
Synchronic Plan Rationality

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Résumé

In his Pufendorf lectures and in his 2018 book Bratman presents a strategy for establishing that principles of synchronic and diachronic plan rationality give us fundamental (pro-tanto) practical reasons. To say that these are fundamental (pro-tanto) reasons is to say that they are not merely general rules whose reason giving force derives from the advantages of being the kind of agent who – in general – follows these principles, and which therefore can be breached on particular occasions. Bratman’s main idea is that the fundamental reason giving force of principle of rationality derives from the ideal of Self-Governance. He argues that we have fundamental reasons to bring about the end of self-governance; that to be self-governed the attitudes that guide our actions must constitute our standpoint; and that such attitudes cannot constitute our standpoint unless they cohere with our other planning attitudes. To avoid such incoherence, we must conform with principles of synchronic and diachronic plan consistency, which are some of our basic principles of plan rationality. We, therefore, have a fundamental reason to conform with these principles of plan rationality. In 2019 Sergio Tenenbaum argued that Bratman’s strategy fails when it comes to principles of diachronic consistency. Tenenbaum does, however, grant that the strategy works with respect to principle of synchronic consistency.

In the current paper I will describe an objection to the strategy as applied to synchronic consistency. More specifically, I will argue, that considerations of self-governance cannot show that we have reasons to conform to the principles of synchronic plan rationality on every particular occasion. Having presented this objection, I will claim that we do, nonetheless, have general reasons to conform with such principles and that these are sufficient to buttress Bratman’s larger philosophical project of establishing the centrality of planning attitudes in agents’ deliberative economy.

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Tenenbaum, S. (2019). On self-governance over time. *Inquiry*, 64(9), 901–912. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0020174X.2019.1644444>

Mots-Clés: Bratman, SelfGovernance, Intention, Plan, Rationality

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