

“Are moral analogies deductive?”, prof. univ. dr. Dragoş Bîgu

“I will discuss how to reconstruct analogical arguments used in moral contexts. In *Classifying and Analyzing Analogies*, Waller gives a reconstruction in two steps. The first step is an argument by inference to the best explanation, by which from two premises – (1) In situation A, a certain action is morally obligatory (permitted, forbidden) and (2) The most plausible reason for this normative verdict is the acceptance of the general principle P – the conclusion that the principle P is true is drawn. The second step is a deductive argument in which from the general principle P the conclusion (C) – In situation B (similar to A), a certain a certain action is morally obligatory (permitted, forbidden) – is drawn. I will try to argue that, although not without merit, Waller’s reconstruction faces difficulties in some arguments. More precisely, I will argue that in all moral analogies, a general principle P – which explains moral verdicts in situations A and B – can be formulated, but in some arguments principle P can hardly be seen as a result of an inference to the best explanation, as required by Waller’s step (1). This is why I will argue for a “more standard” reconstruction of moral analogies, based on the principle that situations that are similar in all morally relevant respects should be treated the same from a normative perspective. I will try to argue that, under this reconstruction, moral analogies can be seen as deductive arguments.”