and the linkage between motivation and stability. Let's first consider conception-dependent desires. As Rawls notes, these "desires can be described by saying that the principles we desire to act from are seen as belonging to, and as helping to articulate, a certain rational or reasonable conception, or a political ideal" (*PL*, 84). Although the term conception-dependent desires is not employed until *PL*, these desires clearly play a role in the three moralities of *TJ*.[21] Consider, for instance, the following passage:

> But we may also suppose that the newer members of the association recognize moral exemplars, that is, persons who are in various ways admired and who exhibit to a high degree the ideal corresponding to their position. These individuals display skills and abilities, and virtues of character and temperament, that attract our fancy and arouse in us the desire that we should be like them, and able to do the same things. (*TJ*, 471/413)

This passage not only evinces the presence of conception-dependent desires in *TJ*, but also shows them to possess an affective dimension, which appears to contribute directly to their

[20] *TJ*, ch. VIII. Rawls is not forthcoming about whether full development happens for everyone, although he does suggest that at least one component of the morality of principles is "not one for ordinary persons" (*TJ*, 478-9/419).

[21] Again, see *TJ*, ch. VIII. Weithman identifies various other passages in *TJ* that feature such desires—e.g., *TJ*, 472-3/414, 490-1/429-430 (see *WPL*, 69-80, 83, 293, 304, 307).

motivational power. Indeed, in the passage above, what moves us is the attractive example of the "moral exemplars," which "arouse[s] in us the desire" to model ourselves after the ideal(s) they exhibit. These desires orient us toward a certain notion of the good—that is, toward an idea of what it is good *to be*. But in his post–political-turn works, Rawls narrows the scope of justice as fairness to questions concerning what it is *right to do*, as these questions apply to our actions as citizens working within the domain of the political.[22] Thus, it is perhaps unsurprising that Rawls's discussions of conception-dependent desires in *PL* no longer suggest their having the same affective dimensionality. That is, although conception-dependent desires are still said to comprise a chief part of citizens' motivational sets, such that they "are moved…to act in ways worthy of a reasonable and equal citizen," they become wholly cognitive[23]—occurring only "in thought and deliberation" (*PL*, 85&*n*). Thus, the motive force of the political ideals in *PL* more closely resembles that of rational morality[24]—founded, as it is, more on sound reasoning than affective allure.

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[22] See Rawls's discussion on *PL*, xv-xvii, xli-xlii for his explanation of why he chose to eschew comprehensive ideals of the good attendant to justice as fairness.

[23] Cognitive should be understood in contra-distinction to affective or appetitive. Also note that cognition does not presuppose conation.

[24] Of course, the conception of rational morality Rawls develops in *PL* (and throughout his works) is essentially deontological. The rational morality of citizens with PPC views is perhaps better described as consequentialist, however, owing to the fact that their rational desires appear to be more regulative and action-guiding than their sense of justice. This basic idea is developed in the remainder of this section and throughout the next.

Yet, it might be argued that conception-dependent desires must arouse feelings similar to those conveyed in the passage from *TJ*, above, if they are to have sufficient motivational power. In *TJ*, this power was achieved through congruence—i.e., the conjoining of citizens' comprehensive ideals of right and good. In *PL*, however, Rawls eschews the idea that congruence will be generally achieved.[25] What, then, can account for citizens' motivation?

In an obvious sense, it would seem that one's being moved by a given conception or ideal presupposes one's valuing it on a deep level. In other words, much of the motivational power of political conceptions or ideals derives from appealing to citizens' more fundamental (nonpolitical) values, as these values provide citizens with reasons *why* they should accept (and/or continue to affirm) the political conception (*PL*, 148, 171; *WPL*, 359–60). So the question becomes: what are these deeper values and how do they contribute to citizens' moral motivation?

The answer is clear for those with FCDs. They are moved by finding their values to be related to (i.e., embodied in, "derived from," "congruent with," "supportive of") those specified by the political conception of justice (*PL*, 169; *JFR*, 187). In this sense, the political conception is recognized as an extension of their systematic moral views or "natural attachments" (*TJ*, 434). This recognition means that citizens have powerful, *in se* reasons for affirming the political conception; their affirmation is thereby empowered by the depth of commitment and affective attachment each citizen has for his or her fully comprehensive (religious, moral, or philosophical) doctrine. As Rawls describes: "For those who hold well-articulated, highly systematic, comprehensive doctrines, it is from within such a doctrine…that those citizens affirm

[25] In *PL*, Rawls only identifies one type of doctrine—fully comprehensive (Kantian) liberalism—that shares a congruent relationship with the political conception congruence (pp.169, 171).

the political conception of justice. *The fundamental concepts, principles, and virtues of the political conception are theorems, as it were, of their comprehensive views*" (emphasis added; *JFR*, 33). For citizens with FCDs, the desire to act from the principles of justice is an echo of their desire to adhere to their "'higher'" or "'deeper'" moral commitments.[26]

The problem with applying similar arguments to PPC views may already be apparent. As has been stated, PPC views lack the same natural continuity. Rather, citizens with PPC views must simply accept the political conception as "an adjunct to" their partially comprehensive doctrines—i.e., without finding "any particular connection, one way or the other" between their nonpolitical values and those of the political (*PL*, 160). Thus, while some citizens may be able to derive moral motivation from the reasons specified by their fully comprehensive doctrines, value pluralists cannot. What, then, can account for the moral motivation of value pluralists?

One might argue that all citizens socialized in a just society—including value pluralists—may simply desire to "act from" the principles of justice and uphold the "fair terms of social cooperation" "for their own sake" (*PL*, 54). But this answer is unsatisfying for at least two reasons. First, it is not apparent that the motivations associated with acquiring a sense of justice are necessarily very strong ones. In other words, it is at least possible that some citizens in a well-ordered society will be only weakly motivated to do the right thing (e.g., adhere to the principles of justice), even though they know what the right thing is to do. Second, Rawls's account of moral development relies on citizens' achieving a sense of congruence between their sense of the good and their sense of justice.[27] But considering that (a) value pluralists lack a

[26] See Hedrick (p.25) on this point. See also *PL*, 126.

[27] NB: Although Rawls invokes *TJ*'s story of moral development in *PL* in order to ground his account of moral motivation (*PL*, 143&*n*, 49-50*n*), he does not indicate how it might be adapted

comprehensive notion of the good, and (b) post–political-turn justice as fairness no longer includes such a notion, it is not at all clear how (or even if) value pluralists would be able to achieve congruence. Thus, working from Rawls's general account alone, it remains to be seen exactly *what*—if not, e.g., ideas of "moral truth," "redemption," "categorical imperative," "the greatest good for the greatest number"[28]—serves as the basis of moral motivation for those with PPC views.

Section III: Passive & Active Motivation

One approach to this question is to look beyond Rawls's general account of moral motivation, toward his more specific discussions of the PPC view. I argue that, in these discussions, Rawls intimates several ways we might understand the moral motivation of value pluralists. These possibilities are not always consistent, however. For conceptual clarity, we can distinguish between two broad categories, referred to here as *passive* and *active* motivational dispositions.[29] Each disposition represents a way particular value pluralists might come to accept and sustain adherence to the political conception—that is to say, a value pluralist may either "passively" or

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to accommodate this facet of his political turn. Thus, here again, it remains unclear how Rawls might account for the PPC view.

[28] One might object that, even if they are not comprehensive, the values of the political are nonetheless still "very great values" and that this alone should suffice as a source of adequate moral motivation (*PL*, 169). I attempt to show why this is also unsatisfying in section III, below.

[29] See footnote 5.

"actively" accept the political conception.[30] The aim of this section is to consider some of the characteristics of each disposition, giving particular attention to the ways in which they condition value pluralists' allegiance to the political conception. Throughout this section and in the following, I argue that both dispositions are susceptible to motivational deficits that Rawls does not acknowledge or provide for.

Passive Motivation

The passive motivational disposition is characterized by an unreflective acceptance of the political conception of justice. This is captured by Rawls's claim that some value pluralists "come to affirm the principles of justice incorporated into their constitution and political practice without seeing any particular connection, one way or the other, between those principles and their other views" (*PL*, 160). The passivity may extend further than value pluralists merely not finding "any "particular connection" between their political and nonpolitical values, however. At times, both Rawls and Weithman seem to associate PPC views with a kind of indifference, effectively reducing value pluralists' *acceptance* of the political conception to *acquiescence*, and their continued *allegiance* to *compliance*. Consider, for instance, Rawls's claim that some citizens simply adopt the political conception as a matter of convention—without being able to explain why, apart from knowing that other citizens who affirm it are able to cooperate "on the basis of mutual respect." Far from this being a problem, Rawls contends that these citizens "may not expect, or think they need, greater political understanding than that" (*PL*, 156). Weithman makes this point even more clearly where he writes, "[w]hen it comes to politics," value

[30] NB: These categories are provisional and meant only to emphasize certain distinctions. It is likely that a less categorical admixture of the two would characterize the motivational dispositions of many real-life value pluralists, depending on the particular person and situation.

pluralists "just accept the political conception as the right account" (*WPL*, 306). This kind of unreflective acceptance—which is based not on perceiving a relationship between one's nonpolitical values and the political conception, but on the mere absence of "conflict" between the two—ultimately leads Weithman to conclude that Rawls's general understanding of the process of acceptance only "trivially" applies to value pluralists (*WPL*, 306).

In this sense, it seems fair to regard passive motivation as deriving from a minimalistic understanding that the principles of justice and the institutions that uphold them *ought not to be violated*. This understanding does not stem from the realization that such violations would undermine these citizens' values or their sincere desire to live up to the political conception; rather, this understanding is more likely the product of the "desire to conform to what is expected and normally done" (*PL*, 161); or, more negatively, the desire to avoid the (social or punitive) consequences of either not complying with, or outright violating, the principles of justice.[31]

One may already suspect that the passive motivational disposition is at odds with Rawls's general accounts of moral development and motivation. By juxtaposing passive motivation with these general accounts, there indeed seem to be at least two important inconsistencies. One applies both to active *and* passive motivation, and will thus be discussed in section IV, below. A second applies narrowly to passive motivation, however; it concerns the incompatibility of passive motivation and the third and final stage of Rawlsian moral development—the morality of principles (*TJ*, §72). As Rawls describes, the morality of principles is predicated on a firm "knowledge of the standards of justice" such that the "conception of acting justly, and of advancing just institutions," becomes a deeply attractive enterprise (*TJ*, 473/414). The morality

[31] Notably, the latter (negative) desire appears to be an implicit element of the social conditioning in Rawls's account of moral development (*TJ*, ch. VIII, esp., §70-72).

of principles, like that of authority and associations, draws power from affect, desire, and citizens' "moral emotions" (according to Rawls, it denotes an ideal that "exercises a natural attraction upon our affections") (*TJ*, 478/418, 472-6/414–6). This is because the morality of principles presupposes a sense of congruence—of citizens' notions of the good being bound up with their sense of justice (*TJ*, 472-5/414–5, 567-8/497–9, 576/505).

The passive motivational disposition entails a notable lack of these qualities. Acceptance is not based on a firm knowledge of the principles of justice but is unreflective; motivation does not derive from positive desire to live up to certain ideals but the negative desire to acquiesce or avoid the cost of non-compliance; and, crucially, value pluralists categorically lack a sense of congruence between their comprehensive (nonpolitical) notions of the good and the political conception of justice (which encompasses some ideals of the right). Thus, to the extent that the passive motivational disposition is characteristic of some part of the population, the morality of principles cannot be. This means that at least some portion of the just society's citizenry may never come to possess a complete sense of justice.

Active Motivation

In contrast to the passive motivational disposition, the active motivational disposition's conative sources are more positive. More specifically, it is based on the recognition that the political conception is (1) reasonable in itself (and thus "morally correct"[32] in regard to political behavior); and (2) (ideally) conducive to, but (again) at least "not in conflict with," one's "essential interests"—i.e., one's nonpolitical values, desires, ends, and/or notions of the good (*PL*, 160, 169, 170, 134, 155, 392; *JFR*, 197). The motivation of citizens with active dispositions derives from their desire to pursue, acquire, or maintain these "essential interests." This desire is

[32] See *PL*, 126-27, 126*n*.

their "first principle," so to speak, insofar as it provides the external grounds upon which these value pluralists justify their initial acceptance of, and sustained allegiance to, the political conception.

Notably, this "first principle" is neither affective nor intrinsically moral. For value pluralists with active dispositions, this means that moral motivation and moral conclusions (like that of affirming the political conception) are essentially based on rationalistic or prudential[33] reasoning. Although Rawls does not explicitly identify this kind of reasoning, his account of how (actively motivated) value pluralists come to accept the political conception implies as much. Consider the following:

> What is characteristic of [the PPC] view is that different domains of value—of which the political is but one—are unified (so far as they are unified) largely by ideas and concepts drawn from their own domain. […] In this comprehensive pluralist view the political conception is affirmed by *balancing judgments that support the great values of the political against whatever values normally conflict with them* in a well-ordered democratic regime. (emphasis added; *PL*, 170)

This basic idea was introduced in section I, above. Recall that this mode of deliberative reasoning—"balancing"—is not refereed in light of some comprehensive ideal (as is the case for

[33] My use of prudential in this context follows MacMullen's. He identifies "prudential" reasons for moral action as being based on either (1) an appreciation of the good that can be achieved or the bad that can be avoided by performing such an action; or (2) an awareness of the possibility of legal punishment (pp.110, 112-3). In what follows, much of my skepticism about the efficacy of prudential reasoning in producing moral behavior draws from MacMullen's discussion.

those with FCDs[34]); rather, it is a process of ascertaining the relative weight of each competing value or domain of values. (This is perhaps why Rawls insists that the values of the political are "very great values"—i.e., in order to indicate that they hold *very great weight* {*PL*, 169}.) Thus, when deliberating over some moral conflict, actively motivated value pluralists are led to ask themselves something like the following: which set of values (among the conflict options) is the most salient, attractive, and/or appropriate, given the situation?[35] That is, which option exerts the greatest pull on my desires, attachments, and affections; is the most reasonable; and/or is most likely to advance my interests?[36]

This mode of rational-deliberative affirmation distinguishes value pluralists from citizens with FCDs. While the former resolve to endorse the political conception in acknowledgement of good (prudential) reasons to do so, the latter are moved by a categorical sense of what is best (i.e., right and/or good)—and, especially for religious citizens, by some deeper aesthetic-affective attachment to that belief.[37] This is no simple difference. Indeed, being motivated to affirm the political conception on the grounds of prudential reasoning alone seems to suggest that value

[34] For example, fully comprehensive utilitarians would be guided by the principle of the greatest good for the greatest number, or some variant thereof.

[35] My thanks to Colin Bird for his help in clarifying this point.

[36] As Rawls notes, there are many ways rational agents "select[] and order their ends"; though he believes "affections for persons and attachments to communities and places" will play a special role (*PL*, 51).

[37] For an excellent commentary on the aestheticism of religious belief and how this relates to motivation, see Kateb 2000, especially pp. 7-10.

pluralists' sense of justice is secondary to their (nonpolitical) rational desires—the former acting more like a "'rule of regulation'" than a "'first principle.'"[38]

If this is right, a number of questions arise. For one, even if value pluralists were motivated by the sense that upholding the principles of justice somehow advanced the pursuit of their (nonpolitical) rational desires, would it be correct to characterize this motivation as *moral* (instead of, say, instrumental)? That is, could value pluralists (so-motivated) be said to truly "act from (*and not merely in accordance with*) the principles of justice"?[39] More pressingly, what about situations in which value pluralists' reasonable and rational desires conflict? In thinking through such cases, what is to say that value pluralists won't judge the latter to outweigh the former? Does Rawls demonstrate that this is impossible, or at least normally unlikely? Of course, this is crucial, as the stability of an overlapping consensus depends on value pluralists possessing and sustaining moral motivation in the face of such conflict.

Section IV: The Motivational Deficit

It is now left to consider several motivational problems relevant to value pluralists of both dispositions. Throughout this section and the next, I will also discuss what may be the only viable corrective to these motivational issues: namely, state coercive power. For reasons that will become clear, coercion may be necessary not only to facilitate moral action by promoting trust

[38] This is inspired by an argument of GA Cohen's (p.265), as discussed by Hedrick (p.29).

[39] Emphasis added; *PL*, 392.

and confidence in the system (as Rawls suggests),[40] but also as a direct motivational device (at the individual level) for ensuring compliance with the principles of justice and the institutions that uphold them.

Inconsistent Moral Development

The first motivational issue involves the first two stages of Rawlsian moral development. Since value pluralists lack external (non-/extra-political) bases of moral motivation, a plausible account of moral development is especially crucial. In describing these stages, Rawls assumes that citizens' upbringing and associational ties are generally consistent and serve to progressively orient citizens to the same overarching moral-political ideals and values. This assumption may have an initial plausibility, if only in the abstract sense that certain moral principles and values may be widely shared and reinforced; nonetheless, this assumption seems to be at odds with the "background culture"[41] of contemporary American society, with its prominent and widely shared emphases on individuality, independence, novelty, and change.

Charles Taylor identifies this aspect of American culture in his discussion of "the American tradition of leaving home," which he describes as follows: "the young person has to go out, to leave the parental background, to make his or her own way in the world. In contemporary conditions, this can transpose even into abandoning the political and religious convictions of the parents" (Taylor, 40). Taylor suggests that in a pluralist society such as ours, it is reasonable to imagine that children may be influenced by a wide range of values, many of which are

[40] Rawls understands coercive mechanisms as a background instrument meant to resolve the "assurance problem" (TJ, 267*ff* /236*ff*, 577/505). See also Weithman on this point (*WPL*, 69-70, 230, 308). This understanding is challenged in the final part of this section.

[41] *PL*, 14; see also, *PL*, 13, 38, 139.

inconsistent or in sharp conflict with those of their upbringing, ultimately leading them to eschew the latter. Daniel Bell also discusses this feature of contemporary American culture, arguing that the exaltation of "the new" as "superior in value to all older forms," leads us into pursuing a "ceaseless search" for new (moral, political, etc.) sensibilities (Bell, 12). The key point here is that, for many, the American ethos seems to involve shirking the values they were raised with as an expression of functional independence and the appreciation of novelty.[42]

But if a child's upbringing is not a reliable way to engender support for principles of justice, what is? There appears to be at least ways to respond to this question. The first would be to make the seemingly indefensible claim that this kind of social paradigm (i.e., the American emphasis on breaking with tradition) would simply not exist in the just society. The second would be to suggest that, in lieu of moral values being cultivated continuously and consistently from childhood onwards, the principles of justice would need to be enforced by the state through sanctions, punitive mechanisms, or some other coercive means. Of course, both responses are unattractive for Rawls (though the latter benefits from its plausibility). Before discussing the idea of coercion as a solution, however, let's consider a few other issues.

Slippage

The second motivational issue involves the idea of "slippage" (*JFR*, 33, 193; *CP*, 441*ff*; *PL*, 160). Rawls uses the term to denote the process whereby the political conception comes to "cohere loosely" with a citizen's partially comprehensive doctrine, slowly "bend[ing the view] toward itself."[43] It is this individual-level phenomenon occurring *en masse* that ultimately produces the

[42] Of course, I am not arguing that this cultural tendency is an established empirical fact; rather, I am merely suggesting that the possibility should be addressed.

[43] *WPL*, 311, 306; *PL*, 246, 168, 160.

societal transition from "simple pluralism" to "reasonable pluralism" (*PL*, 164). Society-wide change is, however, very "*gradual*" (emphasis added, *PL*, 160&*n*); indeed, according to Rawls, it may take "generations" (*JFR*, 198, 33). Nonetheless, the change comes to comprise part of society's "political capital," as Rawls puts it (*JFR*, 198; *PL*, 157, 157*n*, 160). That is to say, the PPC view is, in a sense, the raw commodity into which the political conception is first invested (via slippage) and is thus the vehicle for society's "political capital" to mature.

This is key to Rawls's societal-developmental story. As the "political capital" matures, society will ultimately metamorphose from a "mere *modus vivendi*" into an "overlapping consensus of reasonable comprehensive doctrines" (*PL*, 157*ff*).[44] This development notwithstanding, Rawls gives no reason to believe that it presupposes or causes fundamental changes in the fabric of the PPC view. We thus have no reason to doubt that, even in the just society, value pluralists will, for instance, still rely on "balancing" to reach moral conclusions (e.g. in affirming the political conception); or, of more immediate relevance, that the PPC view will still possess a propensity for slippage.

[44] Rawls's description of how this happens is long and complex. Very broadly speaking, it can be described as follows: because value pluralists' allegiance is tendered independently, they justify acceptance on the grounds of public reason alone and are thus lead to act with "evident intention." This, in turn, promotes "trust and confidence" in the system, allowing "cooperative virtues" to flourish and the conceptions of person and society to be generally realized. As Rawls explains, when citizens act from public reason, others are better able to recognize that their "political institutions and democratic procedures" function properly and have desirable effects. And it is on this "recognition…that so much depends" (*PL*, 163-4)—i.e., the very possibility of an overlapping consensus. See also *PL*, 86, 168, 208, 158-160; *JFR*, 197-8; *CP*, 471-2.

It is on this last point that I believe Rawls runs into difficulties. Assuming that the PPC view is indeed fundamentally unaltered in the context of an overlapping consensus, and keeping in mind that value pluralists constitute *most* of the citizenry in the just society, it becomes imperative that Rawls is able to effectively demonstrate that slippage will not ultimately work against the political conception; that is, that value pluralists will not, via slippage, be susceptible to the influence of other (*anti*-political) conceptions, ideals, or accounts of values, to the detriment of their moral-political motivation and, by extension, at the cost of the stability of an overlapping consensus.

Of course, slippage of this sort is not inconceivable. Consider, for instance, the manifold historical instances in which aesthetic or cultural values and ideals have come to predominate, influence, or severely undermine ethical and political values. Indeed, examples of this kind of slippage are manifest in the works of thinkers as diverse as Edmund Burke, Martin Heidegger, and Ezra Pound—all of whom adopted extreme political stances, arguably by dint of their aesthetic predilections.[45]

To show that this would not be a possibility, it must be argued that such (anti-political) conceptions would either: (a) not exist in the just society, or (b) be consistently outweighed in value pluralists' balancing considerations by the "very great values" of the political conception. Any defense of (a) would require either making implausible empirical claims that such conceptions would never arise in the just society, even given free speech; or else resorting to a

[45] There are numerous discussions of the relationships between these thinkers' political and aesthetic views. On Edmund Burke, see White 1994. On Heidegger, see Kateb 1992, 146-171 and White 1991, 28, 32-7, 39-42, 46-53. On Eliot and Pound, see Taylor, 456-495. For a broader, but eloquent overview of the interplay between aesthetics and morality, see Kateb, 2000.

mode of socialization wildly out of sync with Rawls' own.[46] While more defensible, (b) is problematic for two reasons: first, it is unclear how well, or even if, Rawls's account of moral socialization applies to value pluralists (as argued in section II); and second, without a compelling account of socialization—and in the absence of nonpolitical, *in se* reasons (derived from within their comprehensive doctrines)—it is unclear how the political conception could otherwise be motivationally effective, especially when it is in conflict with more salient desires.

The only other option would be to assert that slippage does not work as I have described it. But this would entail arguing either that (1) slippage only works one way (i.e., *from* the political conception); or (2) slippage (presumably of any sort) only occurs in a society that has not yet achieved an overlapping consensus. Both options are unattractive. The first would require claiming that Rawls understands the PPC view's "looseness" and propensity for change to be something more like amenability to the political conception—a claim that lacks any clear textual grounds. The second would require arguing that an overlapping consensus is somehow immune from any future depreciation, or at least that which stems from outside influence. Beyond the implausibility of such a claim, here again one would have to contend with Rawls's own statements to the contrary. Consider, e.g., his claim that "like capital, [political] virtues depreciate, as it were, and must be constantly renewed by being reaffirmed and acted from in the present" (*PL*, 157*n*).

Lack of Wholehearted Support

A third motivational issue involves the kind of "wholehearted support" of the political conception that Rawls deems critical to the stability of an overlapping consensus (*PL*, xl, xxxviii,

[46] That is, one much more like Plato's, wherein education is strictly confined to bowdlerized ideals that accord with the political conception.

54; *WPL*, 304, 312). By wholehearted support, I understand Rawls to mean the kind of support that comes from citizens affirming the political conception from within their comprehensive doctrines (i.e., on the grounds of a perceived relationship between their nonpolitical values and those of the political), since these doctrines are constitutive of citizens' most fundamental and deeply held "convictions—religious, philosophical, and moral" (*PL*, 392). As has been shown, however, PPC views categorically lack continuity between nonpolitical and political values. Unsupplemented by a deeper moral doctrine, the only possible source of conviction (to the tune of wholehearted support) must therefore come from *the given domain itself*. But as the (post–political-turn) political conception of justice derives conviction from external grounds, it is difficult to see what provision might be made for value pluralists.

This problem might be resolved if the political conception of justice was not so *freestanding*—that is, if it had some kind of deeper metaphysical dimensionality or attachment to a normatively definitive and comprehensive notion of the good (as was the case in *TJ*). This would allow citizens to accept the political conception as not only "reasonable," but "*true*" (*PL*, 386, 126–128), thereby affording it a greater measure of aesthetic-affective depth and poignancy and, undoubtedly, a greater ability to motivate. This is Rousseau's thesis, as he discusses in his *Discourse on Political Economy*:

> It is not enough to say to the citizens: be good. They must be taught to be so; and example itself, which is in this respect the first lesson, is not the only means to be used. Love of country is the most effective, for as I have already said, every man is virtuous when his private will is in conformity with the general will in all things, and we willingly want what is wanted by the people we love. (Rousseau, 133)

It is precisely this conjoining of politics and comprehensive notions of the good within a political conception that Rawls sheds in his political turn, however,[47] in his attempt to enable political liberalism to respond to "the fact of reasonable pluralism" (*PL*, xli, 144). A slight caveat is that FCDs are meant to serve as functional equivalents, but of course the citizens that concern us (value pluralists) lack these doctrines. In lieu of such a foundation, the principles of justice appear the more vulnerable to being "outweighed" by stronger conceptions of the good and other (more affective) desires. And, where moral motivation is made precarious, so too is stability for the right reasons.

"The Weak Force of Good Reasons"

The thin basis of the PPC view's moral motivation—i.e., public reason alone—presents another issue. Jürgen Habermas captures this problem where he writes of "the weak force of good reasons" (Habermas, 74–5). Habermas argues that motivation based on a cognitive recognition of "the good reasons" one has for doing what *ought* to be done (and vice versa) is relatively weak, especially in terms of fostering "morally guided, collective action" (Habermas, 75). It can be argued further that good reason suffers particularly when confronted with other affective, aesthetic, and/or appetitive desires—including self-interest, jingoism, sexual desire, and so on.[48] Of course, this is a problem as old as philosophy itself. And though thinkers like Plato and Hume have come to vastly different conclusions on the relationship between desire and reason, almost all acknowledge the significant threat the former poses to the latter. What is remarkable about

[47] Moreover, Rawls expressively rejects "civic humanism"—which is close to the idea Rousseau is presenting in this passage—, just as he eschews the idea of congruence, which required justice as fairness to function as a partially comprehensive doctrine itself (*PL*, 206, xv-xvii, xli-xlii).

[48] This list borrows significantly from one in Klosko 1997 (p.645).

Rawls's account is his assumption that moral reason will prevail in such a conflict, at least given the "favorable conditions that make a constitutional democracy possible" (*PL*, 155). In such morally propitious conditions, social conditioning would enable citizens to achieve the morality of principles, and thus the ability to act from the conclusions of their reason (or reasonable sense of justice) alone—i.e., not just by mere force of habit or social pressure.

Granting Rawls's apparent assumption that this kind of moral reasoning provides adequate motivation, we might still note that his account of social conditioning presupposes congruence between citizens' comprehensive ideas of right and good (again, formerly provided for by justice as fairness alone). This becomes problematic since, following Rawls's political turn, only one doctrine—namely, fully comprehensive Kantian liberalism—is described as being "congruent with" the political conception (*PL*, 169, 171). The PPC view, by contrast, lacks the comprehensive foundation with which to achieve congruence—it is instead merely "not in conflict with" the political conception (*PL*, 169). It is therefore unclear that value pluralists would be able to realize the morality of principles.[49] Thus, in the absence of other intervening factors (e.g., punitive measures), any generalized assumption that principled reason alone will be motivationally efficacious is problematic.

Prudential Motives, Moral Motives

The last issue concerns value pluralism's mode of (moral) evaluative deliberation—i.e., "balancing." As argued above, Rawls's description of balancing suggests that value pluralists reach moral decisions and base moral motivation on *prudential*, as opposed to strictly *moral*, grounds. This presents an obvious problem. Specifically, on occasions in which the political

[49] This is especially the case for those with passive motivational dispositions, as argued in section III.

conception conflicts with a value pluralist's pursuit of the good, that citizen may be inclined to violate its principles or shirk its values. In other words, when the motivational force of good reasons alone falters and rational positive incentives for sustained compliance are lacking (if even temporarily), value pluralists may be tempted not to comply with the principles of justice and the institutions that uphold them, assuming such behavior is judged to be more conducive to advancing their interests or otherwise maintaining their nonpolitical commitments.

One obvious solution to this problem is to introduce coercive sanctions as a kind of rational deterrent to violating the principles of justice. This solution has some resemblance to the one Rawls formulates in his discussion of the "assurance problem." Very broadly, the assurance problem is a game-theoretic issue that involves the threat to stability that occurs when citizens lack "sufficient reason to think others will do their share" in upholding the principles of justice; the idea is that one's sense of justice requires a belief in reciprocity to be action guiding (*WPL*, 46*ff*). To illustrate this problem, Rawls discusses the example of a citizen who is tempted to "free-ride" by not paying his taxes because he is unsure that others will act in kind (*TJ*, 267*ff* / 236*ff*). As Weithman explains, without a firm belief that others will reciprocate, the temptation not to pay taxes becomes "so attractive" that the citizen is, or may be, willing to "ignore the promptings of [his] sense of justice" (*WPL*, 47). Rawls's solution for averting this problem is to introduce a limited "system of sanctions" meant to foster confidence and trust in the system (and among citizens) by publically assuring each citizen that everyone else can be reasonably expected to act justly and contribute his or her fair share. In this way, the sanctions serve as citizens' "security to one another" and ensure the "stability of social cooperation" (*TJ*, 240/211, 267*ff* /237*ff*, 576/505; *WPL*, 47–9).

Notably, the emphasis in Rawls's account is on the indirect, systemic role of coercive power or sanctions. The point of such power is not to, say, compel action, "impose" stability through enforcement, or otherwise serve as some form of "retributive or denunciatory" punishment (*TJ*, 240-1/211–2, 267/237). Rather, "their main purpose is to underwrite citizens' trust in one another" (*TJ*, 576/505). That is, the sanctions exist not to motivate any particular citizen to pay his or her taxes (in a direct, first-person sense), but to assure each individual that *everyone else* has sufficient reason to pay their taxes. Underpinning this is the idea that the doubtful citizen always *wants* to pay his or her taxes, assuming others do the same. In this sense, Rawls's treatment of the assurance problem shows us only how persons with *in se* moral reasons to comply with the laws might come to have prudential reasons as well. But what is notably lacking here, as elsewhere, is an explanation of how persons with initially *only* prudential reasons to comply—e.g., value pluralists—might also come to have moral reasons, or be otherwise moved by the principles of justice "for their own sake."

In the absence of such an account, we might doubt Rawls's assertion that coercive mechanisms may "never be applied" (*TJ*, 267/237). Indeed, as Rawls himself identifies, such a claim hinges (again) on citizens achieving congruence between their notions of the right and the good:

> For our good depends upon the sorts of persons we are, the kinds of wants and aspirations we have and are capable of. It can even happen that there are many who do not find a sense of justice for their good; but if so, the forces making for stability are weaker. Under such conditions penal devices will play a much larger role in the social system. The greater the lack of congruence, the greater the likelihood, other things equal, of instability with its attendant evils. (*TJ*, 576/505)

As has been shown throughout this paper, value pluralists definitionally lack the capacity for congruence (*PL*, 169). They only conceivably approach something like it when their political conception-dependent desires are in harmony with their other desires (whether they are conception-, principle-, or object-dependent[50]), such that fulfilling the former does not prescind (and, ideally, even advances) the latter. As there may be many instances in which value pluralists will lack a sense of congruence between their pursuit of the good and the demands of justice, the presence of punitive mechanisms is likely to play a significant and direct role in motivating them to uphold the political conception. In other words, it would seem that coercion is, and must be, a significant component in the motivational sets of value pluralists. And while this is of course problematic for Rawlsian stability arguments in general, it acquires further significance when we recall Rawls's claim that *"most" citizens are value pluralists* (*PL*, 208, 160; *JFR*, 33, 193; *WPL*, 306). If this is right, coercion may indeed "play a much larger role in the social system" and even come to be a prevalent and oft-employed mechanism for ensuring allegiance to the political conception for a significant portion of citizenry (*TJ*, 576/505).

Thus, in order to maintain the possibility of achieving stability without coercion (i.e., stability for the right reasons), it must be shown how the entire population of the just society, especially including value pluralists, will: (a) adopt or affirm the values and principles of the political conception of justice *and* (b) be motivated to sustain their allegiance to them, even in

[50] Rawls describes these desires on *PL*, 81-86. I cannot provide a full account of them here, suffice to say that object-dependent desires are generally related to appetitive ends (food, sex, etc.), while principle-dependent desires are those one has to justify his or her actions in light of the reasonable or rational principles that he or she maintains.

times of conflict. But, as I have attempted to show, there are significant reasons to doubt that such an argument can be made from within Rawls's theoretical framework.

Section V: Conclusion

In *A Theory of Justice,* Rawls identifies the extent to which his arguments for stability hinge on successfully attending to the motivational problematic:

> The stability of a conception depends upon a balance of motives: the sense of justice that it cultivates and the aims that it encourages must normally win out against propensities toward injustice. To estimate the stability of a conception of justice (and the well-ordered society that it defines), one must examine the relative strength of these opposing tendencies. (*TJ*, 454-5/398)

Paul Weithman's *WPL* also emphasizes the importance of moral motivation in achieving stability; as he notes, Rawls's stability arguments "succeed only if those institutions [in a just society] bring about members' enduring convergence…on certain ends, such as the end of living up to ideal-dependent desires and the end of living as free and equal rational beings. The arguments will succeed *only if those institutions foster effective motives to pursue those ends*" (emphasis added; *WPL*, 230). As I have attempted to demonstrate throughout this paper, there is considerable reason to doubt whether value pluralists would be able to normally reconcile their "opposing tendencies" on the side of justice and achieve something of an "enduring convergence" among their various ends without the direct motivational force of coercion.

Underlying this problem are the incompatibilities between Rawls's moral psychology and the PPC view, which leave him without a compelling account of how value pluralists might derive the moral motivation needed to adopt and sustain affirmation to the political conception of

justice. Conception-dependent desires attendant to justice as fairness alone do not suffice, for it remains to be shown that such desires can prevail in conflict with more salient ones opposing them. As George Klosko argues:

> Rawls does not provide evidence for his crucial claim that the motivating force of moral principles with particular content is greater than that of other factors. Even if we concede that the factor he notes plays a role in influencing behavior, he does not address the question of how this factor interacts with others that also influence conduct, such as self-interest, religion, and national identification. In order for stability in his sense to be a central consideration…it must play a significant role in stimulating cooperative behavior, but this Rawls has not shown.[51]

Since "most" citizens are value pluralists, clearly more depends on this group than any other. Thus, insofar as the PPC view is susceptible to the motivational issues described in this paper, the prospect of any society achieving and sustaining "stability for the right reasons" remains elusive.[52]

[51] Klosko 1997, 645. NB: Klosko is not here referring to value pluralists, but the point holds nonetheless.

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