

## **Excusable Moral Uncertainty**

*Javier González de Prado*

*Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia*

*01/03/2019*

Agents are often uncertain about whether some action is morally right, even if they are aware of all relevant non-moral facts. A possible view is that such moral uncertainty never provides excuses because it always reveals a lack of (*de re*) concern for morally relevant considerations (Harman 2011; Weatherson 2014; Álvarez and Littlejohn 2016). In this paper I appeal to recent discussions in the literature on epistemic disagreement and higher-order evidence in order to argue against this view. My claim will be that, even if we grant that moral facts are knowable *a priori*, there are situations of moral uncertainty where a competent, fully informed agent may fail to do what is morally best in a way that does not reflect a lack of proper care for morally significant considerations. More specifically, I will discuss situations of misleading moral self-doubt, in which the agent has misleading (higher-order) evidence making her reasonably doubt whether she is being properly sensitive to a relevant moral concern (say, justice). In general, misleading higher-order evidence can make competent agents blamelessly doubt truths knowable *a priori*, for instance mathematical truths (Christensen 2010; Elga 2013; Horowitz 2014; Steel 2018; for critical discussion, Worsnip 2018; Lasonen-Aarnio forthcoming). The same happens, I will argue, for moral truths. However, I will also suggest that in these cases the agent will suffer a (blameless) impoverishment of her moral autonomy, in the sense that she will be put in a position where she cannot directly respond to moral reasons to which she was sensitive before acquiring the (misleading) higher-order evidence.