



# SÍMBOLOS, IMAGENS, IMAGINAÇÃO E MEMÓRIA: ELEMENTOS PARA UMA EPISTEMOLOGIA JONASIANA

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**Abstract:** Joseph Raz became well-known for his concept of exclusionary reasons, which he applied in the analysis of various practical concepts, such as decisions, rules and obligations. However, the scholarly literature displays a high degree of skepticism regarding the existence of exclusionary reasons and even the coherence of the concept itself. Throughout his work, Raz consistently focused on two types of exclusionary reasons: directly motivational reasons and evidential ones. The concept has faced numerous criticisms, likely stemming from this particular focus. In this article, I emphasize another category of exclusionary reasons that Raz neglected: reasons that are excluded by their very nature. I argue that this category not only shows that the concept is not empty or inconsistent, but also plays a crucial role in elucidating a significant moral domain, specifically, the domain of affective relationships.


**Keywords:** Exclusionary reasons. Role obligations. Friendship.

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**Resumo:** Joseph Raz tornou-se bastante conhecido pelo conceito de razões excludentes, que ele aplicou na análise de uma série de conceitos práticos, como decisões, regras e obrigações. No entanto, a literatura especializada exibe um alto grau de ceticismo quanto à existência de razões excludentes, e até sobre a coerência do conceito. Ao longo de sua obra, Raz sempre focou em duas espécies de razões excludentes: as diretamente motivacionais e as evidenciais. Atribui-se a isso o fato de o conceito ter recebido tantas críticas. Neste artigo, dá-se destaque a uma outra categoria de razões excludentes, negligenciada por Raz: as razões que são excluídas por sua própria natureza. Argumenta-se aqui que essa categoria é capaz de mostrar, não apenas que o conceito não é vazio ou inconsistente, mas também que ele tem um papel importante a desempenhar na elucidação de um importante domínio da moralidade: o domínio das relações afetivas.

**Palavras-chave:** Razões excludentes. Obrigações de papéis. Amizade.

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## ARE THERE EXCLUSIONARY REASONS? AN INQUIRY ON A THIRD KIND OF EXCLUSIONARY REASONS<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** Joseph Raz became well-known for his concept of exclusionary reasons, which he applied in the analysis of various practical concepts, such as decisions, rules and obligations. However, the scholarly literature displays a high degree of skepticism regarding the existence of exclusionary reasons and even the coherence of the concept itself. Throughout his work, Raz consistently focused on two types of exclusionary reasons: directly motivational reasons and evidential ones. The concept has faced numerous criticisms, likely stemming from this particular focus. In this article, I emphasize another category of exclusionary reasons that Raz neglected: reasons that are excluded by their very nature. I argue that this category not only shows that the concept is not empty or inconsistent, but also plays a crucial role in elucidating a significant moral domain, specifically, the domain of affective relationships.

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### INTRODUCTION

The complexity of practical reasoning goes beyond weighing a multitude of favorable and unfavorable considerations regarding a given action (Scanlon, 1998; Dancy, 2018). Practical reasoning also has multiple layers. In other words, considerations from different levels impact our deliberation. Joseph Raz sought to capture this phenomenon through the concept of exclusionary reasons. Exclusionary reasons are not reasons that count against or in favor of a particular action. They are reasons for not acting on certain reasons (Raz, 1999b). In fact, Raz (1989) dispelled any possible ambiguity of the concept and made it clear to accept only the motivational interpretation of exclusionary reasons.<sup>3</sup> Thus, in summary, exclusionary reasons are negative second-order reasons for not having certain valid first-order reasons as our guiding ones.

However, not all exclusionary reasons are directly motivational. An example of a directly motivational exclusionary reason is Colin's promise to his wife. He has committed

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<sup>3</sup> For other possible interpretations of the concept of exclusionary reasons that were at issue when Raz took this stance, see also Moore (1989).

not to decide which school to enroll their child in based on any reason other than the quality of education the child will receive (Raz, 1999b). In addition to this specific type of exclusionary reason, Raz (1999b) also accepted another category of exclusionary reasons—evidential exclusionary ones. The latter is strategically adopted to optimize conformity with the excluded reasons or with the totality of ones applicable to us (Raz, 1989, 2021). In other words, when it comes to this latter type of exclusionary reason, the agent cannot be motivated by a certain reason, but the reason for them to avoid that motivation is an indirect strategy to enhance their conformity with that same reason or with the totality of reasons applicable to them.

The existence of exclusionary reasons of any kind is controversial, to say the least. In this work, I will focus on reasons that are excluded by their very nature. If they exist, it is inherent to their nature that they cannot motivate action; otherwise, there would be no conformity with them. Raz (2021) briefly mentions the possibility that some reasons are inherently unable to motivate action. I will provide a representative example from a wide range of cases. In my analysis of the example, I will argue that these cases form a third category of exclusionary reasons, potentially the most significant one.

## 1 THE PROBLEM OF EXCLUSIONARY REASONS

First and foremost, it is crucial to understand the concept of exclusionary reasons and why they are considered problematic. Just a few months before his passing, Raz published his final text on *SSRN (Social Science Research Network)*, specifically addressing the concept of exclusionary reasons. In this text, Raz (2021) builds upon the definition of the concept found in his work *Practical Reason and Norms* (1999b). He indicates that he will provide further clarifications and expansions to the original notion, as exclusionary reasons possess certain peculiarities that raise doubts regarding their possibility. According to the definition (Raz, 1999b), exclusionary reasons are reasons not to act for a certain reason. In other words, if  $p$  is a first-order reason for subject  $S$  to perform action  $\emptyset$ , and  $q$  is a reason for  $S$  not to  $\emptyset$  for  $p$ , then  $q$  is an exclusionary reason, a negative second-order reason.

According to Raz (2021), the basic objection against the existence of exclusionary reasons is that the idea of a reason not to act for a certain reason is considered incoherent. The argument is that if we have a reason  $p$  to  $\emptyset$ , then we ought to  $\emptyset$ . Therefore, if an exclusionary reason  $q$  defeats  $p$ , the objection suggests that we ought to  $\emptyset$  without any reason at all. After all, exclusionary reasons are not first-order reasons. Raz's (2021) reply asserts that exclusionary reasons appear incoherent in this way only to those who overlook a fundamental assumption in his analysis of the concept: first-order reasons for actions are all *pro tanto* reasons, meaning that there are always multiple reasons expressing conflicting aspects of the same action, that is, its pros and cons. This implies that the normativity of an action is never entirely determined

by a singular reason. Therefore, even if  $q$  defeats  $p$ , we may still ought to  $\emptyset$  for other reasons. In short, it is always the totality of reasons applicable to the case that informs us of what we ought to do, and not merely one of the reasons involved.

However, the logical possibility of exclusionary reasons does not guarantee their existence. Therefore, Raz (2021) also addresses an objection independent of the basic objection. According to Raz's formulation of this new objection, in cases where a reason  $q$  supposedly excludes a reason  $p$ , what actually occurs is that there is a fact implying not  $p$ . In a similar argument, D. S. Clarke Jr. (1977) defended the thesis that there is no difference between a reason excluding another and a reason defeating another by outweighing it. In other words, for Clarke, all cases, where a second-order reason supposedly defeats a first-order reason by excluding it, could be equally well explained as cases where a first-order reason defeats another first-order reason simply by being more important than it in the context. Similarly, according to Chaim Gans (1986), what is at stake in the phenomena of practical reason that Raz aimed to explain, through exclusionary reasons, is merely that every first-order reason, which is stronger than another, is also a reason not to act on the latter. Thus, there is no reason being excluded by a higher-level reason; instead, a reason is being defeated by another of the same level in a process of weighing or balancing first-order reasons.

Considering these objections to exclusionary reasons, as a layer of practical reasoning superior to the mere balancing of first-order reasons, Raz (2021) acknowledges the need to demonstrate that situations, where it is not the case that  $p$ , differ from situations where we should not act on  $p$ . Cases, where there are no reasons other than  $p$  to perform  $\emptyset$ , would not serve this purpose. In such cases, it would be possible that we should not perform  $\emptyset$  both because not  $p$  and because  $q$  excludes  $p$ . Therefore, Raz believes it is necessary to find situations where, even if  $q$  applies and excludes  $p$ , we should still perform  $\emptyset$  for other reasons. Excluding the action from being performed based on  $p$ , in these situations, aims to increase our conformity with  $p$ . After all, if the role of  $q$  in practical reasoning is to maximize the satisfaction of  $p$ ,  $q$  is not a fact that shows not  $p$  or outweighs  $p$ . If we can present a case like this, it will be proven that  $q$  is an exclusionary reason.

The condition for the existence of exclusionary reasons, that  $q$  maximizes the satisfaction of  $p$  by excluding  $p$  as a motivating reason, demonstrates that attitude-related reasons cannot replace exclusionary ones, as proposed by Christian Piller (2006). Attitude-related reasons are the ones based, for example, on the value of making a particular choice. They are defined in contrast to content-related reasons, which are the ones based, for example, on the value of the chosen object. According to Piller (2006), examples of alleged exclusionary reasons could be explained based on attitude-related reasons conflicting with content-related ones. However, when attitude-related reasons defeat content-related reasons, they do not exclude these ones; they simply outweigh them in the balance of reasons. Piller argues that

the fact, which it is still better for the excluded reason to be satisfied, is not a distinguishing feature of explanations based on exclusionary reasons. It is also better when we can satisfy reasons that are outweighed in the balance of ones.

I provide an example to illustrate how it is better when outweighed reasons can also be satisfied. Pleasant taste is a first-order reason to eat a particular chocolate bar. The high number of calories, in this chocolate bar, can be a first-order reason not to eat it. If we are on a diet, we may conclude that the calorie count outweighs the taste of the chocolate bar. But it would still be desirable if we could satisfy both reasons by enjoying the taste of the candy without consuming as many calories. This implies that we can demonstrate the existence of exclusionary reasons, as opposed to attitude-related ones, only if there are cases where we not only wish the defeated reason to be satisfied, but, more importantly, cases where we refrain from acting on the defeated reason precisely because it is the best strategy for us to conform to it. After all, it seems that this is never the case with reasons defeated in ways other than exclusion in the sense given to the term by Raz, such as canceled reasons<sup>4</sup> or outweighed reasons. But do such cases exist?

## 2 EXCLUSIONARY REASONS DIRECTLY MOTIVATIONAL

Given that Raz's 2021 text on exclusionary reasons is self-published in an online repository, we can assume that Raz was still working on it. It is common for these self-published texts in repositories to be revised with some frequency and in a substantive manner. Indeed, the latest online version in the SSRN repository introduces a whole new third section, which was not part of the initial version published there. Nonetheless, it is curious that the version of the text, which became definitive due to Raz's passing, makes no mention of what previously seemed to be the most obvious type of exclusionary reason: the directly motivational type.

In the postscript of *Practical Reason and Norms*, Raz (1999b) stated that if he overcame the conceptual objection to exclusionary reasons by showing their logical possibility, proving their existence would be merely a matter of fact, dependent on whether someone had made a promise like Colin's. However, in the 2021 text, not only are directly motivational exclusionary reasons, like Colin's promise, omitted, but Raz's strategy—explained in the previous section—is also inapplicable to a directly motivational exclusionary reason, like Colin's promise<sup>5</sup>. Let's explore why.

<sup>4</sup> Canceled reasons, as the term suggests, are reasons that simply cease to exist due to a new fact. For example, you promise to help your neighbor with the harvest the next morning. However, overnight, a storm destroys your neighbor's crops. In this case, your promise becomes a canceled reason.

<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, it is worth noting that in the only passage of the 2021 text, where a reference to a promise appears, that promise is treated as an apparent excluded reason, rather than an exclusionary one (Raz, 2021).

Colin's promise is atypical because, as Raz (1999b) notes, Colin did not commit to any specific action—such as enrolling his child in School A or School B. Instead, Colin's promise directly involves excluding certain reasons, as guiding ones. He pledged not to be motivated by considerations other than the quality of education when making the enrollment decision for his child. Consequently, this example cannot be generalized to assert that promissory obligations, in general, function as exclusionary reasons. Its purpose is solely to illustrate the existence of exclusionary reasons, offering an undeniable case of such reasons.

In this example, Colin faces the decision of enrolling his child in either a public or private school. The public school is cost-effective, allowing Colin to pursue his dream of writing a book by quitting his job. On the other hand, the private school offers a higher quality of education. Due to Colin's promise not to be motivated by personal interests, he cannot justify choosing the public school. His commitment mandates selecting the private school as the only justifiable option. Notably, Colin's promise compels him to choose the private school, even if evidence suggests that this decision may significantly harm his excluded reason—his interest in writing a book. In essence, the choice of the private school is unrelated to a strategy aimed at maximizing the satisfaction of the excluded reason.

Even if the public school offers an acceptable quality of education, Colin's practical reasoning leads to the same outcome. The private school only needs to be marginally better in terms of education—the sole consideration—prompting Colin to sacrifice his dream of writing a book, regardless of its significance to him. Consequently, Colin's promise functions as an exclusionary reason, nullifying the practical effects of a first-order reason, even when that first-order reason is the strongest in a given context. Importantly, there is nothing suggesting that the excluded reason can be satisfied at any point in the future.

How can a voluntary act, such as making a promise, exert such a profound influence on the normativity of our choices? Indeed, many voluntary acts influence our reasons for action or inaction. For instance, when we voluntarily say something hurtful, we incur an obligation to apologize to the person we have harmed.<sup>6</sup> However, Colin's promise stands out as a case where a voluntary act directly and intentionally manipulates his reasons. This raises the question: can someone, for instance, promise not to act based on moral reasons and thereby acquire a reason not to be motivated by moral considerations? Raz's (1999b) solution to this potential paradox<sup>7</sup>, which poses a threat to our capacity to make promises, is to assert that Colin can exclude a specific valid reason, even when, under normal circumstances, that first-order reason would determine the most rational choice. The crucial distinction lies in cases where the excluded reason is self-regarding. In such instances, Raz argues, we

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<sup>6</sup> The example is taken from Darwall (2011); see also Owens (2011) for the distinction between voluntary acts that incur obligations and those that undertake obligations.

<sup>7</sup> See, in particular, Smith (1997) and Gilbert (2011) on the problem of the paradox of promises.

have exclusionary permission<sup>8</sup> not to be motivated by the strongest reasons, even though we acknowledge that this choice may definitively harm our conformity with those reasons.

In the event that the reason to be excluded pertains to matters of justice (Raz, 1999b), the dynamics would alter significantly. Consider, for instance, the scenario where Colin attempts to kidnap someone to secure funds for his child's education, citing his promise to his spouse as a rationale for the kidnapping. Such a justification would be untenable in the realm of justice. To distill this, we can voluntarily adopt a reason not to act based on a specific ground only if we were, initially, granted permission to abstain from acting for that reason, should we choose to do so. Colin's promise, in essence, imposes constraints on his discretion, concerning the motivational underpinnings of certain reasons. Preceding the promise, he could be motivated by his own interests; post-promise, he cannot.

In light of the insights gained from the preceding section, dedicated to the issue of exclusionary reasons, one might question why we should not simply assert that Colin's promise constitutes a reason that outweighs his own interests, as argued by critics skeptical of the existence of exclusionary reasons. However, such a straightforward assertion falls short because the very content of Colin's promise dictates that his interests cannot serve as reasons for his decision, regardless of their strength. The fulfillment of his promise would be compromised if he were to act in pursuit of his interests, irrespective of their intensity. Consequently, the crux of the matter lies in determining the binding nature of a promise akin to Colin's. To address this concern, the concept of exclusionary permission emerges as an adequate solution. Therefore, if we acknowledge the validity of exclusionary permission, allowing decisions to be unaffected by certain reasons, even when those reasons are the most compelling in the balance of first-order reasons (implying a lack of obligation to prioritize one's own interests), we must concede that Raz had already identified, well before 2021, an example of a reason that prevails through exclusion, rather than through strength or cancellation. Could Raz's oversight of this example, in 2021, be attributed to mere forgetfulness or a lack of time to complete the text? I propose an alternative explanation.

Even if we acknowledge the validity of a promise akin to Colin's and accept that it represents an exclusionary reason, the inherent limitation of this example for Raz's broader objectives becomes apparent. Raz (1999b) sought to leverage the concept of exclusionary reasons to illuminate a spectrum of practical concepts, revealing the systematic interplay between exclusionary reasons and fundamental structures of practical reasoning. However, the illustration, involving Colin, falls short of substantiating this proposition. As mentioned earlier, it lacks the capacity to extrapolate convincingly that the promises, as a general category, should be construed as exclusionary reasons. Essentially, the significance of example is heavily contingent on the specific content of the promise made. Consequently, it fails to establish

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<sup>8</sup> See Raz (1975) on the concept of exclusionary permission.

a more generalizable principle, raising the possibility that it may stand as a solitary instance of an exclusionary reason—a mere curiosity. To summarize, while Colin's example may effectively counter critics by demonstrating the existence of, at least, one exclusionary reason, its limited scope impedes significant progress in advancing the understanding of exclusionary reasons in practical reasoning.

### 3 EVIDENTIAL EXCLUSIONARY REASONS

In *Practical Reason and Norms*, Raz (1999b) expands the scope of exclusionary reasons to encompass a more comprehensive category: evidential exclusionary reasons. Diverging from the scenario involving Colin, evidential exclusionary reasons, on the one hand, do not compel us to act on weaker reasons. On the other hand, in the realm of evidential exclusionary reasons, the capacity to exclude reasons extends even to those over which we possess no discretionary control. This capacity is justified by either increasing conformity to the excluded reasons themselves or enhancing conformity with the entirety of reasons applicable to us.

The foundational premise of this indirect approach to fulfilling reasons is grounded in the belief that we can meet the requirements of a reason, by undertaking all necessary actions, without being explicitly guided or motivated by that particular reason (Raz, 1999a, 1999b). In essence, achieving conformity with a reason does not always mandate that this alignment must be driven by an understanding of the reason as a reason. This assumption creates a logical framework, supporting the thesis that, in certain instances, optimizing our conformity with a reason may only occur when we are not actively guided by that reason.

According to Raz (1999b), instrumental considerations of this nature justify directives from authorities and mandatory rules as exclusionary reasons. These rules and directives aid in making more rational decisions by preventing us from acting based on the balance of all first-order reasons for or against a given action. Take, for instance, a straightforward rule mandating us to halt our vehicle when the traffic light is red. This rule effectively excludes a range of considerations, such as the urgency to reach our destination or the belief that we could cross the intersection without colliding with another vehicle. However, simultaneously, adhering to the rule better satisfies our reasons for driving safely and even for reaching our destinations as quickly as possible—at least on a holistic level—compared to directly acting on these reasons.

The utilization of an instrumental strategy for establishing rules is not exclusive to Raz's philosophy. A broad-ranging debate, particularly within the utilitarian tradition, delves into the advantages of adhering to rules in decision-making rather than determining what would be optimal on a case-by-case basis (Sidgwick, 1962; Alexander, 1985, 1991; Schauer, 1991;



Hooker, 2000; Card, 2007; Eggleston, 2007; Kahn, 2013; Singer, 2011). To discern what sets exclusionary reasons apart, we can revisit the example of the traffic light, a scenario that easily brings to the forefront the well-known problem of the red light in the desert (Raz, 2009).

Envision a scenario where a rule mandates stopping our vehicles when the traffic light is red. However, we find ourselves in a flat and deserted area with perfect visibility, reasonably ascertaining the other humans' and animals' absence or of other vehicles, around us, and yet the traffic light displays red. The question arises: should we stop our vehicle until it turns green? A utilitarian would typically argue against it.<sup>9</sup> In cases like this, it becomes apparent that we can deviate from the rule without compromising our alignment with the values it upholds. As long as this exceptional deviation does not diminish our inclination to adhere to the rule in standard situations, we can assert that it does not impede our broader conformity with reasons applicable to us. Another supporting factor, for the utilitarian stance, is that, when faced with the red traffic light in the desert, we incurred no costs whatsoever in verifying the inapplicability of rule to our situation. A simple observation is sufficient to confirm that proceeding through the red light would be safe. Consequently, it appears that an instrumentally justified rule lacks normative force in cases analogous to the red traffic light in the desert.

Nevertheless, despite the instrumental justification of evidential exclusionary reasons, they dictate that actions cannot be based on the excluded reasons even when, as articulated by Raz (2009, p. 25), one may seem "ridiculous to the gods" as a consequence<sup>10</sup>. This departure from utilitarianism stems from Raz's (1989) commitment to the motivational interpretation of exclusionary reasons as the sole viable interpretation. According to this interpretation, exclusionary reasons function as reasons not to act based on specific valid reasons. They are not reasons to refrain from deliberating on each occasion about what we should do (Raz, 1989), nor are they reasons to abstain from acting based on our judgment about a reason due to the uncertainty of that judgment. Stephen Perry (1989) proposed an alternative perspective, suggesting that evidential exclusionary reasons, distinct from directly motivational ones, be understood as subjective exclusionary reasons. In this framework, evidential exclusionary reasons serve as reasons for the agent to refrain from acting based on her judgment regarding what the objective balance of reasons necessitates in situations

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<sup>9</sup> See Smart (1956) as the *locus classicus* for this response. Rule utilitarians could answer the question affirmatively, as they would apply utilitarian calculation solely for the justification of the rule, justifying particular acts through rules and never directly through utilitarian calculation. See Rawls (1955), Lyons (1965), Gibbard (1965), Hooker (2000), and Arneson (2005) regarding this two-step process of justifying acts. It is true that all utilitarians agree on a two-step justification process to optimize the use of resources for decision-making and reduce the incidence of errors. However, only rule utilitarians would refrain from violating the rule in the face of evidence that it prescribes an action that does not maximize overall utility in a particular context. This is why Smart (1956) refers to them as "rule worshippers" in an objection that has become a classic.

<sup>10</sup> Or, as Smart would put it, "rule-worshippers", as mentioned in the previous footnote.

of uncertainty. However, Raz (1989) categorically dismissed Perry's dichotomy between objective and subjective exclusionary reasons.

The lingering question pertains to why we persist in adhering to certain rules and directives despite overwhelming evidence indicating that doing so impedes our alignment with the excluded reason or with reasons in general. This outcome appears to contradict the justification model inherent in the concept of an evidential exclusionary reason. This issue has drawn attention from various commentators since the early formulations of exclusionary reasons (Clarke, 1977; Gans, 1986; Perry, 1989; Moore, 1989; Regan, 1990; Hurd, 1999; Whiting, 2017).<sup>11</sup> Regrettably, Raz did not address this line of objection during his revisit of the concept in 2021. If the objection proves valid, it leads to two possible outcomes: either evidential exclusionary reasons are diminished to something trivial—mere rules of thumb that optimize decision-making by saving time and energy or reducing errors in uncertain situations, yet they do not constrain us when we know that the balance of reasons dictates otherwise—or they become incoherent by binding us even when there is evidence of their uselessness. Consequently, one might question whether the only valid exclusionary reasons are those found in the limited cases where we explicitly promise to exclude reasons within our permission to dismiss.

#### 4 REASONS EXCLUDED BY THEIR NATURE

In *Practical Reason and Norms*, Raz (1999b) asserts that rules and commitments are exclusionary reasons by their nature. It is crucial not to conflate this with his later statement in 2021, wherein he discusses the impossibility of being guided by certain excluded reasons due to their nature (Raz, 2021). In this section, I will argue that there exist exclusionary reasons arising from the inherent nature of certain excluded reasons that cannot be satisfied if they guide actions. These reasons differ from directly motivational exclusionary reasons in that the exclusion is justified by the fulfillment of the excluded reason. However, they also differ from evidential exclusionary reasons, as the exclusion is not instrumentally justified by the evidence that it could optimize conformity with the excluded reason. In the cases scrutinized in this section, exclusion is a conceptually necessary condition for satisfying the excluded reason.

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<sup>11</sup> Recently, Adams (2020) authored a paper defending exclusionary reasons. However, in contrast to Raz, Adams rejects the motivational interpretation of exclusionary reasons. According to Adams (2020), a reason is considered excluded when it lacks relevance to the specific type of choice being considered. For instance, in his illustration, the fact that an individual is a vegetarian renders the taste of a hamburger irrelevant as a basis for deciding whether to eat it or not. Essentially, one's commitments shape her choices and disqualify certain considerations. In my perspective, Adams introduces confusion to the debate by purporting to defend exclusionary reasons while advocating a concept distinct from Raz's understanding of exclusionary reasons. Furthermore, what Adams terms as exclusionary reasons aligns with Raz's (2011) concept of conditional reasons—reasons that do not apply to certain agents due to their long-term projects or even their transient desires.

Consider a well-known derogatory remark by Friedrich Schiller about Immanuel Kant's moral philosophy. According to Schiller *apud* Paton (1947, p. 48), Kant's moral philosophy compels us to disdain our friends if we aim to fulfill our duties of friendship. This is because, in Kant's view, we would not be fulfilling these duties if we provided services to our friends with pleasure: "Gladly I serve my friends, but alas I do it with pleasure. Hence I am plagued with doubt that I am not a virtuous person. [...] Sure, your only resource is to try to despise them entirely, And then with aversion to do what your duty enjoins you".

Indeed, Schiller's verses, when taken literally, misinterpret Kant. According to Kant (1996), morality does not prohibit acting with pleasure, but rather acting solely out of pleasure when fulfilling moral duties. However, overlooking this misreading, we can appreciate Schiller's critique if we acknowledge that a friend should not serve another (for instance, by visiting them in a hospital) out of a sense of duty to friendship. Even though the duty of friendship may necessitate such service for satisfaction, an action performed out of a sense of duty to friendship results in a lack of conformity with the duty itself. This is because it renders the agent emotionally detached and disconnected from the specific person being served. A genuine friend rushes to the hospital out of concern, not because friendship dictates it. Similarly, even if we align with Piller (2006) in asserting that a reason for wanting a friend to be well may stem from a desire to be someone who cares about their friends, we still cannot act on that reason if our genuine intention is to become that kind of person. A true friend cannot be reduced to an opportunity for self-improvement.

I believe this is the most charitable interpretation of what Raz might mean when he mentions that, sometimes, it is the nature of the reason that requires not acting upon it for it to be satisfied. In my example, reason  $p$  is the duty of friendship. An exclusionary reason  $q$ , derived from  $p$ , leads us to not directly act for  $p$  when performing action  $\theta$  (which, in the example, is visiting the friend in the hospital), so that reason  $p$  could be satisfied.

Perhaps another example of a reason that self-defeats if directly guiding our action, therefore needing to be excluded, can be found in a sensible and well-known consideration made by Henry Sidgwick in his work, *The Methods of Ethics*. According to Sidgwick (1962), there is no more glaring imprudence than egoism in the ordinary sense—a concentration on personal happiness to the extent of preventing sincere concern for the others' pains and pleasures, unless they serve as means to alleviate one's own pain or provide pleasure. Thus, it appears that to satisfy egoistic reasons, i.e., the pursuit of personal happiness, an individual needs to adopt an indirect strategy and be guided by non-egoistic reasons in practical life. In this context, reason  $p$  signifies the reason to seek personal happiness, and an exclusionary reason  $q$  derived from it would lead us to refrain from directly pursuing our own happiness. After all, if we always acted for  $p$ , we could not have authentic friendships, for instance, resulting in unhappiness. Once again, the exclusionary reason would enable the satisfaction

of  $p$ , and therefore it would not be a fact that implies not  $p$  or outweighs  $p$  in the balance of reasons.

However, Sidgwick's paradox of hedonism, as elucidated in the preceding paragraph, does not provide a compelling instance of a reason being excluded by its own nature. Sidgwick himself (1962) acknowledges that his argument is not universally valid, as there are egoists who appear to be happier than non-egoists. Consequently, we cannot assert that the pursuit of one's own happiness invariably mandates being guided by reasons other than happiness itself.

It is conceivable that additional examples may arise, but at present, the obligations<sup>12</sup>, tied to affective relationships within our role responsibilities, seem to offer the most poignant demonstration of reasons being excluded by their inherent nature, as elucidated in the earlier discussion on friendship. This is underscored by the dual nature of these role-based obligations. While critique may be justifiably directed at, for instance, a spouse's indifference, these roles also necessitate a spontaneous expression of emotion in their execution. As Sidgwick (1962, p. 437) aptly notes, "[...] the charm of Friendship is lost if the flow of emotion is not spontaneous and unforced." Scanlon (1998) aligns with this perspective, asserting that while it is beneficial for friendships to develop, the motivation for such occurrences must stem from reasons other than the reason to foster friendship. Scanlon (1998, p. 383, n. 15) terms this the "paradox of teleology," drawing inspiration directly from Sidgwick's paradox of hedonism. According to Raz's theory of practical reason, instances like these need not be classified as paradoxes, as it is posited that reasons do not invariably have to direct action to be fulfilled. In fact, certain reasons cannot guide action for their satisfaction.

Hence, if, as it appears, there exist role obligations within affective relationships, these obligations must be excluded—that is, they must cease to motivate action in order to be satisfied. This, *a fortiori*, meets the requirement laid out by Raz in addressing critics who dispute the existence of exclusionary reasons (as detailed in Section 1 of this work). The exclusionary reasons, discussed in this section, cannot be interpreted as facts demonstrating that the excluded reason does not exist or that it has been outweighed by another first-order reason, as their purpose is precisely to enable the satisfaction of the excluded reason.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

If the arguments, presented in this paper, are sound, the inevitable conclusion is that the most compelling instances of exclusionary reasons are those which Raz, in essence, overlooked, briefly acknowledging their existence in passing, specifically, exclusionary reasons derived from reasons that need to be excluded by their very nature. These examples surpass

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<sup>12</sup> I am using the terms "duties" and "obligations" interchangeably, as it has become a common practice nowadays.

others in virtue of their lack of inherent problems, unlike cases involving evidential exclusionary reasons, and their lack of artificiality, in contrast to directly motivational exclusionary reasons, typified by Colin's case. Personally, I contend that all promissory obligations can and should be explained as directly motivational exclusionary reasons. However, substantiating this contentious thesis demands a lengthy and intricate argument, a task I must defer to another occasion. Consequently, even if my stance on promissory obligations, as exclusionary reasons, holds, the clearest instances of exclusionary reasons will persist as those elucidated in this paper. Furthermore, the scrutinized example herein is sufficient to illustrate that, even if exclusionary reasons do not play as extensive a role in practical reasoning as Raz envisioned, the concept remains pivotal in shedding light on a significant realm of morality: the domain of affective relationships.

### EXISTEM RAZÕES EXCLUDENTES? UMA INVESTIGAÇÃO SOBRE UM TERCEIRO TIPO DE RAZÕES EXCLUDENTES

**Resumo:** Joseph Raz tornou-se bastante conhecido pelo conceito de razões excludentes, que ele aplicou na análise de uma série de conceitos práticos, como decisões, regras e obrigações. No entanto, a literatura especializada exhibe um alto grau de ceticismo quanto à existência de razões excludentes, e até sobre a coerência do conceito. Ao longo de sua obra, Raz sempre focou em duas espécies de razões excludentes: as diretamente motivacionais e as evidenciais. Atribui-se a isso o fato de o conceito ter recebido tantas críticas. Neste artigo, dá-se destaque a uma outra categoria de razões excludentes, negligenciada por Raz: as razões que são excluídas por sua própria natureza. Argumenta-se aqui que essa categoria é capaz de mostrar, não apenas que o conceito não é vazio ou inconsistente, mas também que ele tem um papel importante a desempenhar na elucidação de um importante domínio da moralidade: o domínio das relações afetivas.

**Palavras-chave:** Razões excludentes. Obrigações de papéis. Amizade.

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