

agent judges best are not over courses that are to the agent's personal advantage. When we have a serious duty to do something that is contrary to our private interests we usually judge that it would be best to sacrifice our private interests to duty. We may not succeed in making the sacrifice, but here the rule-following part is a natural ally. Conflict occurs when duty seems to require us to cause some serious harm to others: to torture a prisoner, persecute a religious opponent, or reject the desperate plea of a friend. In these cases self-interest or fear for oneself is often the ally of duty; and it is much easier to go horribly wrong through following duty than by doing what we judge best. When heart and mind speak with a single voice, society should defer.

Tall Tale, c. 850 A.D.

Leonard Cochran OP

It was alleged, by some, that students
of John Scotus Erigena,
Angered by his tyrannical teaching,
Rose as a body in their unheated
Aula, quills clutched
in raw, chilblained fists,
Top the great surprise of their master,
Who, in the middle of his lecture
De divisione naturae, looked up
To see a score of pens
Stabbing at his tonsured head.