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“The Logic of the Liver”.
A Deontic View of the Intentionality of Desire

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To the loved ones

(You all know who you are)

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Table of content

Abstract ..... **i**

Introduction **1**

0.1. The Issue – The Intentionality of Desire 2

0.2. Standard Views of Desires – Evaluations and Motivations 4

0.3. The Claim – The Deontic View of Desire 7

0.4. *Desiderata* for a Promising Account of Desire 8

0.4.1. Desiderative Direction of Fit 8

0.4.2. Desiderative Consonance 11

0.4.3. Desiderative Dissonance 13

0.4.4. The Death of Desire Principle and the Phenomenology of Absence 15

0.4.5. Desiderative Strength 17

0.4.6. Desiderative Normativity 18

0.4.7. Desiderative Typology 21

0.5. The Argument 22

0.6. The Plan 26

Part I | Motivating the Deontic View: Desires, Values and Goals

1. Standard Views of Desires I – Desire and Values 30

1.1. Varieties of Axiological Views 32

1.1.1. The Perceptual Analogy 33

1.1.2. Extending the Perceptual Analogy 35

Thick Value vs. Thin Value 35

Actual Value vs. Counterfactual Value 35

Evaluative Content vs. Evaluative Mode 36

Experiential State vs. Doxastic State 38

Identity vs. Entailment 39

1.2. The Unity of the Axiological Views 40

1.2.1. Implications of Axiological Intentionality 40

1.2.2. Evaluation of the Arguments in favour of the Axiological View 41

1.2.2.1. The Experience Conjecture 41

1.2.2.2. Motivation 42

1.2.2.3. The Shadow of Moore's Paradox 45
1.3. The Axiological View and the chief *Desiderata* 50
1.3.1. Objection I – The Death of Desire Principle and the Phenomenology of Absence 50
1.3.2. Objection II – Desiderative Direction of Fit 54
1.3.3. Objection III – Desiderative Explanation 60
1.4. Axiological Moral 64

2. Standard Views of Desires II – Desire and Motivation 66
2.1. Varieties of Motivational Views 68
2.1.1. Dispositions to Act 68
2.1.2. Motivational Mode 71
2.2. The Unity of Motivational Views 72
2.2.1. Motivational Implications 72
2.2.2. The Arguments in favour of the Motivational View 74
2.2.2.1. The manifestation of desire 74
2.2.2.2. Action explanation 77
2.3. The Motivational View and the chief *Desiderata* 79
2.3.1. Objection I – Desiderative Direction of Fit 80
2.3.2. Objection II – The Death of Desire Principle 87
2.3.3. Objection III – Desiderative Explanation 93
2.4. Motivational Moral 97
2.5. Interlude on Compound Views 99

3. The Deontic Alternative – Desire and the Guise of the Ought-to-Be 103
3.1. Varieties of Deontic Views 104
Types of deontic entities 105
Mode vs. Content 106
Doxastic vs. Non-doxastic Deontic Views 106
3.2. Deontic Motivations 107
3.3. Deontic Alternatives 109
3.3.1. Scanlon and the Practical Rationality View of Desire 109
3.3.2. Schroeder and the Reward View 113
3.3.3. Velleman's "Deontic" Mode 116
3.4. The Deontic Mode View 120
3.4.1. Preliminaries 120
3.4.1.1. Ought-to-Do and Ought-to-Be 120
3.4.1.2. Mode and Content 122
The Nature of Modes 122

Modes and Semantics 124
Modes and Attitudes 126
3.4.2. Formulating the Deontic View 128
3.4.3. Reformulating the Deontic Mode View 131
3.4.4. Unfolding the Deontic Mode View 133
The Deontic Mode and the Semantic of Desire 133
Desires as Deontic Attitudes 134
3.4.5. The Deontic Mode View and Deontic Alternatives 135

Part II | Defending the Deontic View: Desiderative Direction of Fit, Desiderative Consonance and Dissonance, and the Death of Desire Principle

4. Argument I – Desiderative Direction of Fit 138
4.0. The Issue – Fit and Direction of Fit 138
4.1. Fit – Metaphysics 142
4.1.1. The Nature of Fit 142
4.1.1.1. Fit and Correspondence 142
The nature of Correspondence: A Sketch 142
Fit, Structural Identity, and Mapping 144
4.1.1.2. Fit and Satisfaction 144
4.1.2. The Normativity of Fit 146
4.2. Direction of Fit – The Proposal 148
4.2.1. *Desiderata* 148
4.2.2. The Proposal – Directions of Fit, Norms for Satisfaction and Modes 150
4.2.2.1. Norms for Satisfaction 150
4.2.2.2. Directions of Fit and Modes 155
4.2.2.3. Fitting the desiderata 158
4.3. Direction of Fit – Hermeneutics 162
4.3.1. Functional Roles 163
4.3.2. Smith's Counterfactuals 165
4.3.3. Humberstone's Background Intentions 169
4.4. Direction of Fit and Deontic Mode – Implications 172

5. Argument II – Desiderative Consonance and Desiderative Dissonance 174
5.1. Deontic Desiderative Consonance 176
5.1.1. Values, Ought-to-be and Motives – Explanatory Consonance 177
5.1.1.1. Values, Ought-to-be and Motives – Anti-reductionism 178

5.1.1.1.1. The Irreductibility of Ought-to-be to Values 178
5.1.1.1.2. Ought-to-Be and Ought-to-Do 180
5.1.1.2. Values, Ought-to-be and Motives – Directions of Explanation 183
5.1.2. Evaluations, Deontic Attitudes and Motivations – Informative Explanatory Consonance 185
5.2. Deontic Desiderative Dissonance 186
5.2.1. Desiderative Explanatory Dissonance – A Deontic Perspective 187
5.2.1.1. From Explanatory Consonance to Dissonance 187
5.2.1.2. Explanatory Dissonance for Desires 189
5.2.2. Desiderative Contradictory Dissonance – A Deontic Perspective 192
5.2.2.1. Intentional Modes and Contradictions 192
5.2.2.2. Deontic Mode and Contradictory Dissonance 195
5.2.3. Desiderative Moore's Paradoxes – A Deontic Perspective 200
5.2.3.1. From Modes to Moore's Paradox 202
5.2.3.2. Deontic Moore's Paradoxes for Desires 203

6. Argument III – The Death of Desire Principle 212
6.1. Formulating the DODP 215
6.2. Defending the DODP 219
6.2.1. Desires about the present 219
6.2.2. Self-reinforcing desires 221
6.2.3. Irrational desires 225
6.3. Extension of the DODP 232
6.3.1. The DODP and Cognitive Attitudes 233
DODP vs. Rationality Requirements 233
DODP and Representing Satisfaction 234
DODP vs. Open Contradiction 234
6.3.2. The DODP and Conative Attitudes 235
6.4. Explaining the DODP – A Deontic Explanation 236
6.4.1. The Deontic vs. Existential Operator 237
6.4.2. The Argument – From the Deontic View to the DODP 239
6.4.3. Objections – Facts and norms 243
6.4.3.1. Counterexample I – General facts 243
6.4.3.2. Counter-example II – Negative Facts 244
6.4.3.3. Structural Objection I – Meeting Norms 247
6.4.3.4. Structural Objection II – Modes of Presentation and Tense 248

Part III | Unfolding the Deontic View: Desiderative Normativity, Desiderative Typology and Objections

7. Desiderative Normativity – A Deontic Approach 253
7.1. Deontic Normativity – Structural Argument 254
7.2. Caprice 258
7.2.1. Capricious Puzzles 259
7.2.2. Capricious Desires and Correctness Conditions 260
7.2.3. Caprice and the Standard Normativity of Desire 261
7.2.3.1. Caprice and Values 261
7.2.3.2. Caprice and Motivation 264
7.2.4. Caprice and Ought-to-Be 267
7.3. Desiderative Aggregative Impermissibility 272
7.3.1. The Principle of the Impermissibility of Aggregation of Desires 273
7.3.1.1. The Cases 273
7.3.1.2. The PIAD and other principles 274
7.3.1.3. Further Puzzles & Desiderata 275
7.3.2. Standard Accounts of Desiderative Normativity and the PIAD 277
7.3.2.1. The PIAD from the Axiological Perspective 277
7.3.2.2. The PIAD from the Motivational Perspective 280
7.3.3. A Deontic Account of the PIAD 281

8. Desiderative Typology – A Deontic Approach 284
8.1. Formal Boundaries – Types of Types of Desire 285
8.1.1. Formal Boundaries I – Super-types of Desire 285
8.1.2. Types of Desire 286
8.1.2.1. Formal Boundaries II – Normative vs. Natural Types 287
8.1.2.2. Formal Boundary III – Types of Normative/Natural Desires 287
8.1.2.3. Formal Boundary IV – Polarity 288
8.2. Material Boundaries – The Deontic Typology 290
8.2.1. Material Boundaries I – Types of Deontic Operators and Types of Conations 291
Deontic Necessity and Ought-to-be 291
Deontic Necessity and Needs 292
Ought-to-do and Intentions 296
Motivations for the Deontic Typology 297
8.2.2. Material Boundaries III: Natural Types of Desire, Types of Possibility and Types of Priority 299
8.2.2.1. Types of Possibility – Wishes, Hopes, and Urges 299
Wishes and Epistemic Possibility 301
Hopes and Metaphysical Possibility 303
Urges and Physical Possibility 307

Advantages of the Deontic Typology ... 307
8.2.2.2. Priority – Urges and Impulses ... 311
Urgent Requirements ... 311
Urgent Requirements and Urges ... 312
Advantages of the Deontic Account of Urges ... 313
8.2.3. Material Boundaries III: Sources of Requirements and Normative Types of Desire ... 314
8.2.3.1. Requirements of Well-Being, Superfluity and Capricious Desires ... 314
8.2.3.2. Requirements of Well-Being, Wrongness and Addiction ... 317
8.2.3.3. Requirements of Practical Rationality and Temptations ... 321
8.2.4. Material Boundaries IV: The Polarity of Norms and Desiderative Polarity ... 323

9. Doubting the Deontic View – Six Objections ... 326
9.1. Deontic beliefs ... 327
9.2. Desiderative Strength ... 330
9.2.1. Norms and Priority Relations ... 330
9.2.2. Desires and Priority Relations ... 333
9.3. Propositional Content ... 333
9.4. Functional Role ... 336
9.5. Desiderative Explanation ... 339
9.6. Values and Norms ... 341

Conclusions ... 344
10.1. Summary ... 344
10.2. Why the Deontic View Matters ... 345
10.2.1. The Deontic View and Aspects of Desires ... 345
Phenomenology ... 345
Conditional Desires ... 348
Self-Knowledge of Desire ... 353
Sexual Perversion ... 356
10.2.2. The Deontic View and the Mind ... 358
Emotions and Desires ... 358
Desire and Motivation ... 360
Pushmi-Pullyu Representations ... 362
The Nature of Attitudes ... 364
10.2.3. The Deontic View and the Normative ... 367
The Puzzle of Practical Reasoning ... 367
Motivating Reasons ... 369
The Problem of Negation for Expressivism ... 370

Ross's Problem 374
Normative Relations and Ethical Theories 376
Appendix ..... a
Appendix 1: Values, Ought-to-be and Ought-to-do ..... a
Appendix 2: Evaluation, Desire, and Motivation ..... b
Appendix 3: The Dialectic of the Thesis ..... b
Bibliography ..... - 1 -

Abstract

If we look inside ourselves, we see memories, beliefs, sorrows, doubts, suspicions, imaginings, joys and regrets, among other phenomena. But this sight would not be exhaustive without the mention of desires. Our life is indeed imbued with desire. Some people desire to see the ocean; others want to understand the laws of the universe or to live in New York, whereas Sam only dreams of romance. Moreover, if we look carefully inside ourselves, we shall find a variety of desires, in addition to the ones mentioned. In a broader sense of desire, one might desperately wish death did not exist, Sam might strongly hope that Mary still loves him, while Cleo often longs for the good old days. Despite the differences and in a general sense of the term, these mental phenomena are desires. But what are desires? What is the essence of desiring? This the question addressed in this Ph.D. dissertation. More precisely, the issue of the nature of desire shall be approached by tackling the question of the intentionality of desire. By this expression, I mean to refer to the particular way the world is represented in desiring. Consequently, the question is: how do we represent a state of affairs when desiring it?

The history of philosophy and the recent philosophical literature provide us with two standard answers to this question. According to the first, the intentionality of desire is essentially *evaluative*. On this axiological view of desire, desiring a state of affairs is evaluating it in a positive light. According to the second answer, which is even more popular, desires are conceived as being essentially *motivational* states. On this option, desiring a state of affairs is being motivated to act towards making it true.

The purpose of this inquiry is to examine these accounts of desire and suggest an alternative picture of the intentionality of desire. On this conception, the deontic view of desire, the key to understanding desires is neither goodness nor motivation, but consists in norms of the ought-to-be type. We think that some states of affairs ought to obtain, as when we claim that there should be equal access to goods. But we think of other states of affairs in a different manner, namely as states of affairs that should not obtain, as when we think that heartaches should not exist. The thought is that desires are one way of representing states of affairs as what ought to be the case. More precisely, the claim is that the intentionality of desire consists in representing a state of affairs *as what ought to be*, where the deontic clause ("as

what ought to be the case") captures the mode, as opposed to the content, of desiring. As norms of the ought-to-be type are deontic in nature, it follows that desiring is a deontic attitude. This constitutes the intuition that shall be presented, explored, and defended in the present investigation. It is divided in three parts.

*

After having presented the issue and the main claim of this dissertation in more detail, the introduction is devoted to the formulation of the *desiderata* a plausible view of the intentionality of desire should fulfil. Among the *desiderata* presented, three will prove crucial. The first concerns the so-called "world-to-mind direction of fit" of desire or the intuition that the world is supposed to conform to our desires. The second concerns the explanatory profile of desire or the thought that desires are explicable by some of the subject's mental states (for instance affective dispositions) and, in turn, can explain other of her mental states (for instance, intentions). Finally, the third decisive *desideratum* is what I call the "Death of Desire Principle" or the intuition that desires cease to exist when one represents their being satisfied to oneself. These *desiderata*, among others, aim at capturing important aspects of the intentionality of desire and will set the agenda for our exploration.

**

After these preliminary observations, the first part of the thesis is dedicated to the examination of the standard views of desire, which will motivate the alternative that is to be defended.

In the first chapter, I present and discuss the axiological view of desire in the light of the three chief *desiderata* introduced earlier (§1). The upshot of this chapter is that the axiological view does not meet the relevant *desiderata*. Indeed, I claim that the view does not accommodate the death of desire principle or does so only in an *ad hoc* way. Moreover, it is argued that it is not compatible with the direction of fit or, in any event, does not explain it adequately. Finally, as it is common to explain desires by appealing to evaluative states, however one understands the evaluation, desires cannot consist in evaluative states, without the explanations turning out to be reflexive and thus uninformative.

With these difficulties in mind, I move to the motivational view of desire in the second chapter (§2). Indeed, *prima facie*, this conception seems to have the resources to meet the *desiderata* mentioned. However, as surprising as it may seem, I argue that the motivational

view does not fare any better with regard to the *desiderata*. First, although motivational states have the world-to-mind direction of fit and cease to exist when the subject believes that they are satisfied, they do not share the same satisfaction conditions as desires. This complicates the task of meeting the *desiderata* on direction of fit and the death of desire principle, since accounting for them partly relies on delivering the right the satisfaction conditions for desire. Moreover, as far as the explanation of the DODP is concerned, the intuitive proposal of the motivational view cannot capture the very impossibility stated by the DODP. Finally, although evaluative states can explain motivations, desires might also partly explain motivations. This rules out equating desire with motivation. If the first two chapters are on the right track, we have reasons to seek an alternative account of desire.

In the third chapter, I present such an alternative, namely the deontic view of desire (§3). Since several types of deontic views – or at least views that describe desires by appealing to a deontic feature – have been put forward in the recent literature, the chapter discusses the main variants, namely Thomas M. Scanlon's, J. David Velleman's as well as a deontic interpretation of Timothy A. Schroeder's view. After having introduced some difficulties for these proposals, I argue that appealing to the deontic mode of desire can acknowledge the essential relation desires bear to norms without suffering from the flaws of the other deontic views. Defending this claim requires us first to formulate the deontic mode view carefully, and to explicate what is meant by its two main components, namely norms of the ought-to-be type and modes of intentionality. Some implications of the view are then presented. This view will prove to be promising, as far as the three *desiderata* are concerned. For, *prima facie* at least, deontic attitudes have the direction of fit of desire, seem to be incompatible with representing that they are satisfied, and can be explained by evaluations, while in turn explaining motivations. Although these observations will be justified in more details in the second part of the dissertation, they suffice to demonstrate the initial appeal of the view.

***

In the second part, three arguments in favour of the deontic view are presented. Each relies on the symmetry between desire, on the one hand, and the norm of the ought-to-be type, on the other. In other words, it is claimed that desire and the ought-to-be norms fit hand in glove.

The fourth chapter approaches the metaphor of direction of fit from the perspective of the deontic view and provides a metaphysical outline of the fittingness relation (§4). After having claimed that fitting is a type of correspondence relation, namely the one that leads to

satisfaction, I argue that the distinct directions of fit refer to distinct norms for this type of correspondence, more precisely distinct norms of adjustment. In a nutshell, the thought is that the world should conform to desire, for the satisfaction of the representation to obtain, in contrast with belief. This literal interpretation of the metaphor is then captured by the deontic view of desire. Indeed, with some assumptions about modes and satisfaction in mind, it appears that the deontic view of desire is equivalent to the aforementioned norm of adjustment instantiated by desire. The reason is that norms are such that the world should conform to them for them to be satisfied. Finally, this proposal is motivated by pointing to the difficulties of the main interpretations of the metaphor that have been defended in the recent literature.

The next chapter is devoted to the more or less felicitous relations desires bear to other mental states. Indeed, some combinations are explanatory and consonant, while other combinations are odd and dissonant. With the help of the deontic view, the chapter approaches both kinds of combination, moving from consonant deontic combinations to dissonant ones in three steps (§5). First, desires, as deontic representations, can be explained by evaluations and can in turn explain motivations. The argument relies on the meta-ethical thesis that norms can be explained by values and can therefore explain what one ought to do. This requires us to establish the claim that ought-to-be norms constitute a *sui generis* type of norm that is neither reducible to values nor to the ought-to-do type of norms, which is what the first part of the chapter attempts to do. Second, I argue that the explanatory relations laid out, combined with the deontic view of desire, can help to explain three types of dissonance. The first concerns irrational combinations, like the combination of the desire for p and the all-out evaluative judgement that p is bad. The second type of dissonance mentioned concerns contradictory combinations or, on the deontic view, the combination of the desire for a state with the absence of representing it as what should be. Finally, a deontic case for Moore's Paradox for desire is proposed, namely sentences of the form: "(Let it be the case that) p! I do not desire that p."

The last argument of this part addresses the death of desire principle (§6). After having formulated the principle in more detail, I examine alleged counter-examples and argue that the principle is true. It will also appear that a similar principle holds for any type of conation as well as some types of belief. An explanation of the principle is then provided with the help of the deontic view. The claim is that the incompatibility between desire and belief depends on the incompatibility between the specific modes instantiated by each type of representation.

This is in turn explained by the incompatibility between a particular norm and its actual satisfaction at the same time. In other words, norms are necessarily about what is non-actual, which, with the help of other assumptions, explains why desires are incompatible with the representation that they are fulfilled. As the alleged incompatibility between norms and the facts constituting their satisfaction is a contentious issue, the chapter closes with an examination of some putative counter-examples to this claim and concludes that, even if they are genuine, they do not threaten the explanation provided.

****

But there is more. It appears that the deontic view can offer new perspectives on the way the conative landscape is to be understood. The third part mainly addresses the issues of two types of boundaries involving desire: the distinction between correct and incorrect desires, on the one hand, and that between the varieties of desire that seem to exist, such as wishes, hopes and urges, on the other hand. The part aims at sketching some directions *aficionados* of the deontic view will be happy to embrace in order to reveal the heuristic value of the deontic view with regard to those aspects of desire.

Chapter seven is devoted to the presentation of the deontic picture of the correctness conditions of desires (§7). On this option, a desire for p is correct if, and only if, p ought to be, or, what amounts to the same thing, p is right or required. This revisionary account is first motivated by addressing the problems faced by the standard picture of the correctness conditions of desire. More positively, and this constitutes the second step, two puzzles concerning the normativity of desire are approached with the help of the deontic correctness conditions of desire. First, as desires can indeed be capricious, the question is to know what turns desires into a caprice. Second, it appears that it is not necessarily right to desire (that p and q), despite the fact that one correctly desires that p and that one correctly desires that q. If this is correct, this calls for an explanation. In response to these puzzles, the deontic picture predicts that the states of affairs desired in caprice or that should not be desired in conjunction are states of affairs that are not right. They might well be good states of affairs, but nonetheless not required to obtain. Some might not even be wrong, as they are states of affairs that are neither right nor wrong, i.e. superfluous states of affairs. This is the crux around which caprice revolves and is again a deontic concept. In the same vein, norms similarly do not necessarily aggregate, which provides us with an elegant solution to the

puzzle of aggregative impermissibility. Again, the key is the symmetry holding between desires and norms.

The next chapter presents a typology of desires along deontic lines (§8). First, the types of types of desires that are relevant for a typology of desire are presented. They concern types of conations (as desiring, needing, intending), types of desire proper (as capricious desires, addictive desires, wishes and hopes), and the polarity of desire, among other distinctions. A deontic typology that purports to say more about these distinctions is then proposed. Again, the proposal is that features of norms provide us with all we need to distinguish between types of desire. Norms indeed admit a variety of forms depending on the general type of deontic entity (for instance, ought-to-be vs. ought-to-do), the types of possibility the norm is grounded in, the sources of the norm as well as their polarity. This, it is claimed, accounts for the types of desire that there are.

Finally, in order to demonstrate the heuristic value of the picture defended here, this part ends with the examination of six objections to the deontic view that might immediately come to the reader's mind (§9). They concern the distinction between desire and deontic beliefs, the strength of desire, the propositional content of desire, and the relationship between values and norms, among others.

*****

In conclusion, some tentative observations about the significance of the deontic view are presented. They concern three domains of philosophy for which the deontic view might have interesting implications. The first domain concerns features of desire that have been untouched in the present inquiry, such as the phenomenology of desire or self-knowledge of one's desires. The second concerns the philosophy of mind more generally and addresses topics such as the relationship between emotions and desire, and the nature of attitudes. Finally, the last observations touch on normative philosophy and sketches how the deontic view can illuminate issues such as the structure of practical reasoning or help expressivists rebut the problem of negation that their view faces. Although a lot more could be said, these considerations aim to show the heuristic value of the deontic view with regard to important philosophical debates and, I hope, convincing the reader that the exploration of the deontic view was not a waste of time. Rather, it constitutes one way of describing how desires matter. For, without them, the world would be a dull place from which nothing is requested and

where no one cares whether some states of affairs come to obtain and colour our lives with meaning, delight and sorrow, be it for better or for worse.

Introduction

"The part of the soul which desires meats and drinks and the other things of which it has need by reason of the bodily nature, they placed between the midriff and the boundary of the navel, contriving in all this region a sort of manger for the food of the body; and there they bound it down like a wild animal which was chained up with man, and must be nourished if man was to exist. They appointed this lower creation his place here in order that he might be always feeding at the manger, and have his dwelling as far as might be from the council-chamber, making as little noise and disturbance as possible, and permitting the best part to advise quietly for the good of the whole.

And knowing that this lower principle in man would not comprehend reason, and even if attaining to some degree of perception would never naturally care for rational notions, but that it would be led away by phantoms and visions night and day- to be a remedy for this, God combined with it the liver, and placed it in the house of the lower nature, contriving that it should be solid and smooth, and bright and sweet, and should also have a bitter quality, in order that the power of thought, which proceeds from the mind, might be reflected as in a mirror which receives likenesses of objects and gives back images of them to the sight; and so might strike terror into the desires, when, making use of the bitter part of the liver, (…) it comes threatening and invading, and diffusing this bitter element swiftly through the whole liver produces colours like bile, and contracting every part makes it wrinkled and rough; and (…) causes pain and loathing.

And the converse happens when some gentle inspiration of the understanding pictures images of an opposite character, and allays the bile and bitterness by refusing to stir or touch the nature opposed to itself, but by making use of the natural sweetness of the liver, corrects all things and makes them to be right and smooth and free, and renders the portion of the soul which resides about the liver happy and joyful, enabling it to pass the night in peace, and to practise divination in sleep (…).

For the authors of our being, remembering the command of their father when he bade them create the human race as good as they could, that they might correct our inferior parts and make them to attain a measure of truth, placed in the liver the seat of divination."

Plato, *Timaeus*, 70c-72b (transl. B. Jowett)

"*Le rêve pour les uns serait d'avoir des ailes,*
De monter dans l'espace en poussant de grands cris,
De prendre entre leurs doigts les souples hirondelles,
Et de se perdre, au soir, dans les cieux assombris.

D'autres voudraient pouvoir écraser des poitrines
En refermant dessus leurs deux bras écartés ;
Et, sans ployer des reins, les prenant aux narines,
Arrêter d'un seul coup les chevaux emportés.

Moi, ce que j'aimerais, c'est la beauté charnelle :
Je voudrais être beau comme les anciens dieux,
Et qu'il restât aux cœurs une flamme éternelle
Au lointain souvenir de mon corps radieux.

Je voudrais que pour moi nulle ne restât sage,
Choisir l'une aujourd'hui, prendre l'autre demain ;
Car j'aimerais cueillir l'amour sur mon passage,
Comme on cueille des fruits en étendant la main.

Ils ont, en y mordant, des saveurs différentes ;
Ces arômes divers nous les rendent plus doux.

J'aimerais promener mes caresses errantes
Des fronts en cheveux noirs aux fronts en cheveux roux.

J'adorerais surtout les rencontres des rues,
Ces ardeurs de la chair que déchaîne un regard,
Les conquêtes d'une heure aussitôt disparues,
Les baisers échangés au seul gré du hasard.

Je voudrais au matin voir s'éveiller la brune
Qui vous tient étranglé dans l'étau de ses bras ;
Et, le soir, écouter le mot que dit tout bas
La blonde dont le front s'argente au clair de lune.

Puis, sans un trouble au cœur, sans un regret mordant,
Partir d'un pied léger vers une autre chimère.
– Il faut dans ces fruits-là ne mettre que la dent :
On trouverait au fond une saveur amère."
Guy de Maupassant, *Désirs*

0.1. The Issue – The Intentionality of Desire

If we look inside ourselves, we see myriads of things. Among them figure thoughts, memories, dreams, fears, regrets, loves, but also desires. Some people desire to see the ocean, others aspire to become a great pianist, while some dream of romance, and so on and so forth. Whatever our wants, our life is imbued with desires.

Moreover, if we look carefully, a variety of desires reveals itself. For instance, it is one thing to *wish* certain things to be the case, as when Mary desperately wishes that death did not exist. It is another thing to *hope* that some event will occur, as when Sam hopes that Mary still loves him. Similarly, cravings (say, for a kiss) are distinct from longings (say, for the good old days), and likewise for other types of desire. Those differences notwithstanding, there is an intuitive sense in which all those mental states qualify as desires in a wide or generic sense of the term, or so it appears.

Desiring constitutes an important part of our psychological life, as revealed by the following platitudes about desires. Desires come and go. They wax and wane. Some last longer than others. Some are stronger than others. Some are bitter, some are sweet. Some come true, while others are doomed to frustration. Some of them are important to us. Some overwhelm us. And some even obsess us.

But what is this thing called "desire"? What is the property in virtue of which the mental states mentioned count as desires and that allows for the platitudes alluded to? In other words, what are desires? Although desires are often mentioned in several philosophical debates,

contemporary philosophers have not paid considerable attention to the question of the essence of desire. The main aim of the present inquiry is to redress this imbalance.

More precisely, I shall approach the issue of the nature of desire by addressing the question of the intentionality of desire. By intentionality, I mean to refer to the particular way desires represent the world[1]. It is indeed reasonable to think that paying attention to the intentionality of a particular type of mental state constitutes a promising starting point in understanding the essence of the representation[2]. The object of investigation of the present inquiry can thus be formulated as follows: what is the specific intentionality involved in desiring, i.e. in which way do desires represent the world[3]?

As revealed by the quotation from Plato at the beginning of the chapter, the Liver was considered as the seat of desire – or at least of primitive desire (the "épithumètikon" part of ourselves). Starting from Plato, this tradition has been developed further by the physician Galen of Pergamon later on and was still present in the Middle Ages. This quotation from Galen shows how the scientific observations of the time have been linked to the Platonic division of the soul:

> If you seek the beginning of the initial generation of the veins, it is the liver. If you seek the beginning of the distribution of the matter by which the whole body is nourished and the beginning of the power, here too you will find no other internal organ to be more fit to be regarded as the beginning. (…) It makes no difference whether the liver is called the source of the veins or of the blood or of the appetitive soul, but it is more appropriate for a physician to present his teaching in terms of bodily organs, for a philosopher in terms of powers of the soul; in either case the one follows from a proof of the other. (…) The liver has been demonstrated to be the source of the veins, the blood, and the appetitive soul."[4]

On top of this historical tradition, it appears that the word "liver" still is a way of referring to desire in Persian slang ("jigar"). For these reasons, I shall call the following exploration the

[1] See for instance Searle 1983. The thought can be traced at least back to Franz Brentano.
[2] This restriction to the intentionality does not imply that intentionality is the only essential features of desires. This being said, provided that intentionality is considered as the standard hallmark of the mental, the present thesis will focus on the intentionality of desire.
[3] The term "desire" is often used to refer to different classes of things in the philosophical literature, including for instance conations or pro-attitudes. It is worth noting that the wide sense of desire I alluded to is more restricted than the concept of conations that applies to any mental state having the world-to-mind direction of fit (including intentions for instance). Moreover, my use of the term "desire" is not meant to refer to the broad set of pro-attitudes, where this encompasses any motivating entity (including values, principles, or evaluative beliefs; see Davidson 2001). On the wide sense of desire used in this dissertation, see §8.1.2. Types of Desire.
[4] Galen, *On the Doctrines of Plato and Hippocrates*, 6.8.6-6.8.77. See Tieleman 1998, Gill 1998, Moss 2012.

"Logic of the Liver".[5] By this expression, it is assumed, like Blaise Pascal famously did with emotions and their corresponding "Logic of the Heart", that desires are not necessarily parasites of our psychology, but might have their own rationality and are beautiful objects that deserve careful exploration.

In order to address this issue at a more intuitive level, let me suggest a thought-experiment which will guide the present inquiry. Imagine a world inhabited by creatures that are exactly like us in all respects but one. They have thoughts like we do, memories like ours, maybe emotions and sentiments like ours. But there is a slight difference between those creatures and us: the creatures imagined, unlike us, do not have any desires. No single desire, wish, or hope is present in their minds. The question then is the following: what is the crucial difference between this *desireless* world, where desire is absent, on the one hand, and the actual world, where desire is ubiquitous, on the other? By the crucial difference between the two worlds I mean to refer to the *essential* feature of desire, whose absence *constitutes* the absence of desire. This should be contrasted with differences that are explained by the fact that *desireless* creatures are lacking in desires, but fail to capture the essence of desire. Hopefully, the difference between those two worlds will solve the puzzle of the nature, and hence the intentionality, of desire. Enough poetry, on to philosophy.

0.2. Standard Views of Desires – Evaluations and Motivations

Despite the importance of desires in our psychology, the question of the intentionality of desire, compared with debates concerning other types of mental states, is rarely addressed in detail in the contemporary literature.[6] In spite of this neglect, the present state of the literature reveals the existence of two standard answers to this question, constituting the two standard views of desire.

The first, Aristotelian in spirit, is the axiological view of desire[7]. On this view, desires bear an essential relation to the positive value of goodness, as they are essentially positive evaluations[8]. Roughly, desiring a state of affairs, say p, is representing p as being good[9]. For instance, in desiring to see the ocean, one represents this state of affairs as being good, in

[5] I owe this metaphor and the following thought-experiment to Kevin Mulligan.
[6] Notable exceptions are Schroeder 2004, Oddie 2005, Tenenbaum 2007, Friedrich 2012, among others.
[7] See p. 27. The view is said to be Aristotelian in spirit, but might not be Aristotle's own view.
[8] See Stampe 1986, Oddie 2005, Tenenbaum 2007 and chapter 1 for the discussion of this view.
[9] In this work, "p" refers to the content of desire without implying that the content is propositional in nature.

being struck by its goodness or in any other way. This view is very appealing. For how could one desire something without somehow evaluating it in a positive light? A *desireless* world, if this view is correct, would be a world where creatures do not evaluate things in the way desiring subjects do. But is evaluation all there is to desiring? This question merits careful investigation.

The second standard view, Humean in spirit, is the motivational view of desire[10]. On this view, desires bear an essential relation to motivation in being essentially *motivational* states. Desiring that p, it is claimed, is being motivated to act in such a way that p obtains or representing p as a goal, which amounts to the same[11]. For instance, in desiring to visit Paris, one is moved to act so as to realise this state of affairs. A *desireless* creature, by contrast, would be a totally passive creature or at least would lack the "oomph" of motivation that is characteristic of desire. In a sense, this conception of desire is even more standard than the axiological one, since it is often taken for granted in the philosophical and psychological literature[12]. As Schroeder puts it:

> "Though the rest of the world is fascinated, philosophers of mind appear bored by the topic of desire. In what is perhaps the standard view held by these philosophers at present, a desire is just anything that plays the functional role characteristic of desires, which is that of tending to bring about that state of affairs which is the object of the desire."[13]

Part of the explanation of this fact relies on the standard conception of the *direction of fit* of desires. The *direction of fit* of desire, as we shall see below, can be expressed by the figurative thought that the *world* is supposed to fit our desires – rather than the other way around. This contrasts with belief, since there is a sense in which the *belief* is supposed to fit the world.[14] Now, this figurative way of speaking is usually understood in terms of the motivational power of desires, which contrasts with the motivational inertia of beliefs. By assuming that the direction of fit of desire captures the essential property of desires, and that it consists in the motivational power proper to desire, it follows that desires are essentially motivational states. Since the direction of fit of desires plays a crucial dialectical role in debates concerning moral motivation, practical normativity and others, the motivational view

[10] See p. 59.
[11] See Smith 1994, Dancy 2000 and chapter 2. Standard Views of Desires II – Desire and Motivation for the discussion of this view.
[12] As for the psychological literature, see for instance the entry on 'Motivation' in Sander & Scherer 2009.
[13] Schroeder 2004: 3.
[14] More on this on §0.4.1 and chapter 4, from page 139 on.

of desires impinges on lots of philosophical issues.[15] But despite the intuitive appeal of this view, it has rarely been discussed in detail.[16] Although desires typically are accompanied by motivation, is motivation the key to understanding to desire? This question merits examination.

At this point, the reader might be puzzled. Indeed, one might think that nothing prevents desires from being both essentially evaluative and motivational representations. One might even think that positive evaluations are nothing but motivational states. The debate alluded to would on such a view hardly make sense. In order for the debate between the standard views of desire to be a genuine one, it should indeed be assumed that desires cannot essentially be both evaluative and motivational representations. This is so at least if one wishes to think of desire as a simple state, involving only one type of representation[17]. The soundness of the assumption mentioned requires establishing that evaluative representations are distinct from motivational ones. Two considerations are relevant in this respect.

First, contrary to what one might think, positing a distinction between evaluative and motivational representations does not beg the question against anti-Humeanism or what is sometimes called internalism about motivation. According to this theory, evaluative beliefs are sufficient to motivate. For instance, in believing that murder is wrong, Mary is *eo ipso* motivated to avoid murder, independently of any background desire of her. One might thus think that holding beliefs to be motivationally inert precludes this very possibility. This view however is too quick. Anti-Humeanism is actually quite compatible with the distinction between axiological representations and motivational ones. Indeed, Mary's evaluative belief might be conceived as *entailing* a motivational state, where the two representations are distinct. If so, the evaluative belief constitutes the ground of the motivation, which acknowledges the motivational power of evaluative beliefs although this feature is interpreted in terms of the attendant motivation grounded by the belief. Anti-Humeanism about motivation thus does not require the identity between evaluation and motivation.

Still, although it is not implied by anti-Humeanism about motivation, one might wonder why the distinction between evaluations and motivations is warranted. A second consideration

[15] See p. 124.
[16] Notable exceptions are Mele 2003, Schroeder 2004, Friedrich 2008, Wall 2009.
[17] See §2.5. Interlude on Compound Views for compound views of desire.

relying on explanatory relations between the two representations is useful here. Indeed, *prima facie* at least, it makes sense to explain one's motivation to realise a state of affairs by referring to one's positive evaluation of the state of affairs. For instance, we can perfectly well explain why Sam is motivated to see the ocean by pointing to his positive evaluation of such a sight. If it is further assumed that this kind of explanation requires the distinct existence of the *explanans* and the *explanandum*, it follows that axiological representations are distinct from motivational ones[18].

If this is correct, there is room for a real debate between the standard views of desire, at least insofar as one wants desires to be constituted by only one type of representation. This being said, this does not prevent one from adopting a compound view of desires, according to which desires are complex representations made of both motivation and evaluation[19]. In that case, the debate between standard views of desires will be defused, since it will rest on the false premise that desires are simple rather than complex representations. I shall turn to this issue in due time, but for the sake of argument will assume for present purposes that desires are simple representations[20].

0.3. The Claim – The Deontic View of Desire

The aim of this Ph.D. dissertation is to examine the two standard accounts of desire in order to motivate an alternative conception, namely the deontic view of desire. According to this view, the key to understanding desire is neither goodness nor motivation, but consists in a deontic feature, namely norms of the ought-to-be type.[21] Some states of affairs indeed are such that they ought to obtain, others are such that they ought *not* to, whereas some neither ought to be nor ought *not* to. Desires, it is claimed, bear an essential relation to what ought to be. More precisely, the proposal is that the intentionality of desire should be understood by paying attention to the mode or manner in which content is represented, and that this manner is deontic in nature. In other words, desiring that p is representing p as what *ought to be* or, if one prefers, as what *should be*, so to speak "under the guise" of the ought-to-be. Importantly, the deontic feature is part of the *mode* of the representation in contrast to its content, which turns desires into essentially *deontic* attitudes. Put differently, desiring a state of affairs is, if I

[18] On the assumption about the distinction between *explanans* and *explanandum*, see p. 53.
[19] See §2.5. Interlude on Compound Views.
[20] Idem.
[21] For more details, see §3.4.1.1. Ought-to-Do and Ought-to-Be.

may take the liberty of coining this term, "oughting" this state of affairs, *requiring* the state of affairs to obtain or, in a sense to be made clear later, *caring whether* this state of affairs comes to obtain.[22] Consequently, *desireless* creatures would be creatures which do not represent anything as what should be, neither requiring anything of the world, nor caring whether some states of affairs obtain.

The upshot of this dissertation is that desires share essential features with norms of the ought-to-be type in such a way that the formal structure of the deontic is perfectly symmetrical with that of desire. In other words, the conceptual space of the ought-to-be nicely matches that of desiring. The present inquiry constitutes thus a motivation, exploration and defence of this deontic view of desire. As Meinong has defended a similar view of desire, the present work is Meinongian in spirit.[23]

To proceed carefully in our investigation, it is worth formulating the main *desiderata* a plausible view of the intentionality of desires should meet. This will make the criteria by which the standard views of desire will be examined explicit and also provide the guidelines for the defence of the deontic view. To this task I now turn.

0.4. *Desiderata* for a Promising Account of Desire

What are the main constraints a promising view of the intentionality of desire should satisfy? I shall proceed by listing a number of platitudes which are part of our folk psychology of desire. In doing so, I shall try to remain as neutral as possible with regard to any commitment these *desiderata* involve for particular views of the intentionality of desire. For this reason, these constraints are presented in a loose way and the relations between the *desiderata* are left untouched.[24]

0.4.1. Desiderative Direction of Fit

There is a sense in which the *world* is supposed to fit our desires. This is the intuition captured by the so-called *world-to-mind* direction of fit of desire and, more generally, of

[22] Those are meant to be equivalent formulations of the deontic view. See §3.4.3. Reformulating the Deontic Mode View.
[23] See p. 118.
[24] See Friedrich 2008: 2-3 for another list of *desiderata* for a successful theory of desires.

conations.[25] Since talking of direction of fit is highly figurative and given that the notion historically goes back to the theory of linguistic acts, it is worth making a little detour to the direction of fit of linguistic representations in order to better understand its application to mental representations[26].

Consider the following sentence: "It is raining". As a token of an assertion, this speech act is satisfied, i.e. true, if, and only if, it is raining at the time and place of its utterance[27]. Now, consider a case of mismatch between the representation and the world, i.e. that it is not raining at the time and place the sentence is uttered. In that case, if something ought to be changed, it is clear enough that it is *the assertion* rather than the world. Changing the world so that it corresponds to the sentence would indeed be cheating. Assertions are thus said to instantiate the *word-to-world* direction of fit, in the sense that they are supposed to fit the world, not the other way around.

By contrast, consider now the following sentence: "Look out the window!". This linguistic act, namely an instance of an order or demand, is satisfied, i.e. obeyed or met, if, and only if, the person asked to do so looks out the window. Now, unlike before, if there is a mismatch between the representation and the world, the world itself is supposed to change, not the representation. Changing the representation would indeed be cheating again. For this reason, speech acts like demands and orders have the *world-to-word* direction of fit: for satisfaction of the representation to obtain, the *world* is supposed to fit the words, not the other way around.

This contrast between the direction of fit of assertions and orders extends respectively to any speech act of the assertive class (e.g. assertions, descriptions, statements), on the one hand, and of the directive (e.g. orders, demands, prayers) as well as commissive class (e.g. promises, threats), on the other.[28]

Now this very same distinction has been applied to non-linguistic representations, notably mental representations.[29] In a nutshell, beliefs (and more generally cognitive representations) are to assertive speech acts what desires (and more generally conative representations) are to

[25] See Anscombe 1963, Platts 1979, Searle 1983, Humberstone 1992, among others and chapter 4 of this thesis (from p. 138).
[26] I assume that talking about direction of fit constitutes a metaphor. Nothing however rests on this assumption.
[27] In technical terms, satisfaction and truth are equivalent, which explains the equation of the two here.
[28] Searle 1983: 7-8.
[29] For other applications, see for instance the famous anecdote in Anscombe 1963: 56-57 about the direction of fit of reports and shopping lists.

directive or commissive speech acts. In other words, beliefs have the *mind-to-world* direction of fit, whereas desires have the *world-to-mind* direction of fit. Beliefs, like assertions, are supposed to conform to the facts. In case of mismatch, what should be changed is the *belief* – not the *facts*. For changing the facts would be cheating. By contrast, for desires to be true, the *world* is supposed to fit them, not the other way around[30]. If there is a mismatch, changing the *desire* rather than the *world* would might amount to a form of self-deception or cheating, as revealed by the La Fontaine's story of sour grapes. Desires consequently have the *world-to-mind* direction of fit.

Still, one might wonder why we should include the direction of fit of desire among our *desiderata*. In response, let me motivate this constraint by three observations.

Firstly, although more technical than the *desiderata* that will follow, the direction of fit of desire captures an intuitive feature of desires, namely the idea that desires somehow aim at realization. Now, on top of being intuitive, this feature is often considered as the hallmark of desires (and similarly for the direction of fit of beliefs). For this reason, it is reasonable to consider direction of fit as being one of the chief *desiderata* of the present investigation.

Secondly, one might resist the inclusion of direction of fit amongst our *desiderata* on the ground that desires, like beliefs, should also sometimes be changed. For instance, morality sometimes requires changing one's desires. It is thus worth observing that the direction of fit of desires, as we have formulated it, does not prevent desires from being assessable as being appropriate or inappropriate and being to this extent analogous to beliefs. This however does not imply that desires have the direction of fit of beliefs. For, the changing of the desire is not due to the *absence its satisfaction*, as it does in the case of beliefs. Since directions of fit are conditioned on the *satisfaction* of representations, even inappropriate desires are such that, for them to be satisfied, the world should conform to them – not the other way around. If the direction of fit of desire is compatible with the normative assessment of desires, the existence of the latter does not rule out taking the former seriously.[31]

Finally, and this is the last observation, paying attention to the direction of fit of desire does not imply taking for granted the motivational view of desire, in which case the *desideratum*

[30] On this sense of satisfaction for desires, see for instance Stampe 1986, De Sousa 1986, Searle 1983. For doubts on it, see Wollheim 1999: 45-51.
[31] This issue touches on the possibility of desires having both directions of fit. See p. 313 for this issue.

would be question-begging. This is so for two reasons. First, although the standard interpretation of the direction of fit of desires is along motivational lines, alternative interpretations have been offered.[32] Since the talk of direction of fit is highly figurative, its meaning constitutes a highly debatable issue. Second, even if it is assumed that the right interpretation of the idea is motivational in spirit, this does not preclude alternative views of desires from being sound. Indeed, the motivational power of desires might be accounted for derivatively, namely by appealing to a presumed essential property of desire that is distinct from motivation. For instance, the defender of the evaluative view might agree that the direction of fit refers to the motivational power of desire, but still make sense of it by appealing to the essential relation desires bear to values. For those reasons, I think that the direction of fit constitutes a sound *desideratum* of our inquiry.

Whatever one's stance on direction of fit, we are now in a better position to formulate our first *desideratum* and the relevant "sub-*desiderata*" that are part of it.

First, any promising view of the intentionality of desire should be *compatible* with the intuition that desires have the *world-to-mind* direction of fit and only this direction of fit. If desires end up having both directions of fit, it should provide a convincing explanation of this distortion of the figure of speech. Second, within the bounds of the basic intuition underlying direction of fit, a plausible view of the intentionality of desire should ideally offer an *interpretation* of the metaphor, since both the intentionality of desire and the direction of fit are supposed to capture the essential feature of desire. Alternatively, in case directions of fit are thought to be suspicious, one should motivate the rejection of this constraint. Still, for reasons already mentioned, such rejection comes at a high cost[33].

0.4.2. Desiderative Consonance

While our first *desideratum* concerned the relationship between desires and the world, the next three *desiderata* concern the relation desires bear to other mental states of the subject. Some of those relations are, so to speak, consonant. Desires indeed are possible *relata* of explanatory relations within the psychological realm, those relations relating mental states in a felicitous way. Depending on the direction of explanation, either desires are partly

[32] See § 5.1. Deontic Desiderative Consonance for more details.
[33] See Sobel & Copp 2001 and Milliken 2008 for scepticism about direction of fit.

explained by some further mental state of the subject or they partly explain some further mental state of hers. As far as the former is concerned, desires can be partly explained by affective dispositions (for instance sentiments), evaluative judgements or emotions.[34] For instance, it makes sense to say that Sam desires to see the ocean *because* Sam is delighted by contemplating the ocean or believes that seeing the ocean is wonderful. Intuitively, the kind of explanation at stake is not merely causal, but constitutes a *prima facie* rational explanation: when provided such an explanation, we understand what Sam sees in the contemplation of the ocean and thus his reason for having such a desire[35]. On the other hand, desires might partially explain some further mental states of the subject, notably intentions.[36] For instance, it makes sense to say that Mary intends to go to New York *because* she wants to go to New York. This relation between the desire and the intention is felicitous as well in providing us with some reason for Mary's intention.

As partial as they are, such explanations capture important aspects of our psychology. Now, it is reasonable to assume that those explanations go hand in hand with the intentionality of the mental states involved in the relations. For instance, the fact that desires represent their content in such and such a way might explain why desires have the explanatory power they have or at least be the other side of the same coin. Without entering into details about the relation between intentionality and explanation, a plausible theory of the intentionality of desire should account for such explanatory relations.

Again, it is worth noting that this *desideratum* is not begging the question against any standard view of desire. Indeed, even if it is assumed that desires can be partly explained by affective dispositions or evaluative beliefs, this does not prevent desires from constituting a distinct type of evaluative state that can be explained by other types of evaluative states. What is precluded, insofar as explanatory relations of the type are irreflexive, is that a type of evaluation of a state of affairs be explained by the same type of evaluation with the same content. But one need not be committed to such a claim to defend the evaluative view of desire. Likewise, the fact that desires can explain intentions does not exclude the possibility

[34] This is not meant to exclude the possibility of desires which are not explainable by further attitudes of the subject, i.e. *unmotivated* desires (e.g. Nagel 1970, Wallace 2006: 25-26).
[35] This is neither to say that the explanation cannot be causal as well (see Wallace 2006: 24) nor that the reasons stated are *normative* reasons to desire, as the case involves *motivating* reasons.
[36] As Baier 1986: 39 observes, desires explain lots of mental phenomena: "We cite them [i.e. desires] to explain not merely our intentional actions, but our involuntary reactions, our self-deceits, psychosomatic illnesses, and intermittent glows of well-being." In this thesis, I shall focus on intentions and intentional actions, since this constitutes the standard explanatory role attributed to desires along the desire-belief folk psychology. As far as I can see, nothing relies on this restriction.

of desires being motivational states. If desires are dispositions to act, they might as well explain intentions, since dispositions to act and intentions are distinct.

Our *desideratum* on explanation or what I shall call consonance can thus be formulated as follows. Any plausible theory of the intentionality of desire should first be *compatible* with the specific explanatory relations desires bear to other mental states. Second, it should ideally provide an *explanation* of why desires instantiate those particular explanatory relations rather than others. Alternatively, if one thinks that those explanatory relations are misguided, one should motivate the denial of the *desideratum* on explanation. Still, given the consonance that goes with explanatory relations, such a denial comes at significant cost.[37]

0.4.3. Desiderative Dissonance

Consider the following sentences.

> "I desire that p and I think that p is good."
>
> "I desire that p and I am motivated to bring about that p."
>
> "I desire that p and I think that p should obtain."
>
> "I desire that p. Hooray p!"
>
> "I desire that p. Please do something to make it such that p!"
>
> "I desire that p. If only p!"
>
> "I desire that p. Let it be that p!"

Prima facie, those sentences make perfect sense. By contrast, consider now the following variations.

> "I desire that p and I do *not* think that p is good."
>
> "I desire that p and I am *not* motivated to bring about that p."

[37] Let me register that part of this *desideratum* might collapse into the one on direction of fit, provided that some accounts of directions of fit rely on explanatory relations between desires and intentions (Zangwill 1998).

"I desire that p and I do *not* think that p should obtain."

"I desire that p. Boo p!"

"I desire that p. If only it were the case that *not* p!"

"I desire that p. Please do *not* do something to make it such that p!"

"I desire that p. Let it be that *not* p!"

If sincerely uttered, the latter sentences sound odd, to say the least. Contrary to the sentences belonging to the former set, they are, so to speak, *dissonant*. As revealed by this contrast, combinations involving desires are sometimes felicitous, sometimes not. The consonance or dissonance can consist in the combination of desire with further mental states, as the initial examples of each set suggests. Alternatively, it can lie in the combination of desire with the expression of some mental states, as revealed by the last examples of each set. Of course, there are other candidates for dissonance, notably some specifications of the cases mentioned, but I shall restrict myself to those in order to illustrate the gist of the problem.

It is one thing to assess some sentences as being infelicitous. It is another thing to establish a more precise verdict about the particular infelicity involved in each case. Do some of these sentences express explicit contradictions? Do some of them express paradoxical combinations? Are there irrational combinations among the ones mentioned? Do some expressions constitute a case of a Moore's Paradox for desires, a case analogous to the famous paradox for beliefs (i.e. the assertions "p and I do not believe that p" or "p and I believe that not p")?[38] Or is the dissonance involved in some of the sentences distinct in type?

The answer to those questions will partly depend on one's view of the intentionality of desire. Indeed, if the intentionality of a mental state can shed light on consonant combinations, as suggested in the previous section, it is plausible that it can account for dissonance as well, as dissonance is at least partly the distortion of consonance. If so, an elegant account of the intentionality of desire should *provide room* for such a variety of dissonances. Moreover, a promising picture of the intentionality of desire should ideally establish a convincing *diagnosis* of the type of dissonance involved in each case and determine whether such sentences express contradictions, paradoxes, irrationality or other forms of infelicity. Since distinct views of desires will end up delivering distinct verdicts, the question is to know

[38] See Wall 2012 for an extended discussion of a Moore's Paradox for desire.

which of them are the most promising. Those constitute the two branches of our third *desideratum* on dissonance.

0.4.4. The Death of Desire Principle and the Phenomenology of Absence

There is at least another combination of desire with a further mental state of the subject which deserves clarification. This combination amounts to one way for desires to cease to exist. There are indeed different ways desires leave us. Sometimes, having a change of heart on a certain matter makes some desires vanish, as when one ceases to like something and as a result ceases to have the attendant desires. One might as well cease having a desire on the grip of irrationality, on a whim for instance. Alternatively, one might suffer from conative *fatigue*, in which case some desires dissipate as a result of too much promiscuity or exposure with the desired object. And of course, there might be other ways for desires to cease to exist.[39] But, in addition to those, desires sometimes go out of existence because one believes that their content obtains or, which amounts to the same thing, because one believes that the desire is satisfied. This is the case I am concerned with here.

Let us consider an example. Suppose that Sam desires to reach the top of the hill. Suppose that, at some later time, he believes that he has reached the hilltop. Intuitively, as a result, Sam will cease to desire to reach the hilltop in virtue of that belief. It would be strange indeed for Sam to assert that he wants to reach the hilltop while being aware at the same time that he just did it. He might have other desires, for instance to reach the hilltop *again*, to *remember* having reached the hilltop or to enjoy his achievement. Surely those desires resemble the initial desire. Still, they are distinct from it: either they have a distinct content or they constitute a distinct token of the same type-desire.

Let us call this phenomenon the *death of desire principle* (from now on the DODP). According to this principle, every single desire behaves in this way, namely: for the very same p, for the same representational system, and at the very same time, a desire for p ceases to exist when one believes that p or, more generally, represents that p actually obtains[40]. The representation that p obtains might be a belief or whatever state that goes with a commitment to the truth of its content (e.g. perceiving that p, seeming to one that p, realizing that p)[41]. For

[39] See Stampe 1987: 350 for a similar list of causes of the death of desires, including satisfaction.
[40] See §6.1. Formulating the DODP, including more refined formulations of the principle.
[41] It should be noted that the seeming in question should not be accompanied by the belief or knowledge that it constitutes a hallucinatory or illusory seeming, in which case a desire for p might still persists if it seems to one that p. See for instance Velleman 1992 for states constituting commitments to the truth.

the sake of simplicity, let us call "belief that p" any mental state that plays this role, namely killing the desire in virtue of representing that the content of the desire holds. The principle states thus that desiring p is incompatible with believing that p, or, if one prefers, that it is impossible to desire what one believes to be actual.

For the sake of the argument, let us assume that the principle is true. If true, this principle is puzzling. Indeed, the combination of the desire that p and the belief that p does not constitute an open contradiction. Contrast the previous combination with the following one: S desires that p and it is not the case that S desires that p. This also constitutes an impossible combination of attitudes. But the impossibility is easy to explain on the grounds that the combination involves an *open* contradiction. For either one is in the first state of the conjunction or one is in the second, but one cannot fail to be in either of the two states. Now, if it is further assumed that contradictions are impossible, it follows that this combination is impossible. This explanation however is not available for the combination of the desire that p and the belief that p, as one might neither believe that p nor desire that p, hence the puzzling character of the DODP. This is not to deny that some contradiction might be involved in the combination of attitudes at stake. Still, if some contradiction is involved, it is not an *open* contradiction.

Turning to the task of this section, we can now formulate the following constraint. A plausible theory of the intentionality of desire should first be *compatible* with the DODP, at least to the extent that it is true. If one thinks that the principle is not true, this means that a plausible theory of desire should at least account for paradigmatic cases where the principle turns out to be true. Second, given what has been said before, it should ideally provide an *explanation* of the principle. Moreover, it is plausible to think that the explanation appeals to the intentionality of desire and belief, given what has been assumed about the essentiality of intentionality. One might of course defuse the problem by denying the principle. But this comes at a cost. Indeed, leaving aside apparent counter-examples, the principle is intuitively compelling for desires, but more generally for all types of conations, i.e. states having the direction of fit of desires[42]. For instance, intending to F and simultaneously believing that one has executed one's intention is as odd as desiring p while believing that p. If the DODP goes hand in hand with the direction of fit of desires and given what has been said on the

[42] See §6.2. Defending the DODP for the discussion of some alleged counter-examples.

importance of direction of fit, I think that it is better to account for the principle than to deny it. For those reasons, the DODP shall be defended and taken seriously in the present investigation.

Finally, let me mention a corollary of the DODP. There is indeed a phenomenal analogue of the DODP, which I shall coin the *Phenomenology of Absence*. According to this principle, in desiring that p, it does not seem to one that p presently obtains.[43] In other words, desires involve a seeming absence of the object of desire and are incompatible with apparent obtention of their object, at least when such seemings are taken to be veridical[44]. This is not to say that the phenomenal character of desire is exhausted by this feature; the point here is more modest. Still, if desires involve a phenomenology of absence, this requires an explanation as well. Why would that be so? It it is plausible to think that seeming to one that the object of desire is present shares a similar commitment to the actual obtaining of the content of the desire as that of beliefs. If so, it appears that the *Phenomenology of Absence* is the phenomenal twin of the DODP. This is the reason why I shall address those two puzzles together.

The last three *desiderata* that shall guide our exploration concern three ways of distinguishing desires that are part of our folk psychology. Those concern the various strengths instantiated by desires, the correctness as opposed to incorrectness instantiated by desires and, finally, the different proper kinds of desires.

0.4.5. Desiderative Strength

Not all desires are equal. Some desires are stronger than others. One might desire p more than one desires q and slightly less than one desires r. As time goes by, one and a same desire, say for p, can also admit of variations in degree, as when we desire something more and more or as when the desire slowly vanishes with the passing of time. This is an important aspect of the regulation and dynamic of desire.

The strength of desire is a function of different factors.[45] The degree of motivation involved, the intensity of the phenomenal character or some independent ordering of desire are various dimensions of the strength of some desire. Depending on the views of desire one favours,

[43] This phenomenological observation applies only to desires that have a phenomenal character.
[44] See p. 15 for this proviso on the *Phenomenology of Absence*.
[45] See Armstrong 1968: 153 for different behavioural senses of the strength of desire; Humberstone 1990: 109-112 about the motivational and affective dimensions of desire gradability; Goldman 2006: 82 about motivational, evaluative and sensational aspects of desire gradability; and Wallace 2006: 181 for a phenomenological approach of the strength of hedonic desires.

some of those features will appear to be more central than others. Still, the fact that the degree of desire depends on different factors leaves untouched the question of the essence of the strength of desire. An analogy with beliefs might be useful here. It is plausible to think that degrees of credence partly depend on the strength of evidence one has in favour of the content of the belief. Now, it is not clear that the degree of a belief *consists* in the strength of evidence one has. For one might explain the degree of belief by the strength of the evidence one responds to. Distinct views of the intentionality of desire should then end up with distinct pictures of what the degree of desire *consists in*, in addition to what the strength of desire *depends on*. Now, in both respects, it is plausible to think that the intentionality of desire will influence those issues. The strength of desire is thus a relevant *desideratum* of our investigation.

A promising theory of desire should first be *compatible* with the very fact that desires admit of degrees. Furthermore, it should *account* for the strength of desire in both the respects mentioned: in capturing what desire strength consists in as well as in describing the various aspects contributing to it[46]. This is a task any elegant theory of desire should be concerned with.

0.4.6. Desiderative Normativity

Part of our folk psychology of desire consists in evaluating desires as being appropriate or inappropriate. For instance, cruel desires, desires for the ugly, capricious desires are cases of inappropriate desires or, so to speak, mistakes of the Liver. Any plausible view of desire should have something to say on what the distinction between appropriate and inappropriate desire amounts to. But how are we to understand the appropriate or inappropriate character of desires, in one word what I shall the "normativity" of desire? The answer to this question will depend on the metaphysical commitments about the normative realm one is ready to accept. Let me suggest three possible ways of understanding the normativity of desire that are compatible with the present *desideratum* and avoid as far as possible any commitments in the process.

Taking this talk of appropriateness conditions for desires literally, one might be tempted to think that desires can go right or wrong, in the same way beliefs can be true or false, and thus

[46] If the strength of desire is constituted by mental states grounding or grounded by desires, this *desideratum* goes hand in hand with the *desideratum* on explanation.

have *correctness* conditions. Some desires, like the ones mentioned, will then end up being incorrect or mistaken desires, like false beliefs. As revealed by the examples, desires might go wrong for different kinds of reasons (moral, aesthetic, prudential, and so on). The standard picture of the correctness conditions of desire captures these various mistakes as follows. A desire for p is correct if, and only if, p is good.[47] Since the good admits of distinct types (e.g. moral good vs. aesthetic good), appealing to the good constitutes a unified way of understanding the correctness conditions of desire. This picture is sometimes captured by the thought that "desires aim at the good" in the same way as beliefs "aim at the truth".[48]

Humeans might be suspicious about the existence of correctness conditions for desire, on the ground that only beliefs or, more generally, cognitive attitudes can be correct or incorrect.[49] This Humean restriction however is compatible with the existence of correctness conditions for desires. Indeed, one might understand the correctness conditions of desire as being inherited from the beliefs or other cognitions that ground the desire[50]. Although extrinsic to desires, talking of correctness conditions of desires might well make sense in the Humean picture of the mind.

Finally, if appealing to *correctness* conditions of desires is thought to be too strong despite the previous proviso, it is much less contentious to think that desires can be appropriate or inappropriate in the sense of being justified or unjustified (or, if one prefers, rational or irrational). As a classical example, consider for instance a person who intrinsically desires a saucer of mud, but when asked why, remains silent.[51] It is difficult to understand such a desire unless one is provided with a good reason to find a saucer of mud desirable or, as Anscombe puts it, some desirability characteristic of the content of the desire. In the absence of this supplementation, we are tempted to deem the desire to be irrational or even a-rational.[52] By contrast, it makes perfect sense to justify a desire that p by citing one's belief that p is good, all things being equal. Let us call *rationality* conditions of desires the conditions in which desires are justified. Since rationality is understood here as being partly a

[47] See for instance Anscombe 1963: 76, De Sousa 1974, Hazlett (unpublished) and chapter 7. Desiderative Normativity – A Deontic Approach of the thesis.
[48] De Sousa 1974: 538, Velleman 2000: 115, Hazlett (unpublished). I shall leave open the question whether the correctness conditions of desires are *constitutive* of desires in the same way as beliefs are sometimes said to be constituted by the norm of aiming at the truth. For this goes beyond the scope of this thesis.
[49] See Smith 1991 for such a view and Parfit 2011: 114-115 for a critique of this view.
[50] See for instance Smith 1991: 401.
[51] Anscombe 1963: 70-78.
[52] On a substantial account of rationality, one might still deem a desire irrational despite being provided with some reason for the desire, because on such accounts the reason speaking in favour of a desire should be a *good* one for the desire to be rational.

function of the relationship desires bear to other attitudes (for instance, evaluative beliefs) rather than to facts in the world, this talk of the appropriateness of desire is the loosest among the ones presented.

Despite the distinction between correctness and rationality conditions, the existence of rationality conditions for desires does not prevent desires from having correctness conditions as well. Consider beliefs: the fact that a belief is rational is distinct from the fact that this same belief is correct, as the former can obtain while the latter does not. However, this does not preclude the possibility of rational beliefs being true, i.e. correct. *Prima facie*, there is no reason things should be different for desires. Moreover, it is plausible to think that beliefs are justified in virtue of bearing some relation to the truth, albeit a distinct relation than the one instantiated by correct beliefs.[53] If so, rationality conditions can be derived from correctness conditions. *Prima facie*, the same can be said about rationality conditions of desire, as suggested by the standard picture of rationality conditions of desire: a desire that p is justified if, and only if, the subject rationally believes that p is good[54].

Notwithstanding those ways of understanding our assessment of desires, I shall assume, for the sake of argument, that desires have correctness conditions in addition to rationality conditions. This assumption is motivated by the thought that distinct views of the intentionality of desire imply distinct views regarding their correctness conditions. For the fact that p is represented as being such and such in desiring (i.e. intentionality) intuitively implies that desires are correct if, and only if, the world is such and such (i.e. normativity). Consequently, competing views of desires will end up with distinct accounts of the correctness conditions of desires. Those might indirectly capture distinct rationality conditions for desires, if what has been said about the dependence of the latter on the former is correct.

Turning to the formulation of our *desideratum*, any promising view of the intentionality of desire should first allow for the *possibility* of (in)appropriateness conditions for desires, whatever they are. Furthermore, it should imply a *correct* picture of the normativity of desire. This means that the picture should provide *specific* appropriateness conditions, i.e. conditions which are both necessary and sufficient for desires and apply to desires only (or to the attitude grounding the normativity of desires, in case one assumes *Humeanism* in this

[53] I owe this idea to Gianfranco Soldati.
[54] See for instance Pettit 1993: 55.

respect).[55] Finally, a subtle picture of the correctness conditions of desire, if any, should suggest an intuitive account of the rationality conditions of desire.

0.4.7. Desiderative Typology

As suggested by our initial introspective exercise, there are types of desires. Wishes, hopes, temptations and urges are some of the many varieties. Fully understanding desire requires drawing the boundaries between types of desire and other mental states that seem to belong to the same family of representations as desire, but that it is reasonable to distinguish from desires, for instance intentions and needs[56]. Whether those mental states are viewed as types of desires proper, or whether they constitute a *sui generis* type of conation, the desiderative cake admits of divisions that need to be described carefully. But how are we to describe them? How are we to capture the distinctions between general types of conations and between types of desires within the class of desire itself, to the extent that such distinctions exist?

Any virtuous theory of the intentionality of desire should suggest lines for an elegant typology of conations that acknowledges the relevant distinctions. Moreover, if some of the mental states mentioned turn out to be *types* of desires proper (instead of another type of conation) and if distinct *types of types* of desires exist, the relevant theory should capture the unity of desires as well as carve up reality at all its relevant joints.

To sum up our *desiderata*, I have argued that a promising theory of desire should account for (i) the direction of fit of desires, (ii) the consonant or explanatory relations desires bear to other attitudes, (iii) the types of dissonance involving desires, (iv) the death of desire principle, (v) the strength of desire, (vi) the (in)correctness conditions of desires, and (vii) the typology of desire. The list is not exhaustive.[57] Nonetheless, it captures important aspects of desire which will set the agenda for our exploration. Now that we have presented the goal and tools of our journey, let us bring this introduction to a close by sketching the main argument of the dissertation.

[55] Note that the *desideratum* on correctness conditions might go hand in hand with the one about direction of fit, since some interpretations of direction of fit of desires appeal to the correctness conditions of desire (Hazlett unpublished, Tenenbaum 2007).
[56] On this assumption, see § 8.1.1. Formal Boundaries I – Super-types of Desire.
[57] One might think that the functional role of desire or the phenomenal character of desire is missing (although see §9.4. Functional Role and p. 297 for some observations). I can only agree. Still, the choice has been motivated here by dialectical reasons rather than exhaustiveness.

0.5. The Argument

The main argument of the present dissertation can be summarised as follows.

(i) A promising theory of desire should meet the *desiderata* mentioned.

(ii) Standard theories of desires, i.e. the views according to which desires are evaluations or motivations, do not satisfy the *desiderata*.

(iii) The deontic view satisfies the relevant *desiderata*, insofar as it appeals to the mode of the ought-to-be.

(C) The deontic view constitutes the most promising theory of desire among the ones examined.

Of course, presented as such, this argument does not say much. It merely reveals the structure of the dissertation. Indeed, the second premise is justified in the first part of the dissertation, while the second part provides us with the justification of the third premise. In order to say more about the deontic view, let me present roughly how the justification of the second and third premise will proceed.

In order to reveal more about the motivations for the alternative to be defended, it is worth first saying a word about why I think that standard views of desires do not meet the relevant *desiderata*, despite their intuitive appeal. The main reasons all concern three *desiderata* that will prove crucial: the direction of fit of desire, desiderative consonance and the death of desire principle.

First, it is not straightforwardly evident that evaluations have the direction of fit of desire. After all, evaluations should be changed when their turn out to be false, like beliefs. It is thus not clear that the axiological view of desire can satisfy this *desideratum*. By contrast, it is difficult to deny that the motivational view implies the wanted direction of fit of desire. However, it is not clear that it can account for all the subtleties surrounding the direction of fit of desire. The problem arises, I think, by understanding directions of fit as being directions of satisfaction. Now, it is not clear that the satisfaction conditions of motivational states involve only the obtaining of their content rather than the subject's acting in such a way that the content of her motivation obtains. If this is correct, the motivational view does not deliver the right satisfaction conditions for desire, which has repercussions for the *desideratum* on

direction of fit. For those reasons, I think that standard views do not adequately meet this first challenge.

Moreover, and this constitutes a second line of objection against standard views of desire, desires are the *relata* of explanatory relations involving both evaluations and motivations. Indeed, on the one hand, it makes sense to explain one's desire for a state of affairs by reference to one's positive evaluation of the same state. On the other hand, it is plausible to explain one's motivation to act towards the obtainment of a state of affairs by reference to one's desire for that state. Now, if those explanations are sound and if they are irreflexive, as they seem to be, this precludes the equation of desires with evaluations or motivations, respectively. In other words, it is not clear that the standard views of desire can make sense of our *desideratum* on desiderative dissonance.

Finally, without entering into details, standard views seem to have difficulty making sense of the DODP. On the one hand, evaluations can be compatible with the obtaining of their content, as when Mary is happy to see Sam again. Why would desires be incompatible with the obtaining of their content if there is nothing in the nature of evaluations that precludes this possibility? This is a first challenge. On the other hand, although motivations to act are incompatible with the obtaining of their content, the worry concerning the satisfaction conditions of motivations strikes again, as the DODP is a principle involving the representation of the satisfaction of desires. If the motivational view does not deliver the right satisfaction conditions of desire, it will not be able to account for the DODP either. Moreover, even if it assumed that the motivational view implies the right satisfaction conditions for desires, it will not account for the DODP in all its subtlety. The reason is that it explains too much in the sense that it implies that some desires will persist in conditions when they intuitively cease to exist because of the belief that they have been satisfied. It appears thus that standard views of desire face the challenge of the DODP as well.

If this is correct, it leaves the field open for an alternative view of desire, namely the deontic view of desire. Still, it remains for me to explain how this alternative avoids the difficulties mentioned. This constitutes the justification of the third premise above.

The main positive arguments of this dissertation appeal to the existence of an intimate relation and more precisely a symmetry between desires and norms of the ought-to-be type. Our task amounts thus to explaining how norms of the ought-to-be type can help to satisfy

our *desiderata*. Although this will of course be spelled out in much more detail in the rest of the thesis, here is the gist of the arguments.

(i) Ought-to-be and world-to-mind direction of fit

Norms are such that the world is supposed to conform to them for them to be met – rather than the other way around. After all, this is what norms are for: bringing about changes in the world. This means that norms have the world-to-mind direction of fit, if they have any. If this is correct, and if desiring is representing p as what ought to be, desires have *eo ipso* the world-to-mind direction of fit. This is a first line of argument that will be defended in more detail.

(ii) Ought-to-be and explanatory relations

In short, it is intuitive to think that what ought to be is grounded in what is good and in turn grounds what ought to be done. Consider for instance that it ought to be that Sam be in Paris tomorrow. It is plausible to explain this norm by appealing to the fact that Sam being in Paris is a good thing. Moreover, the fact that it ought to be that Sam be in Paris explains why Sam ought to act in such a way that he ends up being in Paris. Now, it is plausible to assume that mental states bearing an essential relation to those relevant properties (the good, the ought-to-be and the ought-to-do) will inherit the explanatory relations instantiated by those properties. If this is so, and if desires are constituted by the mode of the ought-to-be, it is not surprising that desires are explained by evaluations and in turn explain motivations. In other words, appealing to the ought-to-be can account for desiderative consonance.

(iii) Ought-to-be and dissonance

Given what has just been said about consonance, candidates for dissonances involving desires suggest themselves. For instance, the combination of evaluating p positively and not desiring p is an instance of an irrational combination. In the same vein, desiring p without being motivated to act in favour of p also constitutes an irrational combination. This type of dissonance, namely irrationality, contrasts with contradictory statements delivered by the

deontic view, for instance "I desire that p and I do not represent p as what ought to be". Finally, assuming that Moore's Paradox can be understood as a type of dissonance between the expression of a mental state and the expression of the absence of the state, the extent to which the deontic view provides a case for a Moore's Paradox for desires depends on the way the expression of deontic attitudes and norms in general is understood. Now, given that norms in general are expressible by imperatives, prayers and vows, the deontic candidates for a Moore's Paradox are of the following form: "p! and I do not desire that p" or "let it be that p! and I do not desire that p", among others. Appealing to the ought-to-be constitutes thus an elegant way to account for dissonance in all its relevant facets.

(iv) Ought-to-be and non-actuality

Consider that Sam ought to climb the mountains and just did climb the mountain. Is it still the case that he ought to climb the mountain? Intuitively, the answer is negative. For if he just did climb the mountain, how could he still be required to do so? If this is correct, it appears that if p ought to be, then it is not the case that p obtains at the same time. The DODP, I think, can be accounted for by the intuition that norms are incompatible with the facts constituting their satisfaction. The story is the following. Suppose that norms are incompatible with their corresponding facts. Suppose further that desires are to norms what beliefs are to facts. In particular, assume that beliefs represent their content under the guise of the actual, while desires represent their content under the guise of the ought-to-be. It follows that one cannot both desire a state of affairs and simultaneously believe that this state obtains. Desire vanishes when subjects represent that its content holds in the same way as norms cease to exist when they are met. Or so I shall argue.

(v) Ought-to-be and degrees

Not all norms are equal. Although this is a contentious issue, there is a sense in which some states of affairs ought *more* to obtain than others. For instance, when a particular action ought to be performed urgently, there is a sense in which it can override other actions that ought to be performed. Although this does not correspond to a standard sense of degree, a form of strength applies to norms, understood as the priority relations holding between norms. Now, I think that this type of strength is precisely what is involved in the degrees of desire. For

instance, a desire increasing in degree can be understood as the process of a request becoming more and more important, overriding other requests, enjoying some kind of priority over others. Or so I shall argue.

(vi) Ought-to-be and normativity

Intuitively, not all norms are sound. Let us assume that some norms are unwarranted or, so to speak, crazy, and thus contrast with sound norms. One plausible way to understand this distinction is to appeal to what actually is right or required. Now, this provides the ground for an intuitive account of the conditions in which desires are correct. On this deontic view of the normativity of desire, a desire is correct if, and only if, the state of affairs desired should obtain, i.e. if there really is a norm about the obtaining of this state of affairs.

(vii) Ought-to-be and typology

Norms admit of distinct types. For instance, the ought-to-be differs from the ought-to-do. Moreover, norms can differ with respect to their polarity, as there are positive and negative norms. Likewise, requirements of prudence differ from requirements of morality, as the sources of requirements are distinct. Now, it appears that those distinctions, on top of others, provide us with all we need to capture the distinctions that are relevant for a typology of conations and desire. This is at least is the line of argumentation I shall develop in a following chapter.

If this is correct, desires and norms of the ought-to-be type fit hand in glove.[58]

0.6. The Plan

This dissertation is structured in three parts.

[58] On the view that desires bear semantic or logical similarities to norms, see in particular Mulligan 1998 (although he argues that the similarity holds between desires and ought to do rather than ought to be); for some local similarities, see Jackson 1985: 182.

The first part, mostly a negative one, provides the motivation for the deontic view of desire by examining the two standard views of desire, that is the axiological (§1) and motivational view (§2). Those views are presented and discussed in the light of the three *desiderata* mentioned. The upshot of this part is that those views do not meet the relevant *desiderata*, as stated in the second premise above. In the third chapter, I briefly discuss deontic views of desire that are present in the literature in order to motivate and present the deontic alternative I shall favour, namely the one relying on the deontic mode (§3).

In the second part, I present the main arguments in favour of the deontic view of desire, which concern the same three chief *desiderata*. I argue that the deontic view can account for the direction of fit of desires (§4), desiderative consonance and dissonance (§5) and the death of desire principle (§6) along the lines mentioned earlier.

On top of providing promising ways of meeting the *desiderata* mentioned, the deontic view suggests entirely new approaches to thinking about the boundaries of the conative landscape. These concern the normativity of desire, or the boundary between appropriate and inappropriate desires, on the one hand, and the typology of desire, or the boundaries between types of desires, on the other. The last part of the thesis is mainly devoted to those issues. The seventh chapter aims to motivate the deontic account of the normativity of desire, while the eighth presents a typology the defender of the deontic view will be happy to embrace. More generally, this third part of the thesis aims to demonstrate the heuristic value of the deontic view, despite its revisionary features. It constitutes more an application of the deontic view to general issues concerning desire rather than providing direct arguments in its favour. Finally, as the deontic view does not come without problems, notably the strength of desire, general objections directed at the core of the view are addressed and rebutted in the last chapter of this dissertation (§9). This will motivate further the thought that the deontic view constitutes a plausible and fruitful approach to desire.

The exploration ends with some conclusive remarks that are meant to illustrate the heuristic value of the deontic view with regard to some further philosophical puzzles, extending from philosophy of mind to normative ethics.

If this exploration of the deontic view convinces the reader that this view is at least worth examining, the challenge of this dissertation will be met.

Finally, let me draw the attention of the reader to the presence of an appendix presenting some schemas that summarise the main claims of this dissertation.[59] These constitute maps of the normative and mental domain, as conceived in this dissertation, as well as a map of the main steps of the dissertation. They might be useful to orient the reader in the future exploration that starts now.

[59] See p. 383.

Part I

*

Motivating the Deontic View:

Desires, Values and Goals

1. Standard Views of Desires I – Desire and Values

"Blest as the immortal gods is he,
The youth who fondly sits by thee,
And hears and sees thee, all the while,
Softly speaks and sweetly smile.

'Twas this deprived my soul of rest,
And raised such tumults in my breast;
For, while I gazed, in transport tossed,
My breath was gone, my voice was lost;

My bosom glowed; the subtle flame
Ran quick through all my vital frame;
O'er my dim eyes a darkness hung;
My ears with hollow murmurs rung;

In dewy damps my limbs were chilled;
My blood with gentle horrors thrilled:
My feeble pulse forgot to play;
I fainted, sunk, and died away."
Sappho, *Ode to a loved one* (translation by A. Philipps)

As Sappho's poem reveals, to love another person can involve seeing them as a marvellous, sacred, precious thing. At the very least, love goes with viewing the loved ones in a positive light. But when thinking about desire, it appears that desire also has this feature. Indeed, the content of desiring is also represented, so to speak, "under the guide of the good". As Friedrich puts it:

> "Before and after desiring a state, a person may look with calm disinterest upon the possibility of that state coming to obtain. However, while in the grip of desire, her conception of the end changes. Suddenly, the allure of the state is all too apparent. Suddenly, the object is presented to the agent in a positive light. This is not to say that the object can't also be seen to have its flaws. But it appears to be impossible to desire something and to be wholly neutral or wholly negative towards it."[60]

The same intuition is captured by the scholastic conception of desire and its famous formula Kant alludes to by the following:

> "There is an old formula of the schools, *nihil appetimus, nisi sub ratione boni; nihil aversamur, nisi sub ratione mali*" ["there is nothing that is desired, except under the guise of the good; there is nothing we are averse to, except under the guise of the bad" (translation mine)].[61]

One natural way of understanding this close relationship desires bear to the good consists in conceiving desires as being essentially *evaluative* states.[62] According to this axiological view

[60] Friedrich 2008: 20-21.
[61] Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, AA 05-59, 12-14.

of desire, desiring a state of affairs is evaluating this state in a positive way. For instance, when Sam desires to see the ocean, he represents seeing the ocean as being good. As we shall see, there are several ways to conceive of desires as evaluations. One might think that in desiring a state of affairs, one somehow perceives the goodness of some state or is struck by its positive value. Alternatively, desiring might constitute an evaluative attitude or an evaluative stance the subject is taking. Be that as it may, the key to understanding desire is axiological.[63]A *desireless* world would thus be a world where creatures do not evaluate the world positively in the way desires are supposed to.

This view has a large historical pedigree, as it seems to have been favoured by Plato and Aristotle, among others. For instance, in the *Meno*, Plato writes:

> "SOCRATES: When you speak of a man desiring fine things, do you mean it is good things he desires?
> MENO: Certainly.
> SOCRATES: Then do you think some men desire bad and others good? Doesn't everyone, in your opinion, desire good things?
> MENO: No.
> SOCRATES: And would you say that the others suppose bad things to be good, or do they still desire them although they recognize them as bad?
> MENO: Both, I should say.
> SOCRATES: What? Do you really think that anyone who recognizes bad things for what they are, nevertheless desires them?
> MENO: Yes.
> SOCRATES: Desires in what way? To possess them?
> MENO: Of course.
> SOCRATES: In the belief that bad things bring advantage to their possessor, or harm?
> MENO: Some in the first belief, but some also in the second.
> SOCRATES: And do you believe that those who suppose bad things bring advantage understand that they are bad?
> MENO: No, that I can't really believe.
> SOCRATES: Isn't it clear then that this class, who don't recognize bad things for what they are, don't desire bad but what they think is good, though in fact it is bad; those who through ignorance mistake bad things for good obviously desire the good?
> MENO: For them I suppose that is true."[64]

In the same vein, in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle asks the following rhetorical question about wishes:

> "are we to say that absolutely and in truth the good is the object of wish, but for each person the apparent good; that that which is in truth an object of wish is an object of wish to the good man, while any chance thing may be so the bad man, as in the case of bodies also the things that are in truth wholesome are wholesome for bodies which are in good condition, while for those that are

[62] For contemporary defenders of the axiological view, see Stampe 1987, Oddie 2005, Tenenbaum 2007, Friedrich 2008.
[63] See §1.1. Varieties of Axiological Views for a presentation of various axiological views of desire.
[64] Plato, *Meno*, 77b-78c.

> diseased other things are wholesome – or bitter or sweet or hot or heavy, and so on; since the good man judges each class of things rightly, and in each the truth appears to him?"[65]

Finally, a similar intuition can be found in Aquinas:

> "Good delightful to sense is the common object of the concupiscible faculty. Hence the different passions of the concupiscible faculty are distinguished according to the differences of that good. The motive power of the said good bears a different character according as the good is really present or absent. As it is present, it makes the appetite rest therein: as it is absent, it makes the appetite move thereto. Hence the said object of sensible delight, inasmuch as it shapes and conforms the appetite to itself, causes *love:* inasmuch as, when absent, it attracts to itself, it causes *desire:* inasmuch as, when present, it induces rest in itself, it causes *pleasure*, or *delight.*"[66]

Since it is controversial whether Plato's final view of desire is captured by the previous quotation[67], I shall call the axiological view "Aristotelian".

Now that the core intuition and its historical pedigree have been presented, let us move on to the examination of the view. In order to discuss this conception of desire, I shall first present different delineations of the axiological intuition (§1.1). In the second part, some general implications of the view and the main arguments in its favour will be presented. Those concern any variant of the view (§1.2). Finally, I shall examine this account of desire in the light of three *desiderata* (§1.3). The result of this chapter is that, as intuitively compelling as the axiological account is, none of the sketched versions of this view satisfy the *desiderata* of the death of desire principle, direction of fit and consonance of desire. However, as the discussion of the axiological picture progresses, the grain of truth in the axiological view will emerge. Desires, I shall claim, are *grounded* on evaluations. Although this means that desires are not to be identified with evaluations, it captures the intuition that desires are intimately related to goodness.

1.1. Varieties of Axiological Views

As stressed, there are several ways of conceiving of desires as being essentially evaluative states. In this section, the standard axiological picture is presented (§1.1.1.) and then developed into possible alternatives (§1.1.2.). This will avoid concentrating on problems

[65] Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, 1136b7-8. Although this quote concerns wish or "boulêsis", a particular species of desire (that of the rational faculty) that is distinct from appetite and spirit, the latter also have their own proto-evaluative content, being directed at pleasure and the noble, respectively.
[66] Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Prima Secundae, Question XXX. On Desire, Article II.
[67] See for instance Barney 2010.

specific to any particular variant and will help focus the discussion on the view in its full generality.

1.1.1. The Perceptual Analogy

The most influential way of understanding desires as evaluative states relies on the analogy between perceptual experiences and desires. As visual perceptions are about, say, colours and shapes, desires are about the good, or so runs the analogy[68]. Since perceptual experiences can be understood as being sensory seemings or appearances, the analogy amounts to conceiving of desires as being value seemings or appearances of value[69]. In other terms, desiring a state of affairs is seeming or appearing to one that the state of affairs is good, as visually perceiving an object is seeming or appearing to one that the object instantiates some colour and some shape, among other properties[70].

Perceptual Analogy – A subject desires that p if, and only if, p seems good to her[71]

As Oddie puts it:

> "(…) my desire that P involves P's *seeming* good (seeming to be worth pursuing). So the desire that P looks as though it just is the *experience* of P as good."[72] (italics mine)

In a similar vein, Tenenbaum understands the scholastic formula of the guise of the good of desire by appealing to the perceptual analogy. He writes:

> "According to the scholastic view, for an agent to desire X is for X to *appear* to be good to this agent from a certain evaluative perspective." [73] (italics mine)

Desiring and perceptual experiences are usually seen as analogous in at least four respects. I shall present them without examining them.

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[68] For the sake of the argument, I shall assume that the perceptual analogy of desires does not consist in the strong claim that desires literally are perceptual experiences. Rather, I shall assume that the view consists in the weaker claim that desires are analogous to perceptual experiences. Two observations speak in favour of this restriction. The first lies in the thought that perceptual experiences involve specific organs. But there are no organs specifically tasked with the perception of values. Secondly, it is an essential aspect of perceptual experiences, at least veridical ones, to be caused by their object. But desires, even appropriate ones, can be about non-actual states of affairs, which intuitively cannot have any causal power. For those reasons, it is thus better to stick to a mere analogy between desire and perception.

[69] Oddie 2005, Tenenbaum 2007: 21-51. On the distinction between perceptual seeming and perceptual appearance in this context, see Tappolet 2009. I shall ignore those details here.

[70] For the analogy between desire and perceptual experiences to hold, the seeming in question should be understood as phenomenal rather than evidential seeming (see pp. 41 for the relevance of this distinction).

[71] Again, the reference to "p" in the expression is not meant to imply that the content of desires is propositional. Rather, part of the appeal of the analogy is to allow for the possibility of desires with non-propositional content. See Tappolet 2009 for a non-propositional axiological view of desire.

[72] Oddie 2005: 41.

[73] Tenenbaum 2007: 21.

Consider my visual impression of the stars in the sky. This experience involves first a particular phenomenal character, which differs from other experiences, for instance from the way that touching velvet feels. Similarly, my desire to have some coffee has a phenomenal character, which is distinct from, say, my aversion for tea. Secondly, the visual experience is had from a determinate perspective, namely that of a particular human being that is located miles away from the stars. Desires are similarly held from particular perspectives. For instance, going to the opera tonight appears desirable to me, but might not appear the same way to Sally, depending on our respective cares and concerns.[74] Thirdly, the perceptual experience might be non-veridical as in cases of illusions or hallucinations. Analogously, as an appearance of the good, the desire might be illusory or hallucinatory, i.e. the state of affairs desired might not actually be good despite appearing to be so.[75] Finally, since perceptual experience presumably gives us access to the mind-independent world, it provides at least a *prima facie* or defeasible justification for forming the judgement that there are stars in the sky. In the same vein, in virtue of constituting axiological appearances, desires provide us with at least a *prima facie* or defeasible reason for forming corresponding evaluative judgements. When having a cup of coffee seems good to one, this experience justifies the judgement that having a coffee is a good thing. Or so runs the analogy.[76]

It is worth making explicit four features that are part of the perceptual analogy, since this will help delineate variations on the axiological theme. First, desires are conceived of as *experiential* states, in the same way as perceptual appearances are the paradigmatic example of experiences. Second, the analogy presents desiring as being a state that has values as part of its *content*, in the same way as perceptual experiences are about sensory qualities like colours and shapes. Third, desires are understood as representations of what is *actually* valuable, in the same way as perceptual experiences are representations of *obtaining* states of affairs. Fourth, and finally, desiring stands in relation to the *good* in the generic sense of the term (i.e. a thin property that encompasses distinct types of goodness). With those features in mind, we can now develop four different interpretations of the perceptual analogy in order to be as charitable as possible in our discussion.

[74] Oddie 2005: 60-63. See Tenenbaum 2007: 42-51 for a different account of axiological perspectives involved in desire.
[75] See for instance Stampe 1987: 365-6.
[76] Since I shall restrict discussion to problems concerning any variant of the axiological view and since the perceptual analogy has difficulties of its own, the analogy will not be discussed here. See Oddie 2005: 50-57.

1.1.2. Extending the Perceptual Analogy

These variations concern the type of value involved, the modality of the value, its "location" in the representation and the experiential nature of the representation.

Thick Value vs. Thin Value

The first variation, which is compatible with a close analogy between desires and perceptual experiences, concerns the type of axiological property involved in desiring. One might conceive of desiring either as representing the good in the generic sense (thin property), or as representing some type of goodness, such as the pleasant (thick property). Although significant, this distinction will not be explored in this thesis, as nothing in my arguments hangs on it.[77]

Actual Value vs. Counterfactual Value

Another way of developing the perceptual analogy consists in relaxing the analogy between desires and perceptual experiences. If one takes this option, desires are still analogous to perceptual experiences in that they are seemings, but they are not *perceptual* seemings. Indeed, as Tenenbaum observes, some types of seemings are not perceptual, intellectual seemings, for instance.[78] If this is so, there is no reason to restrict the analogy between desires and seemings to *perceptual* seemings.[79]

Conceiving of desires as involving non-perceptual seemings allows more flexibility as regards the modality involved in the evaluation. Indeed, it might seem to one that p obtains (actual modality), as it is usually thought for perceptual experiences. But it might also seem to one that p *would* obtain (what I shall call from now on "counterfactual" modality), as is the case for some intellectual seemings.[80] Analogously, desiring a state of affairs might be representing it as being *actually* good or, alternatively, representing it as what *would be* good, i.e. what is *counterfactually* good.

Counterfactual View – A subject desires that p if, and only, if it seems to her that it *would be* good that p

[77] This distinction indeed does not make any difference with regard to the *desiderata* that will be discussed later.
[78] Tenenbaum 2007: 39.
[79] What seemings in this generic sense are is a very contentious issue, which will not be addressed here.
[80] It is worth noting that this possibility is strictly speaking hypothetical rather than counterfactual, but what is meant by "counterfactual" here concerns merely the absence of actual modality. I leave aside the possibility that perceptual seemings can take a counterfactual content, in which case the same distinction alluded to holds in the case of perceptual experiences.

Although he oscillates between a strict and a loose analogy, Stampe draws the perceptual analogy in those terms:

> "This, then is the analogy I shall pursue – the analogy between desire and perception. (…). The view I shall take is this: Desire is a kind of perception. One who wants it to be the case that p perceives something that makes it seem to that person as if it *would be good* were it to be the case that p, and seem so in a way that is characteristic of perception. To desire something is to be in a kind of perceptual state, in which that thing seems good, this "seeming" hereafter marked by the subscript "$_d$". The term "seems$_d$" may be understood, initially, by analogy with the verbs "sound" and "look" in the contexts "it sounds, looks as if p," where these statements specify the perceptual states distinctive of hearing and seeing respectively. Analogously, we have "It seems$_d$ as if it *would be good* if p," which specifies the perceptual state distinctive of desire, and constitutive of the desire the propositional object of which is that it be the case that p."[81] (italics mine)

As we shall see later, this distinction in modality will turn out to be relevant.[82]

Evaluative Content vs. Evaluative Mode

So far, I have restricted the discussion to two distinctions that are compatible with a more or less strong analogy between desires and perceptual experiences. But there are at least two ways of conceiving of desire as being an evaluative state that do not draw on this analogy.

The first consists in thinking of desiring as an evaluative attitude. As an attitude, desiring would be analogous to other attitudes like believing, remembering, wondering and so on. Those states intuitively constitute attitudes in the sense that the same content, say p, can be the object of believing, desiring, remembering and so on. By assuming further that types of attitudes involve *sui generis* modes or specific ways of representing content, one might think of desiring as an evaluative attitude, i.e. an attitude involving an evaluative mode.[83] Desiring that p, on this option, is taking p to be *good* in the same way as, say, believing that p is, say, taking p to be *actual*[84]. The specific aspects of the attitudes (such as goodness or truth) characterise the mode and are not features of the content of the representation. One might formulate the view by appealing to commitment to, respectively, the goodness or the truth of

[81] Stampe 1987: 358-9.
[82] See p. 46.
[83] I shall speak of attitudes and modes interchangeably here, despite some differences between them. These however do not impinge on the discussion of this chapter. See p. 113 for more details.
[84] See p. 115.

some state of affairs. Indeed, it is one thing to experience a seeming with the content that p is good, it is another thing to take a positive stance towards p.[85]

The distinction between views relying on value as a feature of the content and those involving value as a feature of the mode can be formulated as follows, where "p" stands for content, "D" for the attitude of desiring, "R" for representing and "V" for positive value:

(i) D(p): $R(p_V)$ or R(V(p))
[to be read: In desiring that p, one represents that p is good/the goodness of p]

(ii) D(p): $R_V(p)$
[to be read: In desiring that p, one evaluates positively p]

According to this formulation, (i) expresses versions of the axiological view where the evaluative property is a feature of the *content* of desires, be it the content proper or a mode of presentation of it[86]. By contrast, (ii) expresses a view in which the axiological property is a feature of the *mode* of the representation[87]. On this option, we end up with the following variant of the axiological view:

Axiological Attitudinal View – A subject desires that p if, and only if, she evaluates positively p

Friedrich explicitly endorses this view. As he writes:

> "The upshot then is this: if we wish to capture the richness of our mental lives, we must recognise that just as there are ways of having a content before the mind that include an appraisal of it as being true or false, so too there are ways of having a content before the mind that include a positive or negative appraisal."[88]

Since the distinction between mode and content is orthogonal to the previous distinction, one might construe desiring as involving a counterfactual axiological mode. Whatever Stampe's final view of desire is, some formulations suggest that he might have had this distinction in mind. He writes:

> "while the belief and the desire that *p* have the same propositional content and represent the same state of affairs, there is a difference in the *way* it is represented in the two states of mind. In belief it is

[85] See p. 32 for the relevance of this distinction.
[86] On the distinction between modes *tout court* and modes of presentation, see p. 107.
[87] See Velleman 1992 and Friedrich 2008 for this view. See Deonna & Teroni 2012 for a similar view about emotions rather than desires.
[88] Friedrich 2008: 48.

> represented as obtaining, whereas in desire, it is represented as a state of affairs *the obtaining of which would be good*."[89]

One relevant aspect of the distinction between mode and content concerns the reason-responsiveness of desires. Indeed, thinking of desiring as a state that has values in its content is neutral with regard to the reason-responsiveness of the state. For being in such a state does neither implies that the state *is* responsive to reasons nor does it imply that it is *not* (depending on one's assumptions about seemings and how we understand the perceptual analogy in general). By contrast, thinking of desiring as an evaluative attitude, where the attitude itself is evaluative, suggests that desires are reason-responsive, provided that it is reasonable to think that attitudes, at least serious ones, constitute responses to reasons[90]. For instance, believing is a distinct attitude from, say, sorrow in virtue of these mental states responding to distinct types of reasons. Although speculative, this distinction with regard to reason-responsiveness, if true, will impinge on the way desires are explained and is thus relevant for the present investigation[91].

Experiential State vs. Doxastic State

Finally, a second way of severing the analogy between desires and perceptual experiences consists in conceiving of desiring as being a *doxastic* rather than experiential state.[92] On this view, desiring a state of affairs is nothing but judging or believing that the state of affairs is good.[93]

Doxastic View – A subject desires that p if, and only if, she judges/believes that p is good

One relevant implication of the distinction between doxastic and experiential accounts concerns the format of desire. Indeed, it is reasonable to assume that, on doxastic accounts, the content of desires is necessarily propositional. By contrast, the possibility of non-

[89] Stampe 1987: 355. It is worth noting that this quotation is compatible with desires involving an axiological feature in the mode of presentation of their content rather than in their mode proper, in which case Stampe's view is distinct from the view presented in this section.
[90] By serious attitude, I mean to exclude imagining. Imaginings indeed can be conceived as attitudes, but intuitively are not reason-responsive. See p. 315.
[91] See §5.1. Deontic Desiderative Consonance.
[92] Although one might think that doxastic states involve some phenomenal character, I assume that there is a logical space for accounts of desires that do not involve any phenomenal character and, for ease of exposition, shall call them "doxastic". I also assume that perceptual experiences are not doxastic states.
[93] See Davidson 1980: 97. Of course, there are other ways of conceiving of desires as being non-experiential states, as the issue of the phenomenal character of desire is orthogonal to one's views of desire. This being said, the doxastic view of desire constitutes a standard non-experiential account of desire.

propositional content of desires is left open on experiential accounts[94]. Although this constitutes an important difference, I shall ignore doxastic versions of the axiological views in this work, for the following two reasons. The first is the reasonable thought that the direction of fit of believing should be distinct from that of desiring, whatever the content of the belief. Only with this assumption can the "direction of fit" metaphor secure a neat contrast between types of representations. If desires are a type of belief or judgement, they will end up having the mind-to-world direction of fit that is characteristic of beliefs, which is an unfortunate implication.[95] Second, it is plausible to think that evaluative beliefs can partly explain desires. For instance, Mary might desire to swim *because* she believes that swimming is good. Such desires after all constitute standard examples of what are called "motivated desires"[96]. If so, this view can at first blush hardly make sense of the direction of fit and explanatory relations instantiated by desire.[97] Those are the reasons why I shall ignore it.[98]

Identity vs. Entailment

Let me finally mention a last distinction, which will contrast proper axiological views from borrowed ones. On the former, desiring is *identified* with some evaluation, whatever the details of the variants. By contrast, on the latter, desiring *entails* some positive evaluation, which is compatible with the claim that desire and the relevant positive evaluation are distinct states. Desires, for instance, might motivate evaluations or be motivated by them, without constituting them.

Entailment View – If a subject desires that p, she evaluates p positively

For this reason, proper axiological views should be distinguished from any view that restricts to an entailment relation in the absence of identity between desire and evaluation.

Since the distinctions presented are orthogonal, we end up with many theoretical possibilities for the defender of the axiological view. Although each distinction is relevant, it is worth

[94] See Tappolet 2009 on this distinction.
[95] See however Gregory *forthcoming* for a defence of the doxastic view of desire with regard to direction of fit.
[96] See Schueler 1995.
[97] This implies that the debate on the desire-as-belief literature (e.g. Lewis 1988) will be ignored in the present thesis.
[98] See p. 287.

noting that some combinations are more natural than others.[99] In what follows, I shall discuss axiological views in general terms, turning to a closer examination of some of the variants mentioned when necessary.

1.2. The Unity of the Axiological Views

In order to better understand the core of the axiological view, let me present some general implications of the view (§1.2.1.) and the main motivations that have been put forward in its favour (§1.2.2.).

1.2.1. Implications of Axiological Intentionality

I shall present three general implications of the axiological view concerning the polarity, strength and the normativity of desire, as they will become relevant later[100].

Firstly, given its appeal to values and provided that values are either positive or negative, the axiological view implies that desires necessarily have a polarity. Like positive emotions, desires are positive states, while aversions, like negative emotions, are negative states. Although this might seem trivial, this picture is contentious.[101]

Secondly, since values admit of degrees, the axiological view provides room for degrees of strength of desire. To have a desire that is stronger than another is to represent the content of the former as being more positive in value than the latter.[102]

Finally, the axiological view implies the following standard correctness conditions for desiring. A desire for p is correct if, and only if, p is good (whatever one's stance on the nature of the good). Conversely, desiring p is incorrect if, and only if, p is not good, i.e. either p is bad or p is neutral. By extension, the rationality conditions of desires end up being the following on this view. A desire for p is rational if, and only if, one is presented with a sufficient reason speaking in favour of the goodness of p, absent defeaters (i.e. without the presence of an overriding reason speaking against the goodness of p)[103]. Conversely, desiring p is irrational if, and only if, the subject is presented with a sufficient reason speaking in favour of either the badness or the neutrality of p, absent defeaters (i.e. without the presence

[99] For instance, it is odd to think of desires as doxastic attitudes and as involving an axiological mode at the same time. Indeed, if desires are doxastic, they intuitively involve the mode of judgement or belief, given that modes precisely serve to individuate types of mental states.
[100] See p. 280 and chapter 7. Desiderative Normativity – A Deontic Approach .
[101] See p. 298.
[102] I shall come back to this picture in due course. See p. 60.
[103] Pettit 1993: 55.

of an overriding reason speaking in favour of the goodness of p). In the absence of some reason speaking in favour of, or against, the goodness of p, the desire is a-rational.

1.2.2. Evaluation of the Arguments in favour of the Axiological View

Let us now move to what I think are the three main arguments in favour of the axiological view, or the thought that desires are essentially evaluative representations, to be found in the recent literature[104]. Although they constitute arguments for the claim that desires are *experiences* of the good, they can easily be extended to any variant of the view. Let me warn the reader that the objective of this section is not to provide a careful analysis of each line of argument. Rather, my aim is merely to point to some general problems that will be explained in more detail in the remainder of this chapter.

1.2.2.1. The Experience Conjecture

A first argument, presented by Oddie, relies on the relation between the good and what ought to be pursued. Starting with an intuitive description of desiring (i) and a definition of the good (ii), the argument concludes that desires are seemings of the good (C). This is why it is called the "Experience Conjecture". The argument runs as follows.

(i) In desiring that p, p is presented as something needing to be pursued, promoted or embraced (worth pursuing, promoting, embraced);

(ii) The good is what needs to be pursued, promoted or embraced (worth pursuing, promoting, embraced);

(C) Consequently, in desiring that p, p is presented as good, i.e. desires are seemings of the good. [105]

How conclusive is this argument? Although each premise is intuitively compelling, I think that this argument is problematic, for at least two reasons. The first is formal, while the second is substantial.

Let us assume that the second premise is true. From a formal point of view, the move from the premises to the conclusion is not warranted. Indeed, the first premise forms an intensional

[104] The arguments can be found in Oddie 2005 and Tenenbaum 2007.
[105] Oddie 2005: 55. Tenenbaum 2007: 29 seems to provide a similar argument, since he claims that in desiring that p, p "appears to be a fitting object of a conclusion of a piece of reasoning about what one has reason to do". By equating such an object with the good, we end up with the same conclusion.

context. This precludes the substitution of co-referential expressions *salva veritate*, which the second premise tries to motivate and which is supposed to lead to the conclusion. Given the intensional context of the first premise, p might be presented as worth pursuing without being presented as being good in virtue of the subject not being aware that being worth pursuing just is being good. That being said, I shall leave this worry aside and move to a more substantial problem.

The second problem questions the second premise, i.e. the equation of the good with what needs or ought to be pursued. Although one might think that if a state of affairs is good, then it ought to be pursued, identifying the good with what ought to be pursued is, to say the least, questionable. Indeed, within the normative realm, it is standard to distinguish between the evaluative, on the one hand, and the deontic, on the other. The standard candidate for the former is the good (as the goodness of taking a bath), while 'ought's constitute canonical examples of the latter (as the obligation to go to a particular meeting). If this distinction is taken seriously, what ought to be pursued seems to fall under the category of the deontic, given the presence of a deontic feature (ought). The distinction between the axiological and the deontic, and this way of understanding it, is of course very contentious.[106] However, if the standard distinction between the axiological and the deontic is right, then one cannot conflate the good with what needs to be pursued or promoted. For the argument to go through, it is necessary to motivate the identity between the axiological and the deontic. So far, I have not provided a counter-argument against this equation and thus against the second premise[107]. But my point is more modest and aims merely to draw attention to this substantial commitment that is part of the argument.

For those reasons, despite its intuitive appeal, there are reasons to question the validity as well as the soundness of the *Experience Conjecture*.

1.2.2.2. Motivation

A second argument, put forward by Oddie, draws on the relations between desires, evaluation and motivation. As he puts it:

[106] See Ogien & Tappolet 2009 for an extended discussion of the relation between the axiological and the deontic, as well as section 5.1.1.1. Values, Ought-to-be and Motives – Anti-reductionism.
[107] See section 5.1.1.1.1. The Irreductibility of Ought-to-be to Values.

> "The value data [i.e. the experience of value] should infuse the value judgements they undergird with motivational force. One way to achieve this would be for value data to be closely connected to desire. An experience of the goodness of P should bear an appropriate and necessary relation to the desire that P."[108]

Later, he writes:

> "(…) if desires are experiences of value, it is easy to show that they also satisfy the second desideratum [i.e. motivation]. They connect value judgements to motivation in a direct and immediate way."[109]

Both observations are meant to constitute inferences to the best explanation for two claims. The first is the claim that value-data motivate, while the second is the claim that desires motivate. The crux of both explanations lies in the equation of value-data with desires. The first argument, as expressed in the first quotation, can be glossed as follows. Value-data motivate. One plausible explanation of this fact is that value-data are desires, provided that only desires motivate. Since one might want to explain why desires motivate, the second quotation presents us with a second inference to the best explanation that is appealing to the axiological view. The thought is the following. Desires are said to motivate. If value data motivate, then identifying value data with desires would explain why desires motivate. From those inferences to the best explanation for the claims mentioned, the following deductive argument in favour of the axiological view can be formulated.[110]

(i) Only desires motivate
(ii) Value-data motivate
(C) Value-data *are* desires

I will not discuss the premises in detail and I shall assume that both premises are true. Yet, even if the premises are true, it seems to me that the conclusion does not follow. The reason is that the second premise, i.e. the statement that value-data motivate, is underspecified and can be understood in at least two ways. On the first disambiguation, it can be read as the strong claim that value-data *constitute* motivational states. If it is assumed that only desires motivate, this duly entails identification of value-data with desires[111]. However, the premise

[108] Oddie 2005: 50.
[109] Oddie 2005: 55-57.
[110] For ease of exposition, I allow myself to transform the inferences to the best explanation into a deductive argument. But nothing important rests on this, as my objection to the deductive argument is sufficient to undermine the inferences to the best explanation as well.
[111] Note that it does not entail that all desires likewise constitute value data. But I shall not discuss this worry here.

can also be interpreted as stating the weaker claim that value-data *entail* motivation. For instance, it might be thought that value-data cause or motivate desires. If desires go with motivation, this would infuse the value-data with motivation. The problem is that the latter interpretation is compatible with evaluations being distinct from desires, despite the intimate relation between the two. For entailment is distinct from identity. If so, a weaker conclusion than the one wanted follows, namely that value-data entail desires, as follows:

(i) Only desires motivate [i.e. only desires *constitute* motivational states]

(ii) Value-data motivate [i.e. value data *entail* motivation vs. value-data *are* motivation]

(C) Value-data *entail* desires

On this picture, value-data might still be motivating, but not in virtue of constituting desires. Since the premise can be made true either by the fact that value-data *are* desires or by the fact that they *entail* desires, it provided no reason in favour of one of these disjuncts in particular.[112]

Moreover, there are at least two reasons to doubt that the motivational power of desiring *consists* in their being evaluative states. Let me mention them without entering into details. First, the standard picture of the motivational power of desires appeals to their characteristic direction of fit. Now, the world-to-mind direction of fit is not straightforwardly to be understood in axiological terms.[113] Something more has thus to be said. Second, it makes sense to explain motivations by appealing to evaluations. For instance, it is perfectly appropriate to say that Sally is motivated to go to Paris because she positively evaluates her going to Paris. If this is so and if this kind of explanation requires distinct *relata*, the motivational nature of desire at most depends on the evaluation without consisting in it. A lot more should be said to undermine the strong interpretation of the crucial premise. Still, this is sufficient to shift the burden of proof to the defender of the axiological view.

Consequently, the argument from motivation, as intuitive as it seemed, is unsuccessful.

[112] This speaks against the inferences to the best explanation mentioned as well. Indeed, the existence of entailment relations between desires and value-data is sufficient to explain why desires motivate as well as why value-data motivate. For instance, if desires motivate and if value-data entail desires, then value-data motivate. Likewise, if value-data motivate and if value-data entail desires (or the other way around), then desires motivate.
[113] See §1.3.2. Objection II – Desiderative Direction of Fit for a discussion of this problem.

1.2.2.3. The Shadow of Moore's Paradox

A last argument, proposed by Oddie as well, relies on an axiological candidate for a Moore's Paradox for desires.[114] In order to present this argument, let me describe first the standard case for a Moore's Paradox, namely the one involving belief.

Consider the omissive case of Moore's Paradox for beliefs, i.e. the following assertion:

(a) "p but I do not believe that p".

Oddie understands the paradoxical nature of this assertion as follows. In asserting p, i.e. in the first part of the assertion, one expresses that one believes that p. Now this very same belief is explicitly denied by the same subject in the second part of the assertion. There is thus an air of paradox, since the assertion indicates both the presence and absence of a same mental state. This being said, an important part of the difficulty of understanding Moore's Paradox lies in the fact that the assertion is not contradictory. Indeed, it happens that subjects do not believe that p when p obtains. If the assertion was contradictory, this case would be impossible, provided that contradictions are impossible. In what follows, I shall take this description of Moore's Paradox for granted.

Consider now what Oddie calls the shadow of Moore's Paradox, namely the following assertion:

(b) "p but p does not seem true to me."

This assertion, he thinks, is also paradoxical. In this case, the paradox lies in the fact that in asserting p, one is presumed to have evidence speaking in favour of p, which typically consists in seeming to one that p is true.[115] Since this is precisely what is denied in the second part of the assertion, the statement is paradoxical. Again, the assertion is not contradictory as it might not seem to one that p, despite p being the case. Because of those similarities, Oddie thinks that the two paradoxes mentioned are equivalent, which is crucial for his argument to go through.

Do desires lead to similar paradoxes? It is tempting to think that they do, as the paradox in the case of belief partly relies on the essential connection beliefs bear to the truth. If desires bear a similar relation to the good, then similar paradoxes suggest themselves. Turning to

[114] Oddie 2005: 43-46, although Oddie uses cases of Moore's Paradoxes for desires for a distinct purpose, namely the explanation of what he calls the asymmetry thesis (2005: 28-29). This said, there is one step from a case of Moore's Paradox for desires to an argument in favour of a view of desire (see §5.2.3.1. From Modes to Moore's Paradox).

[115] Oddie 2005: 45.

Oddie's proposal, the analogous paradoxes in the case of desiring are the following assertions:

(c) "p is good but I do not desire that p."

(d) "p is good but p does not seem good to me."[116]

According to Oddie, (iii) and (iv) are equivalent, as (i) and (ii) were in the case of beliefs. Adding the extra premise that the paradoxes involving beliefs are explained by the fact that believing is seeming to one that the content of the belief is true, it follows that desires are seemings of the good. Let us lay out the argument.

(i) "p but I do not believe that p" is a case of a Moore's Paradox for beliefs.

(ii) "p but p does not seem true to me" is a case of a Moore's Paradox for beliefs.

(iii) (i) and (ii) are equivalent.

(C_1) Believing that p is seeming to one that p is true.

(iv) "p is good but I do not desire that p" is a case of a Moore's Paradox for desire.

(v) "p is good but p does not seem good to me" is a case of a Moore's Paradox for desire.

(vi) (iv) and (v) are equivalent.

(C_2) Desiring that p is seeming to one that p is good.

Does this argument speak in favour of the axiological view of desiring? I doubt so, for three reasons.

Let us focus on the form of the argument by restricting our attention to belief. For the argument to be convincing, it should be the case that the shadows of Moore's Paradox, what I shall call "Mooresque" paradoxes, are equivalent to the standard, say "Moorean", paradoxes, as stated in the third premise. The paradox involving axiological seemings, namely the Mooresque Paradox for desire, should then be equivalent to the Moorean Paradox involving desire, as stated in the sixth premise. In order to be equivalent, both paradoxes should state the presence or absence of the same mental states in each pair, namely belief and desire. This however is doubtful.

[116] Although Stampe rebuts the analogy with beliefs, he mentions another case for an axiological Moore's Paradox (1987: 356-7): "one may say, "Although it doesn't *seem* so to me, it is my belief that it would be good to do it" (just as one might say, consistently, "Although it doesn't *seem* to me to be so, the President is a great man"). But one may not say, "I want it, though it in no way *seems* to me as if it would be good to have it"; if one wants the thing, it must in some way *seem good*, when one wants it."

Consider the Moore's Paradox for beliefs. As far as the omissive standard Moore's paradox is concerned, two incompatible beliefs are expressed, namely the belief that p on the one hand, expressed by "p", and the belief that one does not believe that p on the other, indicated by "I don't believe that p". But it is not straightforward that the same mental states are expressed in the Mooresque version of the Paradox. On a weaker interpretation than the one put forward in Oddie's argument, (b) expresses, on the one hand, the belief that p and, on the other hand, the belief that one does not have evidence – or at least not conclusive evidence – in favour of p. Indeed, asserting "p does not seem true to me" might constitute the expression that one does not have conclusive evidence in favour of p. Consider for instance a subject making up her mind about p and hesitating about the truth of p. Such a subject might express her uncertainty about p by asserting that p does not seem true to her. This will provide a reasonable explanation of the absence of the belief that p. After all, if this person is epistemically virtuous, it is expected that she will not believe that p if she thinks that she lacks conclusive evidence in favour of p. Now, by assuming that evidence for beliefs is distinct from beliefs, it follows that the Mooresque paradox is not equivalent to the standard paradox. Indeed, the latter expresses partly the absence of the belief that p, while the former expresses partly the absence of a conclusive reason to form the belief that p. By extension, in assuming that (d) is to (c) what the Mooresque paradox for beliefs (b) is to the standard paradox (a), it follows that the paradoxes are not equivalent in the case of desire either. This then undermines the whole line of argumentation that hinged on the aforementioned equivalence, as this puts into doubt the premises (iii) and (vi) of the aforementioned argument.

One way to avoid this difficulty is to understand the seeming involved in (b) and (d) not as being an epistemic seeming but, in a sense, a phenomenological one. In other terms, it would capture how the world seems to one in believing and desiring. The thought would be that believing that p is seeming to one that p is true, while desiring that p is seeming to one that p is good. As being non-epistemic, the seemings in question are not reasons speaking in favour of the respective attitudes. Although this would avoid the aforementioned worry, there is the suspicion that favouring this interpretation over the evidential one is begging the question in favour of the axiological view, since it relies on the identification of desire with value-seemings. Moreover, independently of this suspicion, there are reasons to think that the axiological case for a Moore's Paradox, however one understands it, is problematic, as it will be made clear now.

Indeed, one might be sceptical about the extent to which the assertions (c) and (d) constitute expressions of desires, as they should for them to amount to desire-versions of Moore's Paradox. The reason why is that it is natural to think that the assertion (c), namely "p is good but I do not desire that p", might express the belief that p is good, on the one hand, and the belief that one does not desire that p, on the other. Likewise, the assertion (d), namely "p is good but p does not seem good to me" might express the belief that p is good, on the one hand, and the belief that one does not believe that p is good. This observation is meant to reveal that such readings of the cases are plausible, in which case the force of the argument is undermined once again. Indeed, this suggests not only that (c) and (d) are not equivalent, but that they might well fail to provide conclusions about desires. For the argument to be conclusive, it should rely on cases of Moore's paradoxes which constitute uncontroversial expressions of desires and do not constitute standard expressions of other attitudes. This may not be possible for the defender of the axiological picture given the existence of evaluative beliefs and the correspondence between the expression of evaluative beliefs and that of evaluative states in general. This is problematic, as it undermines the truth of premises (iv) and (v) above.

In order to be as charitable as possible, let me suggest a candidate for the expression of desire that presumably does not constitute the expression of an evaluative belief. Exclaiming "Hooray p!" might constitute the expression of an evaluative attitude like desires allegedly are. Assuming further that evaluative beliefs are not expressed by exclamations but rather by assertions like the one mentioned earlier, it follows that promising axiological candidates for a Moore's Paradox of desire, as far as this difficulty is concerned, would be the following:

(e) "Hooray p! I do not desire that p."

(f) "Hooray p! P does not seem good to me."

However, although this might avoid the aforementioned difficulty, it still faces a last problem, to which I shall now turn.

Indeed, even if it assumed that the cases of Mooresque paradoxes are equivalent to the standard Moore's paradoxes, and even if we grant that desires are expressed in both paradoxes for desires, it is not clear that axiological candidates for such paradoxes of desire constitute Moore's paradoxes similar to the ones of belief. Here is why.

When a person asserts Moore's paradox (for instance "p and I do not believe that p"), her utterance is barely understandable and sounds mysterious to our ears. We wonder what the

speaker intended to communicate. This dissonance constitutes part of the puzzle. But in the case of axiological candidates for a Moore's paradox, this does not seem to be so. Indeed, when suffering from irrationality, people might describe their state of mind with assertions of this sort. For instance, in suffering from depression, Sam might say that he positively evaluates going to the movie and even that going to the movie seems to him to be a good thing, although he does not have any desire to go to the movie. In that case, the intention of the speaker is to communicate her irrational state of mind, namely the absence of a desire ("I do not desire that p") despite being aware of having a reason to have such a desire ("p is good"). Although this is irrational, it is not clear that such assertions cannot be understood at all and are as mysterious as the parallel assertions mentioning beliefs.[117] If this is correct, it sheds doubt on the premises (iv) and (v), namely on the very thought that (c) and (d) are cases of Moore's paradoxes at all.

A second disanalogy between Moore's paradox for beliefs and the aforementioned candidates for desire builds on the previous observation and concerns the place of the negation in the two parts of the paradoxical assertion. Consider a variation on the sentence "p is good and I do not desire that p", namely: "p is *not* good and I desire that p". The latter sentence intuitively expresses the negative evaluation of p and the desire that p, as opposed to the former which presumably expresses the positive evaluation of p and the absence of desiring p. Now, although the former sounds strange, "strange" is not the best word to characterise the latter. For, it seems impossible to desire that p without positively evaluating p, which is precisely what is denied in the first part of the assertion. But, as mentioned earlier, one might not desire that p despite evaluating p in a positive light. The location of the negation does thus make a difference here. By contrast, initial cases of Moore's Paradoxes for beliefs are not similarly sensitive to the place of the negation. In other words, *both* sentences "p and I do not believe that p" and "not p and I believe that p" constitute assertions whose meaning is, to say the least, difficult to understand. The same observations apply to the cases of the Mooresque Paradoxes. Since the allegedly analogous cases for desires are not symmetric in this respect, this suggests that the candidates for an axiological Moore's paradox of desire examined are not the right one or that none exists.

Again, these observations are not meant to be knock-down counter-arguments against the axiological view. Still, they are sufficient to show that the standard case of a Moore's

[117] This suggests that evaluative states constitute defeasible reasons to desire rather than desires themselves. More on this on §1.3.3. Objection III – Desiderative Explanation.

Paradox for desire offered by the axiological view does not obviously establish the truth of that view. I shall come back in due course and diagnose this failure, as I think that it pinpoints an important problem for the axiological view of desire.[118]

As we saw in this section, it is not clear that the main arguments offered in favour of the axiological view are conclusive. The equation of desires with representations of what is worth embraced, the motivational power of desire and cases of Moore's Paradox do not seem to be sufficient reasons to think that desires are representations of the good. This of course does not imply that the view is doomed to fail, as this depends on the careful examination of it, which is the task of the last section of this chapter.

1.3. The Axiological View and the chief *Desiderata*

Let me mention two restrictions before proceeding. First, I shall assume that desires necessarily involve some positive evaluation of their content. Indeed, although some putative objections to this claim have been widely discussed in the literature, namely the possibility of desiring what appears fully bad to one, it seems to me that this debate too often amounts to a battle of intuition that I wish to avoid.[119] In order to be as charitable as possible, I shall leave this issue aside. Second, despite important differences between the variants of the axiological view, specific problems concerning variants of the view will not be discussed here. Rather, the aim of this section is to shed light on *structural* problems the axiological view faces in all its variants. Those problems will also help explain why the main arguments discussed in the previous section were problematic. In order to do so, I shall examine the evaluative view in the light of the three chief *desiderata* of this investigation, namely the death of desire principle (§1.3.1), direction of fit (§1.3.2) and desiderative consonance (§1.3.3).

1.3.1. Objection I – The Death of Desire Principle and the Phenomenology of Absence

Recall that a satisfactory theory of desire should account for the DODP and the phenomenology of absence that goes with the principle[120]. Does the axiological view of desire meet this *desideratum*? The answer to this question depends on whether *evaluating*, or at least the type of evaluation that desiring allegedly constitutes, satisfies this *desideratum*. Now, I doubt that this is so. The following observation serves to reveal why.

[118] See previous note.
[119] See for instance Stocker 1979, Velleman 1992 for the objections; see Oddie 2005 and Raz 2008 for the defence of the claim against the objections.
[120] See §0.4.4.

Let us assume that the DODP, the phenomenology of absence and the axiological view of desire are true. Two implications follow.

First, given the DODP, the relevant evaluative state constituting desire ceases to exist when one represents that its content obtains. Second, insofar as the axiological view meets the *desideratum* on phenomenology of absence, the evaluative state is incompatible with it seeming to one that its content holds. Both conclusions are implied by the thought that the evaluative state constituting desire shares the same properties as desires.

The worry is that both claims seem to be wrong, at least for standard types of evaluative states. Evaluative states *are* compatible with believing that their content is true. For instance, I might be happy that Mary is on my side and thus evaluate positively this state of affairs, while believing that she is on my side. Likewise, evaluative states *are* compatible with having the impression that their content obtains. Again, I might represent the presence of Mary in a positive light while having the impression that she seats in front of me at the same time.

The *aficionado* of the axiological view might reply that this does not prevent desires from constituting a type of evaluation, which, unlike other ones, satisfies those *desiderata*. Indeed, the axiological view does not require that any type of evaluation satisfy those *desiderata*. Rather, it is a virtue of the axiological view of desire that only the evaluations constituted by desires meet those constraints. So far, I agree. But one important question arises. What is the motivation for thinking that the type of evaluation constituted by desire satisfies those *desiderata*? In the absence of a satisfactory answer to this question, the reply just mentioned seems *ad hoc*.

Moreover, given that there is nothing in the nature of evaluations that is incompatible with the DODP and the phenomenology of absence, it is not clear that the axiological view can *explain* those features of desires, which was part of what we expected from an elegant theory of desire. Therefore, even if it is assumed that there is a type of evaluation that satisfies the relevant *desiderata*, this fact would still remain unexplained.[121] The burden of proof lies thus with the defender of the axiological view of desire.

Let us summarise the argument.

(i) Desires are evaluative states. [Axiological View]

[121] Note that Oddie 2005: 70-2 consequently rejects the DODP, one's *modus tollens* being another's *modus ponens*.

(ii) Desires necessarily cease to exist when one represents that their content obtains. [DODP]

(iii) In desiring that p, it does not seem to one that p. [Phenomenology of Absence]

(C_1) Evaluative states constituting desires necessarily cease to exist when one represents that their content obtains. [i, ii]

(C_2) Evaluative states constituting desires are incompatible with it seeming to one that their content obtains. [i, iii]

(iv) It is possible to positively evaluate p when one believes that p [against C_1].

(v) It is possible that one positively evaluates p while it seems to one that p obtains [against C_2].

(C) Therefore, the axiological view is not compatible and, *a fortiori*, does not explain the DODP and the phenomenology of absence that accompanies desire.

Let us examine in more detail whether the axiological view has the resources to resist this argument.

The defender of the axiological view might resist our conclusion by adopting the counterfactual version of the axiological view[122]. Indeed, if it is assumed that desires are representations of what *would be* good, desires might well end up being incompatible with representations or seemings that their content obtains. The thought is that one cannot simultaneously represent p as something that is the case and that would be the case. The reason why is the following disjunction: either p *is* the case or p *would* be the case, but not both. Assuming that mental representations inherit the relations instantiated by the properties they involve, it appears that one cannot represent the same state of affairs under both the modality of the actual and that of the counterfactual at the same time. Consequently, if p is represented as obtaining, p cannot be represented as what would obtain or as what would instantiate some property were p to obtain. If so, turning to the case of desire, representing p as what would be good is incompatible with representing that p holds. Let us call this the *counterfactual move*. The move consists in refining the premise (i) by replacing it by the counterfactual variant, in order to deny premises (iv) and (v) that constitute the bridge to the wanted conclusion. If this move is warranted, our objection misfires.

[122] See p. 31.

The question is to know whether this refined argument is conclusive or not. Two observations suggest that it is not.

First, if the only reason for adopting this move consists in it being the only variant of the axiological view that is compatible with the DODP and phenomenology of absence, then no progress would have been made. For this arouses the suspicion that this reply is *ad hoc*. After all, is there any further reason to conceive of desiring as a representation of what is counterfactually good? None suggests itself.

Furthermore, the move may not be sufficient to explain away the DODP. The intuition behind the reply consists in distinguishing representations of the actual world from representations of a counterfactual or possible world. The thought is that the former representations are incompatible with the latter. But this is not clearly the case. Let us assume that the counterfactual is part of the content of some representation. Accordingly, desiring that p is representing that p would be good. Now, consider a belief about counterfactual content, as the belief that if p obtained, then p would be good. This belief seems to be compatible with believing that p obtains at the same time. The subject might for instance reason in such a way that if p obtained, then it would be good and draw the conclusion that p is good from the very fact that p obtains. Having drawn this conclusion, it is still true of the subject that he believes that p is true as well as that if p were true, it would be good. More generally, it is clear that one might as well believe that p and believe that p would have some property were it to happen. If the counterfactual move merely consists in the contrast between counterfactual representations and actual ones as construed, then it is not sufficient to account for the DODP.

Note that the same problem arises if it is assumed that the counterfactual involved in desiring concerns the mode rather than the content of the representation. According to this alternative approach, desiring that p is a representation about the state of affairs p. But this state of affairs is represented in such a way that, "were it to obtain, then it would be good", where this refers to the mode of desiring. In order to see whether this alternative constitutes progress, let us assume that imaginings involve a counterfactual mode. In other words, imagining p is representing p under the guise of the possible. Let assume that this contrasts with the mode of actuality that is constitutive of beliefs, i.e. believing that p is representing p as what is actual. If the modal difference in the mode was sufficient to account for the DODP, then one could not imagine p and believe that p obtains simultaneously. But intuitively, nothing prevents one

from doing so. For instance, Sam might believe that it is raining and imagine that it is raining at the same time. In the same vein, Cleo might assume that p, for the sake of an argument, i.e. represent p as possible, while still believing that p obtains at the same time. *Mutatis mutandis*, representing a state of affairs as something that would instantiate goodness is equally compatible with believing that it obtains. For instance, as part of a philosophical exercise, Sam might represent that if it rained, then that would be good, while believing that it is in fact raining. If so, the counterfactual move, as intuitive as it seems, cannot be all there is to the DODP.

Before moving to further problems, it is worth mentioning that this observation corroborates the thought that the *Experience Conjecture* argument examined earlier is insufficient. Indeed, recall that this argument equated evaluative representations with deontic ones. Now, the relation those representations bear to the DODP is illuminating. Indeed, deontic representations seem to satisfy the DODP.[123] How could one represent p as something that ought to obtain while believing that p already obtains at the same time? If this is so, evaluative and deontic representations do not share all their properties, which suggests that the first argument errs in equating them.

1.3.2. Objection II – Desiderative Direction of Fit

Let us move on to a second crucial *desideratum*, namely direction of fit. Does the axiological view provide a plausible account of the direction of fit of desires? Again, the answer to this question depends on the direction of fit proper to evaluations or at least to the type of evaluation that desires allegedly constitute. As before, it does not seem that evaluations in general instantiate the world-to-mind direction of fit, a point which undermines much of the appeal of the axiological view.

In order to proceed carefully, it will be helpful to present a general recipe for determining the direction of fit of types of representations.

A standard algorithm for determining the direction of fit of a type of representation – one which does not rest on a particular interpretation of the metaphor – relies on the relation between the satisfaction conditions of a type of representation, on the one hand, and its

[123] For the defence of this claim, see §6.4. Explaining the DODP – A Deontic Explanation.

correctness conditions on the other[124]. The two relevant relations are the following: either the satisfaction conditions are identical to the correctness conditions of the representation or they are distinct. Consider the belief that p. This belief is satisfied if, and only if, p, i.e. satisfied just in case the belief is true. Since true beliefs are nothing but correct beliefs, it follows that the satisfaction conditions of the representation are identical to its correctness conditions. If the relation between correctness and satisfaction conditions is identity, then the representation has the mind-to-world direction of fit. By contrast, the satisfaction conditions of some types of representations differ from their correctness conditions. Consider desiring. The desire for p is satisfied if, and only if, p. Unlike belief, the fulfilment of the desire does not amount to the desire being accurate. Correct desires might be frustrated and incorrect desires might be satisfied. For instance, an unlucky virtuous desirer might have desires that are systematically frustrated. Conversely, a perverse person might luckily have her desires satisfied. This reveals that the satisfaction conditions of desiring are distinct from their correctness conditions and likewise for any representation that has the world-to-mind direction of fit. The algorithm is thus the following: if the satisfaction conditions are identical to the correctness conditions of the representation, the representation has the mind-to-world direction of fit; otherwise, it has the world-to-mind direction of fit.

Note that this algorithm is in line with the intuitive gist of the metaphor. Indeed, false beliefs, as incorrect beliefs, should be modified. But unsatisfied desire, as they do not necessarily involve a failing on the part of the desires themselves, should not be discarded only in virtue of their being frustrated.

With this recipe in mind, we can go back to our question concerning the direction of fit of evaluations. The question can be rephrased as follows: are the satisfaction conditions of evaluations identical to their correctness conditions? On the face of it, the answer to this question is positive. In other words, a positive evaluation of p is satisfied if, and only if, p is good, which amounts to the evaluation being accurate. This is plausible for beliefs that have an evaluative content. But the same holds for emotions, as it is plausible to understand them as being a type of evaluative state that has the mind-to-world direction of fit[125]. More generally, evaluating seems to constitute a commitment about how things are in the mind-

[124] See De Sousa 2011: 56-57 for the classical distinction used in the test. See however Velleman 1992 for doubts about this test (p. 106 of the thesis).
[125] See for instance De Sousa 1987, Tappolet 2000, Deonna & Teroni 2012.

independent world[126]. In evaluating, one commits oneself to the value of a state of affairs, an object or other, as one commits oneself to the truth of a state of affairs in believing it. It is then reasonable to think that evaluation is a type of cognition and thus has the mind-to-world direction of fit.
If this is right, it follows that evaluations have the opposite direction of fit to that of desire, which is of course problematic.

As before, the defender of the axiological view might reply that this observation is not worrisome, given that it is not part of the view that any evaluation has the direction of fit of desire. Rather, this might help capture the specificity of desire. But, as said earlier, this reply, as it stands, seems suspiciously *ad hoc*. If the key to understanding desire lies in values, it would be better that the nature of evaluations in general explains the world-to-mind direction of fit. But since evaluations typically instantiate the opposite direction of fit, no explanation of the direction of fit of desire is provided by appealing to values, even if it is assumed that there is a type of evaluation that has the direction of fit of desire.

The objection so far can be summed up as follows.

(i) A type of representation instantiates the cognitive direction of fit if, and only if, the satisfaction conditions of the representation are identical to its correctness conditions. [Algorithm]

(ii) Evaluative states are typically satisfied if, and only if, their content is good, i.e. if, and only if, they are correct.

(C_1) Evaluative states typically instantiate the *cognitive* direction of fit. [ii-iii]

(iii) Desires have the *conative* direction of fit. [*Desideratum* on Direction of Fit]

(C) The axiological view is not compatible with the direction of fit of desire and *a fortiori* dos not explain it [C_1, iii].

Let us dissect this argument further. Since the recipe for determining the direction of fit of representations is intuitive enough, this argument mostly relies on premise ii. One way to resist it is the thought that evaluations in general – including desiring – have both directions of fit. As a *Pushmi-Pullyu*, a fictional non-human animal in Dr. Doolittle's story, that has one

[126] Strictly speaking, the expression "mind-independent" precludes evaluations to be about mental phenomena, which is unfortunate. Still, I follow the usage of referring to what is distinct from the representation with the term "mind-independent". One should rather say "representation-distinct", as mental states can be about mental phenomena but also about phenomena that depend on the mind (like actions for instance). Nothing relies on this terminology here, but it is worth clarifying it to avoid confusion.

trunk with two heads facing opposite directions, evaluations can look both ways[127]. On the one hand, they aim at fitting values; on the other hand, the world is supposed to fit them. Indeed, not only are evaluations better when they are correct, but the world should also in a sense fit values, as the more values the world instantiates, the better place it is. This, one might think, would account for the dual direction of fit of evaluations. Similarly, the direction of fit of desiring might be conceived in this way. On the one hand, desires should track the good and conform to the facts of the matter. But, on the other hand, the world itself is better insofar as it conforms to them. It is thus tempting to think of desiring as instantiating both directions of fit. If this is correct, the third premise of our argument is false and the objection does not stand.

However, I think that the temptation just presented should be resisted. The two following observations serve to reveal why. The first relies on the very possibility of representations instantiating both directions of fit, while the second concerns the explanation of the world-to-mind direction of fit that has been mentioned.

It is first worth stressing that for a representation to have both directions of fit, the *relata* of the directions of fit cannot be the same for one direction as for the other. This is implied by the fact that directions of fit are asymmetric. In other words, if x is supposed to fit y, then it is not the case that y is supposed to fit x.[128] For directions of fit to be dual, a new *relatum* should be introduced. If this is right, in order for desires to instantiate both directions of fit, the *relata* of one direction of fit cannot be the same as those of the other, which is exactly what appears in the aforementioned description of desires' dual direction of fit. It has been said that the world is supposed to fit our desires, on the one hand. Now this means that for a subject desiring p, p should obtain. On the other hand, the thought is that desires should fit positive values. This means that a desire for p should fit the goodness of p. The presence of three *relata* can be made clear by the following formulation, where "p" stands for non-evaluative facts, "D(p)" for desiring, "V(p)" for the positive value of p and the arrow for the direction of fit:

$$\textit{world-to-mind}\text{: } p \rightarrow D(p)$$
$$\textit{mind-to-world}\text{: } D(p) \rightarrow V(p)$$

[127] Millikan 2005 was the first to apply the *Pushmi-Pullyu* metaphor to representations. See p. 313 of the present thesis for more details.
[128] See p. 132.

As it appears, the *relata* are not the same in one direction as in the other, since one relation ties desiring to non-evaluative facts, while the other relates desires to values or evaluative facts. Now, this change in the *relata* is, I think, problematic for at least three reasons.

First of all, it is worth emphasizing that a great part of the initial appeal of the metaphor is lost by changing the *relata*. Indeed, the initial metaphor contrasting beliefs and desires is puzzling precisely because those representations differ in their relation to the same *relatum*, namely the facts that constitute the satisfaction conditions of each kind of representations. It would be better to avoid changing the *relata* in order to take the metaphor at the letter.

Second, the presence of two distinct *relata* implies that desires will have distinct satisfaction conditions proper to each of their distinct directions of fit[129]. On the one hand, in virtue of the representation having the world-to-mind direction of fit, a desire for p is satisfied if, and only if, p obtains. On the other hand, in virtue of the representation instantiating the mind-to-world direction of fit, the same desire for p is satisfied if, and only if, p is good. Now, one might be suspicious about a single token of representation having multiple satisfaction conditions of the sort. This is not to say that the satisfaction of a desire can be brought about by distinct facts. This is possible in virtue of the under-determination of the content of our desires and is compatible with the standard account of the satisfaction conditions of desire[130]. But in the case mentioned, the distinct satisfaction conditions do not bear such a similarity relation to one another. Since the standard satisfaction conditions for desiring are the obtaining of their content, and since this does not preclude desiring from being correct or incorrect, admitting the existence of the distinct satisfaction conditions mentioned is problematic. Now, this counter-intuitive result is due to the assumption that desires have both directions of fit.

Finally, allowing representations to have both directions of fit strongly impairs the heuristic value of the metaphor. Indeed, whatever the metaphor means, it serves to establish a clear-cut contrast between cognitive and conative types of representations. But if we allow for representations with both directions of fit, then any clear-cut contrast is lost. The muddle is exacerbated if we talk of desires in particular as having both directions of fit, for they are supposed to constitute the paradigmatic example of representations instantiating the world-to-mind direction of fit.

[129] This is motivated further by the thought that fit is satisfaction, see §4.1.1.2. Fit and Satisfaction
[130] See Fara 2013 for the specification of the content of desire and p. 213.

These observations are not meant to constitute knock-down arguments against the reply examined. Still, they reveal that the strategy adopted by the defender of the axiological view comes at a cost. As the friend of the axiological view might be happy to embrace those implications, let me present a more direct argument against the understanding of the world-to-mind direction of fit that is part of the reply.

It is not clear that the account of the world-to-mind direction of fit provided is sufficient to meet our *desideratum*. Recall that the defender of the axiological view accounts for the thought that the world ought to conform to evaluations by the fact that the world is better off instantiating positive values. But this explanation is far from being uncontroversial. Indeed, even if it is assumed that the world should fit values, it does not follow that the world should fit evaluations. Inappropriate evaluations, in virtue of misrepresenting the good, had better not be satisfied, since the world would not be better were they satisfied. Even if desires are not on a par with evaluations here, provided that even inappropriate desires are such that the world should conform to them, as stressed earlier, this reveals that the world-to-mind direction of fit cannot be equated with the thought that the world should instantiate positive values.

Since it is possible to account for the thought that desires should fit the world without appealing to dual direction of fit and as the axiological explanation of the world-to-mind direction of fit does not come without problems, it appears that the axiological view cannot account for the direction of fit of desire easily.

Let me end this section with a final observation. As in the previous section, this discussion provides an explanation for why the arguments examined earlier failed (the second argument, in particular). Indeed, if evaluative experiences do not have the direction of fit of desires, this implies that they do *constitute* neither desires nor motivations. To hold that evaluations constitute the ground of desires and motivations, as suggested earlier, recognizes both the existence of a strong relation between evaluation and motivation as well as the cognitive nature of evaluations. This could preserve the grain of truth behind the *Pushmi-Pullyu* proposal, namely that evaluations in a loose sense have the world-to-mind direction of fit, without suffering from its flaws.

If what has been said in the last two sections is correct, i.e. if evaluations neither satisfy the DODP nor have the world-to-mind direction of fit, by Leibniz's law, it follows that desires are not evaluations. This however is not to say that desires do not bear a close relationship to evaluations. The examination of our last *desideratum* – the *desideratum* on desiderative consonance – is supposed to shed more light on this issue.

1.3.3. Objection III – Desiderative Explanation

As stressed in the introduction, desiring can be partly explained by the subject's other mental states.[131] Among the latter, it is common to mention positive evaluations. When confronted with awkward desires, pointing out the features of the desired object that one regards as desirable render the piece of behaviour intelligible.[132] Now, it appears that those desirability characterizations are nothing but evaluations of the state of affairs desired. But what is important for our discussion is that types of evaluation do not make a difference as far as the explanation of desire is concerned. For instance, it makes sense to say that Sam desires to swim in the river *because* it seems to him that swimming in the river is good, i.e. in virtue of an appearance of the good. But it equally makes sense to explain the same desire by appealing to the fact that he takes swimming in the river to be good, i.e. by an evaluative stance he is taking. This observation thus stands whatever one's way of understanding the evaluation, even when evaluations have the same content as that of the desire, as in our examples.

Moreover, it is plausible to think that the kind of explanation mentioned is at least partly causal. The fact that one positively evaluates that p might cause one to desire that p. This is where the problem for the axiological view arises. Causal relations indeed are irreflexive, i.e. require distinct *relata*. For instance, the statement "p because p" understood as "the cause of p is p" does not constitute an explanation: when one wonders why p and is answered in this way, she has been given no explanation. If desiring is an evaluation, an explanation of the desire by an evaluation with the same content as the desire would be vacuous in this way, provided that the type of evaluation is the same. This case should be distinguished from both (i) explanations of desires by appealing to evaluative states with distinct content, as well as from (ii) explanations of one type of evaluation by appealing to another type of evaluation. Those do not constitute reflexive explanations, given the difference between the *relata* of the

[131] See p. 10.
[132] See Anscombe 1963: 70-78.

explanatory relation. But if, as emphasized, desires can be explained by evaluations with the same content as that of the desire, however this evaluation is understood, the problem remains. If so, we should conclude that the axiological picture cannot make sense of our explanatory intuitions concerning desires.[133]

Again, as in the previous sections, the conclusion does not follow if it is assumed that desires constitute a *sui generis* type of evaluation. But since desires can be explained by evaluations, however one understands them, our conclusion stands.

The argument provided, the last *reductio* of the chapter, is the following:

(i) Desires are evaluative states. [Axiological View]

(ii) Desires can be partly causally explained by evaluations with the same content, whatever the type of evaluation.

(iii) If x partly causally explains y, x is distinct from y. [Irreflexivity of causal explanations]

(C_1) Desires can be partly causally explained by themselves. [i-ii]

(C_2) Desires cannot be partly causally explained by themselves. [iii, against C_1]

(C) The axiological picture does not satisfy the *desideratum* on explanation.

The crux of this argument lies in premise (ii), namely the assumption that the explanations in question are partly causal, which along with premise (iii) raises the threat of reflexivity. Now, the defender of the axiological view might resist this argument on the ground that some reflexive explanations are not causal and can thus be informative[134]. Let us consider some examples. Some glasses are fragile. One might explain why a particular glass is fragile by appealing to its molecular structure. Now, it is plausible to think that being fragile is nothing but having such and such a molecular structure or some feature that supervenes on its molecular structure. In that case, we have explained one fact by the very same fact, given that one reduces to the other or that one supervenes on the other (assuming that supervenience is a type of identity). In other words, supervenience and reductive explanations are non-causal explanations, hence their informative character. Other candidates are *a priori* explanations (e.g. 3 is a prime number because it is divisible by itself and by 1 only), essential

[133] See Brady 2007 for an objection that is similar in spirit and partly relies on the thought that emotions motivate desires.

[134] See Goldman 2006: 94 for the explanation of desires by the parts of desire, including the evaluative component, and a treatment of similar problems concerning causality. See §2.5. Interlude on Compound Views for compound views of desire.

explanations (e.g. Sam is a human being because he has such and such DNA), and maybe others. In those cases as well, one state of affairs is explained by the very same state of affairs, since being a prime number is nothing but a number being divisible by itself and by 1 only, and so on. As not all explanations are causal, one might think that the explanation of desires by evaluations is not a causal explanation. If so, our objection will not stand, as it depends on a false premise, namely the second one. And despite being reflexive, the explanations provided by the axiological view might still be informative, as they should be.

The issue of course is to establish whether the explanations of desires by evaluations are causal or not. As a reply, I think that there is a disanalogy between the explanations involving desires and the non-causal explanations mentioned, which suggests that explanations of desire are partly causal. In order to elaborate this thought, let us consider some features of non-causal explanations.

For those explanations to be informative, one should learn something by being provided with them. After all, this is what real explanations are for. In the case of the non-causal explanations mentioned, some information is provided, although for different reasons. Some explanations are informative in virtue of linking distinct levels of description or reality to each other in the explanation. For instance, one might think that the supervenience explanation mentioned ties the macroscopic and the microscopic levels. Alternatively, other explanations are informative in virtue of pointing to the extension of some concept or, more generally, providing some piece of information about the concept. This being said, despite those differences, the explanation ceases to be informative, as soon as one is aware of the co-extension of the *relata*. For instance, as soon as one knows what the concept of bachelor means, explaining that a person is a bachelor by pointing to the fact that the person is an unmarried man is uninformative, precisely because being a bachelor is nothing but being an unmarried man. The same goes for other types of non-causal explanations, including the ones that involve synthetic identity statements, since they all rely on the co-extension of the *explanans* and the *explanandum*. Let us assume that this change in the informative character constitutes the criterion for non-causal explanations.

If this is correct, turning to the explanation of desires by evaluations, we should conclude that those explanations are non-causal in type, if the mastery of the concept of desire transforms the explanation from being informative to being uninformative. It is not clear that this is so, however. Indeed, presumably, when being told that Sam desires that p because he positively

evaluates p, one might still learn something despite the mastery of the concept of desire. One learns the ground of Sam's desire or the reason why he desires so. Similarly, one learns the ground of Mary's belief when being told that Mary believes that p because she has seen that p. This suggests that those explanations inform us about the *rational* character of the mental state explained. This appears more clearly with variations of the cases.

A subject presented with evidence that speaks in favour of p, but does not believe that p, will be deemed irrational in the absence of a further explanation (for instance, in the absence of a countervailing reason that undercuts the evidence speaking in favour of p). In the same vein, imagine that Sam positively evaluates that p but does not desire p, although he is not presented with a sufficient reason not to have such a desire. In that case, we would learn that his desire is irrational and would seek for an explanation of the absence of the desire. Of course, the defender of the axiological view is inclined to deny that such cases exist. But there are reasons to think that one can be in such a state. One might indeed suffer from, say, depression, madness or just momentary irrationality. Such conditions do not necessarily prevent one from evaluating certain things positively, despite not desiring them. If this correct, explanations of desires by evaluations remain informative and are thus not similar to non-causal explanations. Since it is rational to assume that rational explanations include a causal element, it is reasonable to think that the explanation of desires by evaluations is partly causal in nature.[135]

It is important to note that this objection impinges on on how the axiological account fares with regard to two further *desiderata* of our investigation.

The first concerns the cases of desiderative dissonance and in particular the Moore's paradox for desire[136]. Our discussion of the Moore's Paradox for desire along axiological lines has already revealed some worries that we are now in a position to diagnose. If desires can be explained by evaluations, then the combination of the expression of the absence of a desire and of the corresponding evaluation, namely "p is good and I do not desire that p", does not constitute an instance of a Moore's Paradox. The reason is that such a combination expresses irrationality, which should be distinguished from the type of infelicity involved in the omissive case of the Moore's paradox.

[135] For the assumption that reasons can also constitute causes, see Davidson 2001.
[136] See p.12.

The second implication concerns how desire is graded. If evaluations partly explain the presence of some desires, they might as well partly explain the strength of the desire. As noted, evaluations admit of degree: one can represent a state of affairs as being better or worse than another. Now, it appears that the degree of a desire is a function of the degree of the positive evaluation of the state desired (all things being equal), at least for rational subjects. For instance, desiring to swim in the ocean more than visiting the Museum of Modern Art can be partly explained by one's representation of the former state of affairs as being better than the latter. Although this provides part of the explanation of the strength of desire, this will not offer a view of what the strength of desire *consists* in rather than merely *depends* on. But, as I observed in the introduction, we expect a theory of the strength of desire to provide a picture of what it *consists* in[137]. Given what has previously been said on evaluations providing the rational grounds of desires, the axiological view cannot meet that expectation. Indeed, the degree of evaluation might be severed from the degree of desire, as when one takes a state as being better than another, but irrationally fails to desire the latter to the corresponding degree. If this is so, the worry concerning the explanation of desires impacts the issue of the strength of desiring.

Let me bring this discussion to a close by offering a diagnosis of the difficulties raised regarding the arguments in favour of the axiological view presented earlier, in particular the second one, with the use of the result of this section. Indeed, if evaluations motivate desires, as suggested here, the assumption that value-data *entail* rather than consist in desires has been vindicated[138].

1.4. Axiological Moral

What should we conclude from the exploration of this first view of desire? Despite its intuitive appeal and other virtues, the axiological view, I think, is mistaken. Not only are the main arguments in its favour inconclusive, but the view faces important structural problems. Desiring, in other words, is not an evaluative state.

This being said, a more positive moral emerges. In spite of the problems mentioned, desires bear a close relationship to evaluations. As already mentioned, evaluations can constitute the grounds of desire. The modality of this claim can even be stronger in the sense that evaluations might constitute the necessary ground of desire. This ground might not

[137] See p.16.
[138] See p. 38.

necessarily be normative in nature, as one might want the possibility of a causal link between evaluation and desire to remain open. Still, if desires are grounded exclusively on evaluations, and if desires are necessarily grounded in some further mental states, it follows that evaluation is a necessary, although not a sufficient, condition for desiring. In other words, if a subject desires that p, then he positively evaluates p, although evaluating p positively does not entail desiring it. I shall for now assume that this is correct, since this nicely captures the intuition driving the axiological view while escaping from its difficulties. I will eventually motivate this picture further[139]. A world where creatures do not evaluate anything would thus be a *desireless* world. This however is not so because desire is a kind of evaluation, but because evaluation is a necessary condition for desiring. Conversely, a *desireless* world could thus also be a world in which creatures positively evaluate certain states of affairs, despite not desiring them. This might be a world full of irrational creatures. But such creatures are conceivable. And actual people in the grip of irrationality do behave like them.

If the moral of this chapter is true, it is time now to turn our attention to the second standard view of desire. This is the object of the next chapter.

[139] See 5.1. Deontic Desiderative Consonance.

2. Standard Views of Desires II – Desire and Motivation

"Il (…) décida qu'il fallait absolument qu'elle permît ce soir-là que sa main restât dans la sienne. (…) La nuit vint. (…) On s'assit enfin (…).
Préoccupé de ce qu'il allait tenter, Julien ne trouvait rien à dire. (…)
L'affreux combat que le devoir livrait à la timidité était trop pénible pour qu'il fût en état de rien observer hors lui-même. Neuf heures trois quarts venaient de sonner à l'horloge du château, sans qu'il eût encore rien osé. Julien, indigné de sa lâcheté, se dit : Au moment précis où dix heures sonneront, j'exécuterai ce que, pendant toute la journée, je me suis promis de faire ce soir, ou je monterai chez moi me brûler la cervelle.
Après un dernier moment d'attente et d'anxiété, pendant lequel l'excès de l'émotion mettait Julien comme hors de lui, dix heures sonnèrent à l'horloge qui était au-dessus de sa tête. Chaque coup de cette cloche fatale retentissait dans sa poitrine, et y causait comme un mouvement physique. Enfin, comme le dernier coup de dix heures retentissait encore, il étendit la main et prit celle de Mme de Rênal, qui la retira aussitôt. Julien, sans trop savoir ce qu'il faisait, la saisit de nouveau. Quoique bien ému lui-même, il fut frappé de la froideur glaciale de la main qu'il prenait ; il la serrait avec une force convulsive; on fit un dernier effort pour la lui ôter, mais enfin cette main lui resta."
Stendhal, *Le Rouge et le Noir*, IX.

Stendhal nicely portrays how Julien's strong desire to hold Mrs de Rênal's hand is the beginning of an endeavour that will eventually make Julien's desire become true, his fears and shyness notwithstanding. Desires indeed tend to move us to act in such a way as to realise them. Like forces inside us, they propel us to bring about changes in the world, colouring our mind with a motivational *oomph* that springs into actions.[140] Consider for instance what you strongly desire at this moment, the dream of your life so to speak. It is likely that this strong desire of yours motivates you to act in ways that will make this desire or this dream become true. You might not know how to make it true. You might hesitate to make it true. You might be afraid of making it turn true. But you are still disposed to make it real or at least to try to do so.

According to the motivational view of desire, this is the key to understanding desires. Desiring, on this view, is nothing but a motivational state.[141] *Desireless* creatures might well evaluate the world, but they are not disposed to act in any way or at least in the way desires are supposed to spur our actions. If desire were the only source of action, they would be totally passive creatures, sadly. Or so goes the story told by the tenant of the motivational view.

[140] See for instance McDowell 1998 for the metaphors of the so-called "hydraulic" conception of desire.
[141] See for instance Armstrong 1968, Stampe 1986, Stalnaker 1987, Smith 1994, Dancy 2000.

As stressed earlier, the motivational view of desire is very popular in the recent philosophical literature[142]. Much of its appeal is due to the way desire is understood by three theories or theoretical tools: the Humean picture of the mind, the direction of fit of desire and the functionalist picture of desire. Let me say a few words about each of these.

According to the Humean picture of the mind, cognitive mental states are to be contrasted with desires precisely in virtue of the latter essentially constituting motivations to act, contrary to the former[143]. As the Humean slogan famously puts it, reason alone is inert, while desire is an essentially motivating passion.[144] Whatever the right interpretation of Hume's thought, the standard interpretations speak in favour of the thought that desires are essentially motivating. The Humean picture of the mind is thus one way to capture the intuition driving the motivational view.

Now, as mentioned earlier, this Humean contrast is often equated with the distinction in directions of fit. Although a contentious issue, the world-to-mind direction of fit is often understood in motivational terms[145]. The metaphor of direction of fit invites thus the adoption of the motivational view of desire. This is a second way of emphasizing the intimate link desires bear to motivation.

Finally, despite the fact that the motivational view does not commit itself to a functionalist picture of desire, it fits nicely with such an approach. Indeed, one way of understanding desires from the motivational perspective is to appeal to the relation they bear to intention. In other words, one might think of desire as instantiating the function of motivating subjects to act.[146] Now, this way of individuating mental states is the core of functionalist approaches to the mind. Although other functionalist stories might be told to supplement the motivational one, it is natural to think that the function of desire bears a peculiar relation to intentions and actions. This constitutes another way of outlining the intuitive character of the motivational view.

It appears thus that the Humean picture of the mind, the direction of fit of desire, and functionalism all invite us to endorse the motivational view of desire, which might partly

[142] See p. 4.
[143] I leave exegetical issues aside here.
[144] See for instance Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, II, 3, 3.
[145] See for instance Searle 1983 and Smith 1994.
[146] See for instance Dretske 1998: 110, Smith 1994: 115 and Millikan 2005 on the functional role of desire.

explain its popularity. This being said, despite its prevalence, the motivational view is rarely examined in detail. This chapter aims at filling this lacuna.

As in the previous chapter, I shall discuss the view in three steps. In the first part, I shall present multiple variants of the view. In the second part, I concentrate on the core of the view by presenting some implications one can draw from it and by discussing the main arguments that have been offered in its favour in the recent literature. As in the previous chapter, the finding will be that the arguments are as such inconclusive, as intuitively compelling as they seem to be. Moreover, which is more important, the view suffers from structural problems, which are presented in the third part of the chapter. In this sense, it is on a par with the axiological view of desire. Finally, as this chapter closes our discussion of the standard views of desire, I shall conclude with an interlude on views portraying desire as a complex state made of evaluation and motivation. The moral I shall draw is that standard views of desires as well as mixtures of those views do not capture the essence of desiring. Or so I think. In order to convince the reader, let me begin by presenting first the motivational view of desire in more detail.

2.1. Varieties of Motivational Views

Just like the axiological accounts of desires, there are several ways of understanding desires as being essentially motivations. Let me present first the standard approach, which spells out desires as being dispositions.

2.1.1. Dispositions to Act

The standard way of understanding desire in motivational terms is by conceiving them as being dispositions to act in favour of the obtaining of their content. In other words, in desiring that p, a subject is disposed to act in favour of p. For instance, desiring to contemplate the stars is nothing but being disposed to act in such a way that one's attention is captured by the stars.

> *Motivational Dispositional View* – S desires that p if, and only if, S is disposed to act in such a way that p.

One *proviso* is worth addressing at the outset. This view, as formulated, is insufficient. Indeed, since subjects might have false beliefs about the means to bring about some state of affairs, it is not necessarily true that a desiring subject is disposed to act in ways that *bring about*, i.e. actually realise, the desired state of affairs. For instance, Sam might desire to please Mary and falsely believe that offering her some roses will please her. In that case, Sam is disposed to act in such a way that he believes will bring about the satisfaction of his desire. However, since his instrumental belief is false, he is not actually acting in a way that would bring about the desired state of affairs, as Mary is allergic to roses. In the light of this complication, the standard formulation of the motivational view should be amended in such a way that the beliefs about the means are taken into consideration, as follows:

> *Refined Motivational Dispositional View* – A subject desires that p if, and only if, she is disposed to act in ways she *believes* will bring about p[147].

This is probably what Stalnaker meant to capture by the following:

> "To desire that p is to be disposed to act in ways that would tend to bring it about that p in a world in which one's beliefs, whatever they are, were *true*."[148]

Let me outline two features of this view that will help grasping how much it embraces.

First, since desires are conceived as dispositions to act, the view is compatible with the existence of desires that do not manifest in actions and, which is more controversial, even do not involve being *actually* motivated to act[149]. In desiring to remove the past, for instance, one might not be *actually* motivated to act in such a way that what is desired comes about. It is reasonable to explain the absence of actual motivation in this case by the thought that being *actually* motivated to act requires having the belief that it is possible for one to act in such a way that the content of the desire obtains – or at least not having the belief that acting in such a way is impossible. It is important to bear this in mind, as some have thought that desires of this sort are counter-examples to the motivational view.[150] But the view as we have formulated it avoids this difficulty. Indeed, although the subject is not *actually* motivated to

[147] See Schroeder 2009. From now on, the locution "disposition to act in favour of p" is used as a shorthand for "disposition to act in ways the subject *believes* will bring about p".
[148] Stalnaker 1987: 15. See for instance Stampe 1986 for a discussion of Stalnaker's quotation.
[149] About inert desires and counter-examples to the motivational view, see p. 310. For ease of exposition, I assume that dispositions to act and motivations to act are the same.
[150] See for instance Friedrich *unpublished*, Mele 1995.

act, she is still *disposed* to act in favour of the obtaining of the desired state of affairs. For, were she to believe that she can erase the past, it is likely that she would be actually motivated to do so. Counterfactuals of this sort are sufficient to correctly ascribe a disposition to act to a subject.

Armstrong explicitly endorses this view. He writes:

> "To have a want or a wish concerning things known to be beyond our power is to be in a mental state such that, if we were to believe the objective of the state could easily be fulfilled by certain courses of action, we would attempt to fulfil it, or at least, there would be a tendency to attempt to fulfil it. Suppose, for instance, I wish that I had attended the first night of *Twelfth Night*. My mental state is such that, if I had lived in Elizabethan England, but known something of what is known of Shakespeare today, I would have at least had some impulse to attend this performance."[151]

The second observation concerns the manifestation of the disposition. Our formulation only explicitly mentions actions. Still, the motivational spirit of the view is compatible with desires being dispositions to choose, try or intend to bring about the desired state, without necessarily performing the attendant actions and thus strictly speaking acting[152]. I shall assume this liberal extension of the manifestation of the disposition, since at least one argument in favour of the view relies on it[153].

As before, it is worth stressing that this dispositional view states the existence of an *identity* relation between desires and dispositions to act. This should be distinguished from an *entailment* picture according to which desires *entail* dispositions to act without constituting them.

> *Motivational Entailment Dispositional View* – If a subject desires that p, then she is disposed to act in favour of p.

The *entailment view* leaves open the possibility of a distinction between desires and dispositions to act, whatever the "strength" so to speak of the entailment relation. Desires

[151] Armstrong 1968: 155. See also Schroeder 2004: 17 and Dancy 2000: 87-88, although the latter appeals to possibilities to act rather than beliefs about possibilities to act.
[152] See Pettit 1993 for a motivational account appealing to choice and Anscombe 1963 for an account relying on trying.
[153] See §2.2.2.1. The manifestation of desire.

might indeed be conceived as entailing dispositions to act *only in certain conditions*. For instance, one might think that desires entail dispositions to act only if the subject is rational. If so, desires end up being the rational ground of the disposition to act rather than *constitute* it proper. This is the view I shall eventually motivate. But even if it is assumed that desires *necessarily* entail dispositions to act, the entailment view remains compatible with the distinction between desiring and dispositions to act, for the former might necessarily be accompanied by the latter. Of course one would need to give some motivation for such a view, but my purpose here is merely to point to the distinction between proper motivational views that identify desires with dispositions to act and views that lie in the vicinity. This will prove important in our assessment of the motivational view.

2.1.2. Motivational Mode

Since the standard motivational view is expressed in dispositional terms, one might think that it is at odds with the first-personal approach on the intentionality of desire this dissertation favours. Indeed, the formulation remains silent on the way content is represented in desiring. Let us thus suggest a formulation of the motivational view that captures the intentionality of desiring from the first-person perspective.

A promising description is to construe desires as involving a mode under which content is represented, a mode that is motivational nature. On this view, desiring that p is representing the state of affairs p. But this state of affairs is represented in a particular manner, namely under the guise of a goal or of what ought to be done.[154] For instance, desiring to kiss Mary is representing the state of affairs in which one kisses Mary as a goal or as what ought to be done. Since goals and norms for action are motivating, the motivational mode implies that desires are motivational attitudes. If attitudes are ways of taking stances, desiring is *taking* p as a goal or as what ought to be done[155]. The view we end up with is the following:

> *Motivational Mode View* – A subject desires that p if, and only if, p is represented/taken as a goal/what ought to be done.

As before, two considerations are worth highlighting.

[154] On the distinction between mode and content, see p. 109.
[155] See p. 124 on this metaphor about attitudes.

The first concerns the modality involved in the representation of goals. If one thinks that representing p as a goal requires believing that there is something one can *actually* do to meet the goal, as it has been suggested for being actually motivated earlier, a counterfactual modification of the view suggests itself. On this option, desiring that p is taking p as *what would be* a goal, were one to believe that one can actually act in favour of p. It is worth recalling this option in order to be as charitable as possible in our discussion.

Second, the motivational mode account should be distinguished from the view that desires merely *entail* representing their content as a goal, for the same reasons as the ones mentioned in the previous section. For instance, one might think that desiring that p entails taking p as a goal, where the desire is the ground of the representation of the goal. I shall come back to this issue in due course.

Although this is debatable, I shall assume that the dispositional view and the view relying on the motivational mode are equivalent[156]. The reason why is that I think that the merits and virtues of the motivational view apply equally to both. Moreover, despite the differences, the two variants presented share core features. Let me present them in order to assess the view in more detail.

2.2. The Unity of Motivational Views

I shall present first some implications of the motivational view (§2.2.1) before presenting the main lines of defence that have been put forward in its favour in the recent literature (§2.2.2).

2.2.1. Motivational Implications

As in the previous chapter, I shall restrict my presentation of the implications of the motivational view to the polarity, the strength and the normativity of desire, since this will be revealed to be significant later.

[156] One might think that dispositions to act are distinct from representations of goals in virtue of the former being partly *explicable* by the latter. For instance, one might explain why Sam is disposed to go swimming by the fact that he takes this state of affairs as his goal. If this is correct, and if the explanation is partly causal in nature, dispositions to act and representations of goals are distinct. In that case, the two views differ.

According to the motivational view, the polarity of desire will be accounted for in terms of the polarity admitted by goals and what ought to be done. Goals can indeed be positive or negative, just as what ought to be done contrasts with what ought *not* to be done. To positively desire that p is thus to be motivated to act in favour of the obtaining of p, while being averse to it being that p is being motivated to avoid p or to prevent p from obtaining.[157]

Second, the motivational view provides room for the strength of desire, as motivations come in different degrees: one can be more motivated to do some particular action rather than another. On the motivational view, this captures the strength of desire. Indeed, on this view, desiring that p more than one desires that q just is being more motivated to act in favour of p than in favour of q.[158]

Finally, as far as the normativity of desire is concerned, a desire for p ends up being correct if, and only if, p ought to be done or, at least, the subject ought to be motivated to act in favour of p.[159] Conversely, a desire for p is incorrect if, and only if, it is not the case that p ought to be done, i.e. acting in favour of p is either neutral or wrong, or at least the subject should not be motivated to act in favour of p[160]. For instance, desiring to swim is appropriate if, and only if, one ought to do so or should be motivated to do so. In case one should not swim nor be motivated to do so, desiring to do so would be inappropriate.

By assuming that the rationality conditions of desire depend on its correctness conditions and that the correctness conditions of desire are the ones stated, a desire for p will be rational if, and only if, the subject's desire is grounded in a state that constitutes a sufficient reason to act in favour of p, absent defeaters. For instance, assuming that evaluating p constitutes a sufficient reason to act in favour of p, a desire that is motivated by such evaluation is, all things being equal, rational. Conversely, if the subject is presented with a sufficient reason that speaks against acting in favour of p, desiring p is irrational. In the absence of any reason speaking in favour or against acting in favour of p, the desire for p would be a-rational, as far as such cases exist.

[157] See Schroeder 2004: 26-27 for a discussion of this view.
[158] See for instance Schroeder 2004: 13.
[159] See for instance Mulligan 2007. In order to avoid the problem of supererogatory actions, the oughtness in question should be construed as involving any right or permissible action, not only obligatory ones. See p. 223 for a discussion of this account of the correctness conditions of desire.
[160] This amendment is supposed to help distinguishing the correctness conditions of desire from those of intentions, in case one thinks that what ought to be done captures the correctness conditions of the latter.

We are now better acquainted with the motivational view. But is there any reason to adopt it? As we shall now see, philosophers have offered at least two reasons to answer affirmatively.

2.2.2. The Arguments in favour of the Motivational View

I will consider here two main arguments in support of the identification of desires with motivational states. As in the previous chapter, the aim of this section is not to provide a careful analysis of those arguments, but rather to point to some problems that shall be approached in more detail later.

2.2.2.1. The manifestation of desire

A first argument relies on the manifestation of desire. As Anscombe famously observed, "the primitive sign of wanting is trying to get"[161]. The gist of this observation can be understood by asking the following question. What constitutes the most basic evidence that a person desires a state of affairs if not that she is trying to bring about the state of affairs? By interpreting this observation in more detail, the following argument in favour of the motivational view of desire can be formulated.

Desires admit of several types of manifestations, from cries and sorrow to smiles and delight. But those might not be on a par, in the sense that some manifestations might be more paradigmatic or in some way privileged. Let us assume that what is meant by "the primitive sign of wanting" is the privileged manifestation of desire and that trying, or more generally acting, constitutes this privileged manifestation of desire. Now, one explanation of why acting is the privileged manifestation is to consider desires as being dispositions to act[162].

Let us formulate the argument more carefully. For the argument to be sound, some hidden premise, namely the second one below, is necessary to provide the bridge from Anscombe's observation to the conclusion that is wanted here.

(i) The privileged manifestation of a desire for p is trying to get p, i.e. act in way believed to bring about p.

[161] Anscombe 1963: 68.
[162] Given what has been said earlier, I shall assume that dispositions to try, to intend and to act are identical, since as far as I can see, this does not affect my discussion.

(ii) If acting is the privileged manifestation of desire, then desiring essentially is a disposition to act.

(C) A desire for p essentially is a disposition to act in favour of p.

In order to discuss this argument, let us discuss each premise, beginning with the first.

The premise is problematic in the light of a well-known distinction between dispositions. Some dispositions indeed are multi-track, i.e. admit of several manifestations. For instance, loving someone might be manifested by the desire to see the person, the pleasure to know she is happy or anxiety in the face of her wrongdoings. This should be contrasted with single-track dispositions, for instance the habit of drinking coffee first thing in the morning, which admits of only one type of manifestation. In the case of multi-track dispositions, a particular manifestation might be essential for instantiating the disposition. But some multi-track dispositions might not have a privileged manifestation. If the latter, the fact that S_1, S_2 and more generally S_n constitute the manifestations of the disposition D suggests that D is a disposition to S_1, S_2 and more generally S_n. Unless one has established that one manifestation, say S_1, is privileged, concluding that the state essentially is a disposition to S_1 is a *non sequitur*. Now, it is natural to think that desires are multi-track dispositions. Indeed, they dispose us to act, but they also dispose us to feel pleasure when we believe they are satisfied, to be worried when one believes that the chances of their satisfaction decrease, to be sad when one believes that they are frustrated, and so on. For the argument to be sound, it should be established that action constitutes the essential manifestation of desire. But why would that be so? In the absence of an answer to this question, assuming that action is the privileged manifestation is begging the question. Indeed, it assumes the existence of an essential link between desire and motivation, which is precisely what was supposed to be argued for.

For the sake of argument, let us ignore the previous difficulty and assume that action is the privileged manifestation of desire. Even so, I think that there are reasons to doubt the conclusion.

Consider the second premise. It is worth observing that the conditional stated in the premise cannot be easily generalised to any type of mental state and manifestation of the state. Indeed, for some states at least, the manifestation is not – or at least not straightforwardly – essential to the state, although it constitutes a privileged manifestation. For instance, asserting that p constitutes the privileged manifestation or evidence in favour of the belief that p, all things

being equal[163]. Applying the second premise to this case, it follows that believing that p essentially is being disposed to assert p, where this captures the whole essence of belief. This however is doubtful. Despite the existence of a close relationship between beliefs and assertions, one might account for such a relationship by appealing to some essential feature of beliefs. If, say the essence of beliefs *entails* the disposition to assert, then the existence of a close relationship between beliefs and this disposition is secured without the need to identify the two. In other words, the fact that y constitutes the privileged manifestation of x is compatible with the disposition to y being merely entailed by x, given the essence of x, and without x being essentially a disposition to y. For the second premise to be warranted, one should motivate the move from the existence of an intimate relationship holding between some mental state and its manifestation to the stronger claim that the state *consists in* the disposition to manifest the relevant manifestation. Turning to the case of desire, one might explain away the fact that acting is the manifestation of desire by appealing to the thought that desires entail dispositions to act, without consisting in them. Although the premise may hold in virtue of some distinctive aspect of desire, without analogue premises applying to other mental states like the one mentioned, it still remains to be established why desires would differ from other mental states in this respect. Merely stating that there is an essential link between desire and action will not do, as this is precisely what should be argued for.

Finally, even if we assume that acting is the essential manifestation of desire and that privileged manifestations capture the essential property of some mental state, one might question the argument from another perspective.

Indeed, actions intuitively constitute the privileged manifestation of other states, like intentions and habits as well. Now, if M constitutes the essential manifestation of the mental states S_1 and S_2, then we are not warranted to infer from this that the mental state S_1 is essentially and specifically a disposition to M. For the mental state S_2 might as well constitute such a disposition. Therefore, if the argument was meant to point to the specific feature of desires (vs. other states like intentions or habits), as it was expected to, it is insufficient as such.

It is plausible to reply that this does not worry us, as the other mental states sharing the manifestation of desire precisely are also dispositions to act. Indeed, it is not far-fetched to think of intentions and habits as being dispositions to act as well. However, this reply is

[163] For instance, the speaker should be sincere, have linguistic skills and so on.

problematic. If we assume that intentions and habits are dispositions to act, then we have lost the distinction between desires and those other mental states. Although one might think that those other mental states involve dispositions to act and also other features (for instance, the belief that one will act in the case of intention), this reveals that the appeal to the manifestation of those dispositions is not sufficient to capture their specificity. Now, if it is not sufficient in the case of intentions, why would it be so in the case of desire? This question remains open.

This observation can be presented with the following dilemma. Either the manifestation is sufficient to capture the specificity of the mental states, but then we lose the distinction between desires and intentions for instance. Or, we assume that the manifestation is not specific to the mental states, in which case the distinction between desires and intentions is secured, but at the cost of the general line of argument that we have examined in this section.

I concede that this last observation is not sufficient to undermine the thought that being disposed to act is a necessary feature of desire. Still, for the argument to be conclusive, it should entail that being disposed to act is necessary and sufficient for desiring. After all, entailment views can also make sense of the thought that dispositions to act are necessary, although not sufficient, conditions for desires. Now, it is not clear that this argument has the resources to end up with both necessary and sufficient features of desire. Things would be different if acting was the exclusive privileged manifestation of desire. But it does not seem to be so.[164]

Since those problems come from the fact that the argument relies on the manifestation of desire, one might wish to capture Anscombe's intuition independently of this issue. This is what the second standard argument in favour of the motivational view attempts to do. Let me discuss it briefly.

2.2.2.2. Action explanation

This argument, similar in spirit to the first, is focused on the explanation of action. Its starting point is provided by the thought that desires are, in some sense, necessarily involved in the explanation of action. As Marks puts it,

[164] Even if one restricts to intentions as being the privileged manifestation of desire, it is not clear that it suffices to distinguish between desires and habits, as the manifestation of habits might be intention as well.

> "Whenever a person does something, he or she may be said to want to do that thing. For example, if Mary eats an apple, it is perfectly acceptable to say that Mary *wants* to eat the apple. After all, if Mary did not want to eat the apple, why would she eat it?"[165]

If so, one straightforward explanation of this fact is to identify desires with dispositions to act. As Dancy writes:

> "Just as, in the relevant thin sense of desire, there can be no action without desire, so, and for the very same reason, there can be no action without motivation. (…) So I understand desire as a non-cognitive state, that of being motivated."[166]

The gist of the argument is nicely summarised by Wallace:

> "This model, which I shall dub the hydraulic conception, pictures desires as vectors of force to which persons are subject, where the force of such desires in turn determines causally the actions the persons perform. This approach may be thought of as offering a particular and contentious interpretation of the more or less truistic dictum that persons always do what they most want to do. (…) The hydraulic conception extracts from the dictum a more interesting and controversial thesis by assuming a different and more restrictive notion of desire. According to this more restrictive notion, desires are conceptually and empirically distinct from our intentions in action, in the sense that one can want to do something without necessarily intending or choosing to do it. They are given to us, states that we find ourselves in rather than themselves being primitive examples of agency, things that we ourselves do or determine. The hydraulic conception maintains, furthermore, that desires that are given in this way have a substantive explanatory role to play in the etiology of intentional action."[167]

One way of formulating the argument is as follows.

(i) Necessarily, if S acts in favour of p, S is motivated to act in favour of p[168].

(ii) Necessarily, if S is motivated to act in favour of p, S desires that p.

(iii) Necessarily, if S acts in favour of p, S desires that p. [i, ii]

(iv) The best explanation of (iii) is that desiring is a disposition/motivation to act.

(C) Desiring is a disposition/motivation to act.

How convincing is this argument? For the sake of argument, I shall assume that the first three premises are true and notably that actions involve desires[169]. The fourth premise however is problematic.

[165] Marks 1986: 134.
[166] Dancy 2000: 89.
[167] Wallace 2006: 172-173.
[168] Again, this should be read as S is motivated to act in ways she believes will bring about p. See p. 60.

Indeed, there are at least two ways to account for the fact that actions involve desires. The first is the equation of desires with dispositions to act, as in the argument formulated. But one does not need to adopt this strong claim in order to make sense of the third premise. Indeed, since the second premise merely states that desire is a necessary condition for being motivated, this is compatible with desiring constituting the ground of motivation. This then does not imply that desires *are* motivations, as the ground of some state is distinct from the state itself. If this is so, although the equation of desire with motivation is a plausible explanation of the third premise, the motivational view is not entailed by the truth of the same premise. Conceiving of desires and motivations as distinct does not preclude the truth of the third premise, i.e. the existence of a necessary connection between desire and action, and offers an equally satisfactory explanation of this relation. The defender of the motivational view should thus provide further support for the stronger thesis that is required for the argument to go through.

The discussion of these two standard arguments in favour of the motivational view has revealed that the burden of proof lies with the defender of the motivational view. In order to examine the view in more detail, let us approach it in the light of our three chief *desiderata*, namely direction of fit, the death of desire principle and desiderative consonance.

2.3. The Motivational View and the chief *Desiderata*

Let me begin with one observation about how I shall proceed. I will not discuss here the putative counter-examples to the motivational view or the so-called candidates for inert desires that have been offered in the recent literature[170]. This is because I think that most of them do not apply to some versions of the motivational view. The aim of this section is rather to discuss the view by paying attention to structural problems that are meant to apply to any variant of the view and to shed light, at least partially, on the insufficiencies of the arguments presented earlier. As in our exploration of the axiological view, three lines of objection will be presented, which happen to be the very same ones.

[169] Some might doubt the argument on the grounds that the sense of desire used here is merely formal. What they have in mind is that subjects intentionally acting in some way might desire to act in this way, in the formal sense of desiring, without having the desire to do so, in the more substantial sense of the term. See for instance Marks 1986: 135 and Quinn 1993 for a critic on this formal sense of desire. For reasons of charity, I will not discuss this issue.

[170] See p. 310.

This requires an explanation. Indeed, at least at first glance, one might be tempted to think that the motivational view has the structural resources to meet the three relevant *desiderata*. First, as mentioned several times, the standard interpretation of the direction of fit is precisely motivational in spirit. Therefore, one might think that the motivational view naturally meets this constraint. Second, at first glance, the motivational view seems to satisfy the DODP as well. After all, one is not disposed to act in favour of the obtaining of a state that one believes has already obtained. Third, and finally, it is plausible to explain dispositions to act by evaluations. If so, the motivational view does not suffer from the problem of explanation that has been faced by the axiological view. Nevertheless, despite those appearances, the motivational view does not resist the careful examination of those *desiderata*, or so I think. This is a substantial claim that deserves justification. Let us begin with what is probably the most surprising claim, namely the one concerning direction of fit.

2.3.1. Objection I – Desiderative Direction of Fit

Famously, the motivational view pictures the direction of fit of desire by appealing to the thought that representations of goals or dispositions to act have the world-to-mind direction of fit. From this picture, the defenders of the motivational view conclude that desires are representations of goals or dispositions to act. As Smith puts it:

> "Clearly, the having of a goal is a state with which the world must fit, rather than vice versa. Thus having a goal is being in a state with the direction of fit of a desire. But since all that there is to being a desire is being a state with the appropriate direction of fit, it follows that having a goal just is desiring."[171]

The argument can be formulated as follows.

(i) Representing a goal is a representation instantiating the world-to-mind direction of fit.

(ii) Desires are nothing but representations instantiating the world-to-mind direction of fit.

(C) Desires are representations of goals.

How conclusive is this argument? I agree with each premise, but I think that the conclusion does not follow. Indeed, the fact that representations of goals have the same direction of fit as

[171] Smith 1994: 116.

desire does not imply that the direction of fit of desire *consists* in representing goals. The reason is that the direction of fit of representations of goals might be of the same genus as that of desire, namely world-to-mind, in virtue of sharing a general property with that of desire. This leaves open the possibility that the direction of fit of desire, despite being of the same genus as that of representations of goals, does not consist in desire being a representation of goals.[172] Since the first premise is compatible with such a possibility, the conclusion does not follow.

For the conclusion to follow, the first premise should be strengthened in such a way that any state having the world-to-mind direction of fit has its relevant direction of fit in virtue of representing goals. If *only* representations of goals have the world-to-mind direction of fit, and if desires have the same direction of fit, then it follows that desires are representations of goals. This is a valid argument.

This strong interpretation of the premise however is begging the question, as far as our investigation is concerned. For it assumes that any representation with the world-to-mind direction of fit, including desire, has its characteristic direction of fit in virtue of representing goals. But this is precisely what should be argued for to the extent that accounts of desires should explain their characteristic direction of fit. Moreover, even if it is assumed that the argument is not question-begging, the equation of states instantiating the world-to-mind direction of fit with representations of goals remains unmotivated. As other interpretations of the metaphor exist, it remains to be shown why this interpretation should be favoured. Now, although equating the direction of fit of desire with their motivational power constitutes a dogma of contemporary philosophy, it is problematic, as revealed by the following observation.

Let us assume that desires are dispositions to act. The natural interpretation of the world-to-mind direction of fit along motivational lines amounts to the following. In case of mismatch between desire and the world, i.e. in case a desire is frustrated, one should not change the

[172] For instance, on the view of direction of fit of desire I favour, both desires and representations of goals have the world-to-mind direction of fit in virtue of instantiating a deontic mode. Still, this does not imply either that desires are representations of goals or that the direction of fit consists in representing goals.

desire. Rather, and this is where the motivational view enters the picture, the world should be changed by the subject *acting* in such a way that the desire is satisfied.[173]

One problem with the motivational view of desires and the corresponding interpretation of the direction of fit of desire hangs on the satisfaction conditions of dispositions to act or motivations. Indeed, if dispositions to act or motivations have satisfaction conditions, it is natural to think that those consist in the subject intentionally *acting* in favour of p. For instance, if Sam is disposed to go to London, his disposition is realized, i.e. satisfied, when he intentionally goes to London. Were he to suddenly wake up in London in virtue of having been teletransported there independently of any action of his part, his disposition to act would not have been satisfied.

In case one does not share this intuition, it is important to emphasize that the satisfaction conditions of desire should bear a particular relation to action in order for the motivational view to secure an essential link between desire and motivation and provided that motivation is essentially linked to action. Indeed, more generally, the satisfaction conditions of mental states bear an intimate relation to the feature essential to that state. Consider beliefs. It is plausible that facts constitute the satisfaction conditions of beliefs given the essential relation beliefs bear to the truth, for instance in being representations as of what is actual. Turning to desire, if the satisfaction conditions of desire bear an essential relation to action, as they should for the motivational view to be sound, they amount to the execution or performance of some action, like in the case of intentions.[174] In other words, if desires are motivational states, this implies that desires are satisfied if, and only if, the subject intentionally acts in favour of p.

This however is suspect; standardly, the satisfaction conditions of desires are simply the obtaining of their content, namely p. Now, the obtaining of p can be distinct from the subject's intentionally bringing about that p. Since desires can be about states of affairs that are independent of the subject's action, for instance the desire that it rain, some desires can be satisfied in the absence of any action of the subject. Rather, the occurrence of events that are independent of the subject's actions is sufficient for some desires to be satisfied, as is the fact that it rains when one desires that it rain. This suggests that the type of satisfaction involved in desire can be independent from the execution or the performance of some action. Let us

[173] See for instance Searle 1986 and Smith 1994.
[174] Note that this does not preclude the existence of a distinction between motivations and intentions, since satisfaction conditions do not individuate types of mental states.

call "fulfilment" rather than "performance" the type of satisfaction conditions proper to desire. If what has been said is correct, we should conclude that the motivational view does not end up delivering the right satisfaction conditions for desires[175].

This in turn impinges on the *desideratum* concerning the direction of fit of desires. Indeed, as mentioned, directions of fit are conditioned on the *satisfaction* of representations[176]. For instance, the world should conform to our desires only insofar as the satisfaction of desire is concerned. If this is correct, a plausible view of desire should first deliver the right satisfaction conditions for desires in order to account for their direction of fit. Since it appears that the motivational view does not meet this preliminary constraint on satisfaction conditions, it is doubtful that it can account for the direction of fit of desire properly.

Moreover, it delivers counter-intuitive verdicts in cases where the content of some desire obtains independently of the subject's action. Indeed, if satisfaction consists in the subject's acting so as to satisfy the desire, the desire will not count as satisfied in those circumstances and thus the world should still conform to it. This sounds far-fetched to say the least.

Even if it assumed that the desire is satisfied in such circumstances, the norm that captures the motivational spirit of the interpretation of the metaphor, i.e. that the subject act so as to satisfy the desire, has not been met. If not complying with norms goes with blame or is at least inappropriate, we should conclude that the subject's behaviour was inappropriate. But this is implausible. Why should one be blamed in virtue of having been teletransported to Paris just because one desired to be in Paris? Although one might reply that the subject cannot be blamed in virtue of the absence of available means to bring about the desired state, this implies that some desires are such that one can never comply with the norm of direction of fit that nonetheless constitutes them. This is an unfortunate implication.

The motivational view of desires might well make sense of the direction of fit of intentions or dispositions to act, since the satisfaction conditions of those representations are constituted by actions. Still, as far as desire is concerned, the view seems to slightly miss the target.[177]

[175] See Friedrich 2008: 5-6 for a similar objection, although not related to the issue of direction of fit.
[176] This is motivated further by the thought that fit is satisfaction, see §4.1.1.2. Fit and Satisfaction.
[177] On motivational variants of the direction of fit metaphor, in particular in terms of motivational function, see § 4.3.1. Functional Roles.

This provides some motivation for denying the strong version of the first premise of Smith's argument that was presented earlier. Indeed, despite representations of goals having the world-to-mind direction of fit, not all representations instantiating the world-to-mind direction of fit are representation of goals. Indeed, the direction of fit of representations of goals captures only one type of the world-to-mind direction of fit, namely performance, a type that does not correspond to that of desiring, i.e. fulfilment.

The main argument presented so far – a *reductio* in form – is the following.

(i) Desires are dispositions to act. [Motivational View]

(ii) The satisfaction conditions of a disposition to act, if anything, are the subject's *acting* a certain way. [Performance]

(C_1) Desires are satisfied if, and only if, the subject *acts* in such a way that p. [i, ii]

(iii) A desire is satisfied if and only if *p*, where the obtaining of p can be distinct from the obtaining of p by the subject's action. [Fulfilment, against C_1]

(C_2) The motivational view does not deliver the right satisfaction conditions for desires. [C_1, iii]

(iv) Directions of fit are directions for satisfaction, i.e. a representation has the world-to-mind direction of fit if, and only if, in case of mismatch, the world should be changed for satisfaction to obtain. [Direction of Fit]

(C) The motivational view does not satisfy the *desideratum* on direction of fit. [C_2, iv]

Let us pause for a while. Since the crux of the argument relies on premise ii and iii, namely on the satisfaction conditions of desires and motivations, let us discuss them in detail. At least three objections to them come to mind.

Against premise iii, one might think that desires necessarily are about actions, in which case the satisfaction conditions of desires necessarily are actions. Still, since some desires, at first glance, are about states of affairs rather than actions proper, some story about those desires should be told. Here, the defender of the motivational view might adopt a disjunctivist move

in conceiving of the so-called desires about states of affairs as being instances of wishes or hopes, where those should be distinguished from desires proper. Provided that wishes and hopes do not bear an intimate link with action, this is a live option. Moreover, wishes and hopes might as well be conceived as emotions or affective phenomena, precisely because they are not closely tied to action as desires are. Assuming further that those affective phenomena have a distinct direction of fit than desire, the disjunctive move helps to rebut our objection.

As a reply, I think that this disjunctivist move is unpromising, for two reasons.

First, it is very revisionary to restrict the object of desires to actions, even by assuming that some distinction between desires, wishes and hopes holds. Indeed, we do say that we desire some states of affairs, where this does not necessarily refer to actions on our part. When desiring that Mary come to the party, my state of mind is *prima facie* different from that of desiring to act in such a way that she comes to the party, even if I might as well be disposed to act in such a way. For instance, the former desire might motivate the latter. The restriction of the content of desire to action should thus be motivated further.

Second, even if it is assumed that desires necessarily are about actions, there are reasons to think that wishes and hopes also have the world-to-mind direction of fit. Indeed, like desires, satisfied hopes or wishes are not *eo ipso* correct attitudes. Lots of incorrect wishes and hopes can be satisfied and lots of appropriate ones can remain frustrated. Wishes and hopes thus satisfy the standard test for having the world-to-mind direction of fit[178]. Moreover, the type of satisfaction involved in wishes and hopes is distinct from performance or execution and can consist in the mere obtaining of states of affairs independently of any actions, like it is standardly thought for desires. It appears that those representations have the same direction of fit, in all the relevant respects, despite the possible distinctions between those attitudes[179]. If so, the first objection does not stand.

Another way of questioning the argument is by denying the second premise, i.e. resist the thought that the satisfaction conditions of dispositions to act are actions. The thought would be that dispositions to act, like desires, are satisfied when their content obtains, independently

[178] See p. 48.
[179] For a deontic account of wishes and hopes, see §8.2.2.1. Types of Possibility – Wishes, Hopes, and Urges.

of any action of the subject. Here is one way of motivating this thought. One might think that dispositions to act have the same satisfaction conditions as desires in virtue of the manifestation of dispositions generally inheriting the satisfaction conditions of the disposition. An analogy with beliefs might be useful here. Let us assume that beliefs are dispositions to judge. This does not prevent the manifestation of the disposition, i.e. the judgement that p, from having the same satisfaction conditions as the belief that p, namely p. If the manifestation of the disposition has the same satisfaction conditions as the disposition itself in the case of belief, why would things be different in the case of desires and dispositions to act?

In reply to this challenge, I think that the case of desire and belief are not on a par in this respect. Indeed, beliefs and judgements presumably do not differ from each other except from the fact that the former is dispositional in nature, while the latter constitutes its episodic analogue. Now, this is not so for desires and actions or intentions. First of all, we do not want the motivational view to be committed to the view that desires and intentions are the same mental state, except from the difference in the dispositional nature of the former. This would be implausible, since desires and intentions themselves admit of the distinction between dispositional and occurrent: there are occurrent desires and intentions as well as dispositional desires and intentions. The case of belief and judgement is not analogous, since there are neither occurrent beliefs nor dispositional judgements.[180] Moreover, as noted several times, the satisfaction conditions of intentions clearly are actions, in which case this move does not help denying the second premise. The objection relied on the thought that satisfaction conditions of the manifestation of desires are identical to those of the disposition desires constitute. But the objection relied also on the thought that the satisfaction conditions of the disposition are identical to those of the manifestation of the disposition. Now, if this is so, it follows that the satisfaction conditions of desire are actions, given that intentions are satisfied by actions. This objection thus backfires.

A last route for the defender of the motivational view is to appeal to the contrast between dispositional and motivational mode views, as it is not clear that those views are equivalent. If so, they might as well differ with regard to their satisfaction conditions.

[180] Another important difference between intentions and desires, which can be found in Bratman 1999: 32, concerns the fact that forming inconsistent intentions is irrational, while this is not necessarily so for desires. I shall not discuss this here, since this goes beyond the scope of this chapter.

However, I think that there is no asymmetry between the variants of the views in this respect. Indeed, it is reasonable to assume that goals can be satisfied only by acting in certain ways. If so, there is no reason to think that the satisfaction conditions of representations of goals do not also bear this intimate link to action. This account of the satisfaction of goals is suggested by our linguistic use of the term "goal". The term "goal" is indeed synonymous with "purposes", "aims", or "targets". It is grammatical to say that goals, purposes, aims and targets are satisfied, in the sense of being accomplished, achieved, or attained. *Mutatis mutandis*, this should be so for representations of goals as well. Now, it is infelicitous to say that satisfied desires are achieved, accomplished or attained. The natural way of speaking of desire satisfaction is to say that one's desire has been fulfilled.[181] Conversely, it seems odd to speak of fulfilled goals, at least when this does not mean that the goal has been attained by some action of the subject. Now, those uses are precisely in line with the contrast between fulfilment and execution alluded to earlier. Indeed, if the satisfaction of goals consists in the subject's acting in a certain way, the felicitous or infelicitous character of the sentences mentioned is vindicated. Consequently, appealing to this variant is useless for the defender of the motivational view against our objection.

As surprising and revisionary as this seems, I conclude that the motivational view cannot make sense of the direction of fit of desires because of the slight subtlety mentioned. Let us turn now to a second objection.

2.3.2. Objection II – The Death of Desire Principle

As stressed earlier, it is tempting to think that the motivational view has the resources to meet the *desideratum* on the DODP, provided that subjects are not disposed to bring about states of affairs they believe have already obtained. As Stampe puts it:

> "What one believes either is, or is something taken to be, a fact. It is, one may say, the office of belief to present the facts to the forum of reason, and its contents are accordingly presented as fact. Desire is a very different thing. The "content" of a desire (like the content of a belief) is indeed a state of affairs: the desire for a hat has, as its content, the state of affairs in which one has a hat. But a state of affairs presented to the mind by desire is not thereby presented as obtaining in fact – even if it should happen

[181] In French, we use the metaphorical expression of the world folding itself to one's desire ("le monde se plie à nos désirs") to refer to the satisfaction of desire, while the analogous expression with goals sounds infelicitous, which suggests the same contrast.

> that it does obtain in fact; at least, *if the desire comprises a basis for doing something*, what is wanted is a state of affairs which either does not or *might* not obtain in fact. (…) (Thus my having a hat might better be said to be and to be presented as being *a possible "objective."*)[182] (italics mine)

In a similar vein, Dretske claims that acting in such a way that one satisfies a desire amounts to the extermination of the desire. Although he refers to the actual satisfaction of desires rather than *beliefs* about the satisfaction of desires, as in our formulation of the principle, his explanation of the DODP is motivational in spirit.

> "Normally we think of behaviour that is successful in reaching its goal as *satisfying* the desire in question. Since the desire is satisfied, the behavior it inspired ceases. Reaching the goal is *consummatory*. This means that, normally, when M [i.e. movement] results in R [i.e. reward], R will eliminate, extinguish, or remove D [i.e. desire] (something we describe by saying the desire has been satisfied), and the goal-directed behavior will therefore cease. Though this may be the normal sequence of events, it is by no means necessary. R may not extinguish D, and even if it does the behavior might persist for other reasons. If R does not extinguish D, the behavior will persist, and it will persist as long as D remains. I will *keep* eating until I'm full, until R (in this case the ingestion of food) extinguishes D."[183]

As intuitive as it seems, I think that the motivational explanation of the DODP does not resist careful analysis, and partly for the very same reason presented in the previous section. In order to establish this claim, it is necessary to go back to the formulation of the DODP.

According to the DODP, a desire for p ceases to exist when one represents that p obtains. Now, since the representation that p obtains can constitute the representation that the desire for p is satisfied, this principle can be reformulated as follows[184]. A desire that p ceases to exist when one represents that one's desire has been *satisfied*. Now, if this is correct, it appears that the DODP is a principle that partly relies on the representation of the satisfaction conditions of desires. This is problematic for the motivational account of the DODP. Indeed, if the satisfaction conditions of motivations are *actions* realising the content of desires rather than the mere *obtaining* of their content, as argued in the previous section, the motivational view will not be able to meet the *desideratum* on the DODP either.

[182] Stampe 1987: 336-337. See also Armstrong 1968: 155 and Goldman 2006: 96, although the latter does not appeal to *representations* of facts but merely facts. He writes: "We desire what we do not yet have, so that desires prompt actions to remedy that lack."
[183] Dretske 1988: 114. See also Russell's analysis of desire as behavioural cycle in Kenny 1963: 72.
[184] The representation that p obtains is not necessarily equivalent to the representation that the desire for p is satisfied, because one might not know that one desires that p, in which case one might represent that p without representing that one's desire for p is satisfied. This however does not impact my argument.

Let us consider an example. Suppose that Sam desires that Mary come to the party. On the motivational view, this means that Sam is disposed to act in favour of Mary coming to the party. Were he to believe that his desire is satisfied, then his desire will cease to exist. Now, let us assume that Mary comes to the party independently of Sam's actions. Seeing Mary at the party, Sam believes that Mary has come to the party. However, he does not represent that his disposition to act in such a way that Mary comes to the party has been realized and rightly does so, since he did not do anything to bring about this state of affairs. Now, according to the motivational view, he might go on desiring that Mary come to the party, since he does not represent that his disposition has been satisfied. This however is counter-intuitive.

Since I believe that the DODP is correct and that the satisfaction conditions of dispositions to act have been rightly specified, it appears that the motivational view does not account for the DODP. The reason why depends again on its failure to deliver the right satisfaction conditions for desires.

The argument provided so far is as follows.

(i) A desire ceases to exist if one represents that the desire has been satisfied. [Reformulation of the DODP]
(ii) Explaining the DODP requires the right view of the satisfaction conditions of desire.
(iii) The motivational view does not deliver the right satisfaction conditions of desire.

(C) The motivational view cannot account for the DODP.

Since the third premise has already been examined, and since the second depends on the first, let us examine the first[185]. One might indeed be sceptical about this reformulation of the DODP and even think that it is *ad hoc*, in which case our objection does not stand anymore. In reply to this complaint, here is some motivation in its favour.

Remember that part of meeting the *desideratum* on the DODP consists in distinguishing the oddity involved in the combination of the desire that p with the belief that p, on the one hand, from the oddity involved in cases of *plain* contradictions, on the other. This has been motivated by the thought that the combination of the desire that p with the belief that p is not a *plain* contradiction.[186] Now, sticking to our initial formulation, which merely appealed to

[185] See p. 72.
[186] See p. 15.

the incompatibility with the belief that p, will not satisfy this purpose. Indeed, some attitudes are incompatible with the belief that p, but the incompatibility in question constitutes an open contradiction. For instance, the combination of the belief that p with the absence of the belief that p is impossible in virtue of constituting a plain contradiction[187]. This suggests that the DODP does not merely rely on some mental state being incompatible with the belief that p. Now, our reformulation helps excluding such plain contradictions. For, the contradictory case mentioned does not involve the combination of some representation with the belief that *this very same representation* has been satisfied. Indeed, believing that p may not consist in the belief that the relevant representation, i.e. the absence of believing that p, is satisfied. For this reason, the reformulation of the DODP is not merely intuitive but helps distinguishing between the DODP and other types of inconsistencies. It is thus far from being *ad hoc*.

Since the argument presented so far relies on the same considerations as the ones presented in the section about direction of fit, it is worth bringing this section to a close by presenting a further problem for the motivational explanation of the DODP. As noted earlier, and leaving aside subtleties about satisfaction conditions, motivations seem to satisfy the DODP. Still, in order to make sense of the principle in full detail, the motivational view should provide us with an explanation of the incompatibility stated. Why are we such that we are not disposed to act in favour of the obtaining of states of affairs we believe have already obtained? In this respect, let us examine the following explanations.

One might think that the motivational view can easily explain the DODP by appealing to the motivational function of desire. The explanation would run as follows. Desires have the function of bringing about changes in the world. The reason why creatures desire, say, p is to bring about p. Now, when a system represents that p obtains, she therefore represents that the function has been accomplished. For this reason, representing that p obtains extinguishes the desire, as there is no reason for such a desire to exist.

As a reply, I think that this explanation does not constitute an improvement, as far as our objection on the satisfaction conditions of desire is concerned. Indeed, what is meant by the function of bringing about changes in the world is nothing but acting in such a way that the world changes. But if so, representing that the function has been accomplished is *eo ipso*

[187] If one is not convinced by this example, one might replace the case by what one thinks constitutes an open contradiction. In each case, my observation stands.

representing that one has acted in such a way that the content of the desire obtained. But this does not imply that desires cease to exist when one represents that they are satisfied, for the very same reasons than the one put forward earlier. This explanation faces thus the same problem already presented. Let us turn to an alternative explanation which might indirectly make sense of the one just sketched.

Dispositions to act, it appears, imply beliefs about actions. More precisely, it is plausible to think that one cannot be disposed to act in favour of p if one believes that there is nothing one can or could do in favour of the obtaining of p. If so, dispositions to act in favour of p imply the belief that one can act in favour of p or at least could do so in a possible world. Now, presumably, a subject believing that p is the case will cease to believe that there is something one could do to bring about p. For if p already obtains, there is nothing one can or could do to bring about the very same p. *Mutatis mutandis*, the belief that p implies the absence of the belief that one can or could act in favour of p. But then, the absence of this belief precludes one from being motivated to act in favour of p, given what has been said earlier. If so, the motivational view provides the following explanation of the DODP:

(i) Being disposed to act in favour p implies believing that one can or could act in favour of p. [Modality of Motivation]

(ii) Believing that p implies that one does not believe that one can or could act in favour of p. [Incompatibility of Actuality and Motivation]

(C_1) Believing that p implies that one is not disposed to act in favour of p. [i, ii]

(iii) Being disposed to act in favour of p is desiring that p. [Motivational View]

(C) Believing that p implies that one does not desire that p. [DODP: C_1, iii]

Since the first premise states an essential feature of dispositions to act, and since it constitutes the crux of the explanation, it appears that the motivational view has a natural story to tell about the DODP.

Still, as intuitive as this story seems, it is problematic. Indeed, it is not clear that the second premise is true. To illustrate, consider a person believing that p obtains, but believing also that she can erase the past. It is likely that this person believes that she can act in favour of the obtaining of p. If so, she might believe that p and believe that she can act in favour of p at

the same time, contrary to what is stated in the second premise. But now, given what has been said earlier, a subject having such beliefs might still be disposed to act in favour of p, despite believing that p. Indeed, the subject is such that, were she back in time in a world where she could act in favour of p and still desire that p, she would do so. It is important to remind the reader that the motivational view should provide room for such counterfactual motivation, in order to account for wishes, hopes or other types of desires that do not seem to involve actual motivation because of the modal beliefs they involve. Appealing to such a case is thus warranted.

This case would of course not be a problem if the DODP ended up being false when subjects believe that they can bring about a state of affairs they believe already obtains. But this is implausible. Even if a subject believes, say, that she can erase the past, she will cease to desire that p when believing that p. Although this subject has strange beliefs about her power, there is no reason to think that she will not behave like we do when we believe that one of our desires has been satisfied. True, as soon as she will believe that the past actually has been erased, she might again desire that p. But this is because in that case she will believe that p has not obtained yet. By contrast, dispositions to act differ from desires in this respect. Indeed, even before the past has been erased, she already is disposed to bring about that p despite believing that p. Indeed, it is already true of her that, if she was in a world where she again desired that p and believed that she could act in favour of p, she would do so. If desires are nothing but dispositions to act, one should conclude that this subject still desires that p. But, as just emphasized, there is no reason to think that this is so.

If this is correct, and since no alternative motivational story suggests itself, I conclude that the motivational view cannot provide a sufficient explanation of the DODP.[188]

To recapitulate our discussion of the motivational view so far, I have motivated the claim that desires are distinct from motivational states in virtue of having satisfaction conditions distinct from those of motivations. I have then drawn the implications that follow from this observation concerning the direction of fit of desire and the DODP. Moreover, for reasons that are independent from the satisfaction conditions of motivations, I have argued that the motivational view cannot easily account for the direction of fit of desire and the DODP. This

[188] There is no reason to think that the variant appealing to the motivational mode differs in this respect.

however is not to say that desires do not bear a close relationship to motivational states, as revealed by the examination of the last *desideratum* of this chapter.

2.3.3. Objection III – Desiderative Explanation

How does the motivational view fare with the explanatory relations desires bear with other mental states? As mentioned earlier, it can easily account for the explanation of desires, on the ground that one might partly explain motivations by evaluations in the same way as one partly explains desires by evaluations. For instance, it makes sense to explain Sam's motivation to swim in the ocean by the fact that he enjoys swimming in the ocean as it does to explain his desire to do so in the same terms. However, it is worth remembering that the *desideratum* on desiderative explanation had two sides, each side depending on one direction of explanation. In addition to accounting for the explanation *of* desires, it should also account for explanations *by* desires or the explanatory power of desires.[189] Now, in this respect, I think that the motivational view is insufficient.

Consider the following explanation: S is disposed to act in favour of p *because* S desires that p. For instance, suppose that Sam is disposed to go to London *because* he desires to go to London. Or consider the following discussion:

- I would go to London if I had the opportunity.
- Why?
- Because I want to go to London.
- But why do you want to go to *London*?
- I love London.

In the same vein, consider the following story. Sam will go to the museum today if he has the time to. Indeed, he wants to go to the museum. The reason why is that he desires to see Mary and believes that she will attend the new exhibition. Seeing Mary again would please him because he still loves her. End of the story.

The more we know about Sam's mental states, the more we understand his disposition to act in certain ways. One motivation for the disposition is provided by his desire, which is then grounded in an evaluation that is in turn the expression of a sentiment. Although the mention of desires might be insufficient to justify Sam's disposition to act, *prima facie* it provides part

[189] See p. 11.

of the explanation of Sam's disposition to act. The explanation moreover seems to be partly causal, the desire constituting the cause or the reason (or both) of the motivation.

Now, if desires are nothing but dispositions to act, such explanations will be uninformative, since, as said earlier, they would be of the form "p because p". Given the irreflexivity of the causal relation, causal explanations are informative only if the *relata* of the explanatory relation are distinct.

But, as stressed, the explanations provided earlier do sound informative. Therefore, if the explanations mentioned *are* informative, as they intuitively are, we should conclude that the motivational view cannot make sense of the explanatory power of desires and hence partly fails to meet the *desideratum* on explanation. Or so is the conclusion that follows from the intuition presented.[190]

Let us summarise the line of argumentation, the last *reductio* of this chapter.

(i) Desires are dispositions to act. [Motivational View]

(ii) It is possible to partly explain one's disposition to act in favour of p by one's desire that p, where the explanation is at least partly causal.

(iii) If x partly causally explains y, x is distinct from y. [Irreflexivity of Causal Explanations]

(C_1) On the motivational view, explaining dispositions to act by desires is of the form "x because$_{causal}$ x". [i, ii, against iii]

(C) The motivational view does not satisfy the *desideratum* on explanation.

This argument of course relies on a distinct conception of motivation than the one the defender of the motivational view has in mind. On the motivational view, being motivated just *is* desiring and the alleged explanations mentioned are uninformative. By contrast, our

[190] See Schroeder 2004: 139 for the claim that desires, i.e. representations of rewards, constitute the basis of motivations, from an empirical perspective.

argument invites us to think of motivation as being partly *dependent* or grounded on desire rather than identical to it[191]. Let us say a few words to motivate this alternative picture.

In order to do so, it is useful to consult our modal intuitions about cases in which subjects desire that p, but are not disposed to act in favour of p. If such cases are conceivable, this would indeed be a reason to think that desire grounds motivation rather than consisting in it. Now, it seems that such cases are conceivable. Here is one.

Consider a person suffering from a particular type of depression. Her depression is such that it has deprived her from having any dispositions to act. Still, it is conceivable that this person desires some states of affairs to be true, while failing to be disposed to act in favour of their obtaining. She might desire that her beloved fares well, despite the fact that she will not to do anything to bring this about. This case should be distinct from other cases, where the person fails to be motivated to act in favour of the satisfaction of some desire because of a stronger desire of hers, the stronger desire outweighing the motivation of the first desire. In the case imagined, no stronger desire is present. Nor does the subject fail to have the relevant modal beliefs that are necessary for being disposed to act. The person strongly wants that p, has no conflicting desire, believes that she can act in favour of p, yet still fails to be disposed to act. This, I contend, is conceivable. Despite some differences, this case broadly corresponds to the famous Weather Watchers imagined by Galen Strawson. He writes:

> "The Weather Watchers are a race of sentient, intelligent creatures. (…) They have sensations, thoughts, emotions, beliefs, desires. (…) But they are constitutionally incapable of any sort of behaviour, as this is ordinarily understood. They lack the necessary physiology. (…) They cannot act at all (…) nor are disposed to act. (…) It sees the sky and hopes that the clouds are bringing rain. It watches a seed lodge in a gap between two rocks by the edge of the river. It forms the belief that a tree may grow there before long, and hopes that it will."[192]

Two important differences between Weather Watchers and the case at hand are the facts that our subject has not been always impaired in her capacities to act and the fact that she believes that she can act, in contrast to Weather Watchers. Our case is thus not as extreme as the Weather Watchers. Of course, the defender of the motivational view will be inclined to think that our case is still inconceivable. This reply is difficult to substantiate, however; scenarios

[191] See Marks 1986: 139-141 and Friedrich 2008: 6-7 for a similar account of motivation.
[192] Strawson 2009: 251-5.

of this sort seem not only conceivable, but can actually occur[193]. Why could not a total impairment of one's executive system be part of acute forms of depression? Is it not the case that this captures at least part of the sad passivity that might be involved in some cases of depression?

This case seems not only to be conceivable, but the intuitive verdict is illuminating, as it is natural to consider that the person suffers from strong practical irrationality. If this is correct, our scenario suggests that there exists a rationality requirement of the form:

$$O(S \text{ desires that } p \rightarrow S \text{ is disposed to act in favour of } p)$$[194]

For this requirement to be sound, it should be possible to fail to comply with it, as in the case mentioned. This invites one to think that desires ground motivations by providing some reason speaking in their favour.

If this is correct, it appears that explanations of motivations by desires are informative. For the previous observation suggests that one will learn something when being told that a subject is disposed to act in virtue of her desire, namely that the subject is rational. This is so, in spite of one's mastering of the concepts of desires and motivation. Given what has been said in the previous chapter about the uninformative character of non-causal explanations when one masters the concepts at stake and given that rational explanations can be conceived as a type of causal explanation, this implies that the explanation of motivation by desire is causal in type[195]. It appears thus that motivations can be grounded on desires and that desires are not identical to motivations.[196]

Finally, if this argument is on the right track, its conclusion impinges on at least two further *desiderata* of our investigation. As argued in the previous chapter, the failure to meet the *desideratum* on explanation prevents the motivational view from delivering the right account of the strength of desire as well as the right verdict about desiderative dissonance.

[193] According to Schroeder 2004: 173-174, this case corresponds to people suffering from severe Parkinsonian symptoms or from akinetic mutism.
[194] I assume that the requirement is wide-scope in form but nothing relies on this (see Broome 1999).
[195] See p. 54.
[196] Again, there is no reason to think that the view appealing to the motivational mode does fare better with respect to the *desideratum* on explanation. Even if it is assumed that dispositions to act might be explained by representations as of goals, it is equally plausible to explain the latter by desires.

First, it is felicitous to *explain* the degree of motivation of a subject by the degree of the desire grounding the motivation. This is so at least for rational subjects. If so, the degree of motivation does not consist in the degree of desire but rather depends on it.

Second, the grounding relations presented imply that the motivational view does not account for desiderative dissonance properly. Let me mention just one problem here. The motivational view implies that the statement "I desire that p and I am not motivated to act in favour of p" is a plain contradiction and thus refers to an impossible combination. But given what has been said in this section, this verdict seems wrong: the combination is possible if irrational.[197]

For those reasons, the failing to meet the *desideratum* on explanation has devastating implications concerning these two further *desiderata*.

2.4. Motivational Moral

Let us conclude this investigation by conjecturing a general diagnosis of the problems faced by the motivational view, whatever they are. So far, the modality of the grounding relation holding between desire and motivation has not been discussed in detail and consisted in the weak claim that desires can constitute the ground of motivations. Now, one way to diagnose the insufficiencies of the motivational view as far as our *desiderata* are concerned is to strengthen the modality of this claim from possibility to necessity. In other words, let us assume that desires constitute the necessary ground of motivations. If the grounding relation discussed is normative, this amounts to the claim that motivations are normatively grounded on desires. This assumption of course does not follow from our observations in this chapter and shall be eventually motivated in more detail[198]. If it is true, it appears that motivation is a sufficient but not a necessary condition for desiring. For if motivation was a necessary condition for desiring as well, the type of irrational combination mentioned earlier would be impossible. If this is correct, this can account for the problems faced by the *desiderata.* Indeed, it is not surprising that a sufficient condition for desiring neither instantiates the world-to-mind direction of fit nor makes the DODP true in the very same way than desires do, although the pictures provided by the view relying on this sufficient condition point in the right direction. In a similar vein, it is not astonishing that desires can normatively ground

[197] For a similar problem concerning Moore's Paradox, see p.184.
[198] See §5.1.1.2. Values, Ought-to-be and Motives – Directions of Explanation

motivations, as this is one way of making sense of the thought that motivation is a sufficient although not necessary condition for desiring.

Finally, it is worth noting that this picture has the merit of capturing the grain of truth present in the arguments in favour of the motivational view discussed earlier. Indeed, if motivations are necessarily grounded on desire, then it is not surprising that the primitive sign of desiring is acting, at least for rational subjects. Likewise, if actions depend on motivations and if motivations are grounded on desires, it follows that actions in a sense depend on desires. This however is compatible with a distinction between desires and motivations. A *desireless* world would thus be a world without motivation. But this is due to the fact that desires ground motivations rather than consisting in them.

To sum up the dialectic of this dissertation so far, it appears that the standard views of desire face inverted problems. While axiological views emphasize a necessary but not sufficient condition for desiring, motivational views identify desires with a state that merely constitutes a sufficient condition for desiring. If this is correct, the grain of truth present in the accounts of desire explored so far concerns the grounding relations instantiated by desires. But then, something seems to be missing from those pictures, namely the common *relatum* of those grounding relations, this thing called desire.

This failure is instructive, since it helps us to reformulate the *desideratum* on desiderative consonance more carefully, which provides us with a better grasp of the conceptual space occupied by desire. Not only are desires explainable by evaluative judgements, emotions or affective dispositions, as I stated in the introduction. They are explicable by evaluative states in all their variety. On the other hand, desires explain motivational states, including intentions but also dispositions to act and maybe others besides. Any plausible view of the intentionality of desire should enlighten why desires play this peculiar role and fill this particular gap in our mental economy.

The crucial question now is to determine which properties desires should instantiate in order to play this conceptual role and satisfy the other relevant *desiderata*. Showing how they might do this will be the task for the rest of this dissertation, as I think that a deontic approach to desire can meet this refined challenge. But before leaving aside standard views of desire, it is worth exploring a final possibility. This possibility is not an orthodox one, but relies on the

standard views examined. So far I have assumed that desire is a simple state and explored the possibility that desires either are evaluations or motivations. But one might think that this assumption misses the point, as desiring is a complex state, made of evaluation *and* motivation. What if desiring was a whole made of evaluation and motivation? This compound view would accommodate the intuitions driving each standard view of desire. But does this avoid the difficulties attending each simpler view? Moving to further views of desires without considering this possibility would be too hasty. I shall thus bring the first part of the dissertation to a close by presenting a few observations about such compound views of desire.

2.5. Interlude on Compound Views

Peter Railton defends a compound view of desire according to which desire is a complex state, made of an evaluative and a motivational part. He writes:

> "Think of desire, then, as a compound, articulated state, similar to belief [i.e. in being compound], in which a degree of affect (in this case, more akin to liking or being attracted to than trust [the latter being a component of belief]) toward a representation regulates and directs a basic, future-oriented state (in this case, wanting rather than expecting [the latter being the other component of belief]):
>
> > Desire that R (first version): A degree of positive affect toward a representation R functions to regulate a degree of positive motivation toward bringing about the state of affairs that R portrays."[199]

This is only one variant of a compound view of desire. The variety depends on the type and number of components involved in desire, but also on how necessary the presence of some components is thought to be for the state to count as desire.[200] Despite such variations, I shall restrict my discussion to Railton's view. Moreover, I shall approach it in the light of our dialectic and shall thus ignore several details and subtleties of the view[201]. The question is: does portraying desire as a whole constituted by evaluation and motivation help avoid the difficulties of the corresponding simple views as far as our three chief *desiderata* are concerned? Let me briefly explain why I do not think so.

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[199] Railton *unpublished*.

[200] One might for instance be more liberal about the components of desire in including more aspects (see Goldman 2009:90). One might as well consider that none of the parts is a necessary feature of desire and conceive of desire along prototypical lines (see Goldman 2009: 90-2).

[201] For instance, Railton describes the object of desire as being a representation. For reasons of simplicity, I shall ignore this aspect of the account here.

Consider the *desideratum* on explanation first. Is the compound view immune to the problems concerning explanation that applied to standard views of desire? One might think so. On the account mentioned, some part, namely evaluation, explains the whole as well as another part of the whole, namely motivation. Now, since it is reasonable to assume that parts are distinct from wholes, the view does not imply reflexive explanatory relations. More generally, the explanatory relations of the sort mentioned are plausible. Consider for instance the compound object made of Eiffel and the Eiffel Tower: {Eiffel, Eiffel Tower}. One part of this object, namely Eiffel, both explains the whole as well as the other part of the whole, namely the Eiffel Tower. For both the Eiffel Tower and the whole composed of the Eiffel Tower and Eiffel depend on Eiffel. Hence the sorts of mereological relations that are part of Railton's view do not suffer from the problem of reflexivity of explanation as did the standard conceptions of desire.

However, taking into consideration our results concerning the explanatory relations desires bear to evaluations and motivations is problematic, as we end up with counter-intuitive mereological relations. Recall how plausible it is to claim that evaluations explain desires which in turn explain motivations. By assuming that a desire is a whole made of evaluation and motivation, we end up with the following mereological relations: a part of the whole (evaluation) explains the whole (desire), while the whole (desire) in turn explains another part of the whole (motivation). Now, this picture is dubious, as can be shown by the following dilemma.

Either evaluations *wholly* explain desires or they merely *partially* do so. Let us assume first that evaluations *wholly* explain desires, which seems to be intuitive enough. Adopting Railton's view, this implies that some part of the whole wholly explains the whole. Now, this is different from the Eiffel example, because Eiffel constitutes only a *partial* explanation of the compound object, the latter being explicable partly by the Eiffel Tower as well. Moreover, assuming that Eiffel *wholly* explains the compound object made of Eiffel and the Eiffel Tower is implausible. How could Eiffel *wholly* explain the whole, i.e. independently of the Eiffel Tower? Although one might assume that Eiffel wholly explains the Eiffel Tower, it is not clear why Eiffel would wholly explain the compound object made of Eiffel and the Eiffel Tower. Assuming that a part wholly explains a whole implies that the part partially explains itself, for the part is a part of the whole that it explains. It seems thus that on this first branch of the dilemma, we end up with counter-intuitive results.

The way out of this difficulty is to assume that parts merely *partly* explain wholes, which is reasonable. Assuming that evaluations are part of desiring, this amounts to say that they partly explain desires. This is compatible with some part explaining the whole without explaining itself. So let us explore this possibility.

Although it is possible that some part partly explains a whole, this principle has a corollary which is problematic in the present context. Indeed, if it is reasonable to assume that one part partly explains the whole, it is reasonable to assume as well that other parts play some partial role in the explanation of the whole. In principle, if a whole can be explained by one of its parts, it can also be explained by another part that is equally important, as partial as those explanations might be. This is precisely what seems to be the case in the Eiffel example. For the compound object is explainable by Eiffel as well as by the Eiffel Tower. Now, going back to the case of desire, this implies that evaluations as well as motivations explain desires. This however is problematic, since this result is not in line with the moral that we have drawn before. First, despite being in line with mereological principles, this violates the intuitive order of explanation our result suggested. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, it is desires which explain motivations rather than the other way around. Second, assuming that both parts can explain the whole precludes the possibility of the whole explaining one or both of the parts, provided that the type of explanation is the same. Indeed, if a part P_1 and a part P_2 partially explain the whole W, then it cannot be that the whole W explains one of the parts, say P_2. For we would end up with a circular explanation: P_2 would both explain and be explained by W. Now, assuming that desires are compound states made of motivations implies that motivations explain desires, which precludes the possibility of desires explaining motivations, on pain of circularity.

It appears that the compound view cannot acknowledge both the moral that emerged from our discussion of the standard views, on the one hand, and intuitive mereological principles, on the other. Since we are in the quest of a theory of desire that is in line with intuitive explanatory relations as well as intuitive principles of mereology, the compound view, taken literally, is unsatisfactory as far as the explanatory relations of desires are concerned. This leaves open the possibility of adopting a non-literal reading of the compound view, according to which desires are the *relata* of the grounding relations stated. But this does not commit one to any compound view, on the contrary.

How does the compound view fare with the *desideratum* on direction of fit? Since each part of the whole presumably has a distinct direction of fit, the view implies that desires have both directions of fit. But for reasons already mentioned, this should better be avoided[202]. The way out of this problem is to conceive of the direction of fit of desires as inherited from one of its parts. But why would one part have precedence over the other in this respect? In the absence of a satisfactory answer to this question, this option appears *ad hoc*. Moreover, even if it is assumed that this is so, conceiving of the direction of fit along evaluative or motivational lines will inherit the problems mentioned earlier. In any case, the benefits of going compound vanish.

Finally, it appears that the compound views will not help with respect to the DODP either, for the same reasons than the ones just mentioned. Either we privilege one aspect of desire, but then inherit the problems of each standard view. Alternatively, one might take the compound talk seriously. But one will end up with a state which might satisfy the DODP only partly and without any explanation of why this asymmetry between the parts of the state holds. Either way, it does not seem that the DODP is adequately explained.

We have now explored the standard views of desires and even examined a view that merged them. Unfortunately, I have found them wanting for various reasons. In my opinion, this should lead us to explore an alternative conception of desire, something to which I shall now turn for the rest of this inquiry. The negative part of this dissertation is hereby closed and the positive part begins.

[202] See p. 50.

3. The Deontic Alternative – Desire and the Guise of the Ought-to-Be

"See how she leans her cheek upon her hand.
O that I were a glove upon that hand
That I might touch that cheek!"
William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*

"Being your slave what should I do but tend
Upon the hours, and times of your desire?
I have no precious time at all to spend;
Nor services to do, till you require.
Nor dare I chide the world without end hour,
Whilst I, my sovereign, watch the clock for you,
Nor think the bitterness of absence sour,
When you have bid your servant once adieu;
Nor dare I question with my jealous thought
Where you may be, or your affairs suppose,
But, like a sad slave, stay and think of nought
Save, where you are, how happy you make those.
So true a fool is love, that in your will,
Though you do anything, he thinks no ill."
William Shakespeare, *Sonnet LVII*

"How strange it is. We have these deep terrible lingering fears about ourselves and the people we love. Yet we walk around, talk to people, eat and drink. We manage to function. The feelings are deep and real. Shouldn't they paralyze us? How is it we can survive them, at least for a while? We drive a car, we teach a class. How is it no one sees how deeply afraid we were, last night, this morning? Is it something we all hide from each other, by mutual consent? Or do we share the same secret without knowing it? Wear the same disguise.
WHAT IF DEATH IS NOTHING BUT SOUND?
Electrical noise.
You hear it forever. Sound all around. How awful.
Uniform, white.
"Sometimes it sweeps over me," she said. "Sometimes it insinuates itself into my mind, little by little. I try to talk to it. 'Not now, Death.'"
Don Delillo, *White Noise*

Not only does love portray the beloved as being infused with a positive aura, but, as nicely described by the first quotation from Shakespeare, love might as well go with imagining states of affairs involving one's beloved and requiring those states of affairs to be true. As suggested by the sonnet, the beloved's desires might even turn into orders for the lover. Similarly, desires seem to involve some kind of requests, orders or, more generally, an imperative mood. The last poem quoted nicely captures how our aversion to death expresses itself through fears and enigmatic questions, but also through a kind of order or plea not to die now. What if, like imperatives, desires were essentially deontic representations: representations about what should be the case? What if desiring that p was in a sense requiring p to be true or a way of demanding that p be real?

After all, it is grammatical to say that one believes that p *is* true, while it is incorrect to say that one desires that p is true. Conversely, it is felicitous to say that one desires that p *be* true, whereas it is wrong to say that one believes that p *be* true. One way of taking this contrast between indicative and subjunctive mood seriously is to adopt the deontic approach to desire. On this approach, desires are understood by means of deontic concepts like reasons, rightness, or the ought-to-be. Therefore, on this view, desiring a state of affairs literally *is* representing this state as *to be true*, in some way or other. One may simply require a state of affairs to be true or one may hold reasons speaking in favour of its being made true. Alternatively, it might seem to one that a state of affairs should obtain. Be that as it may, in each case, one represents a state of affairs as *to be* true. This is the intuition that will be spelled out in detail in this chapter. A *desireless* world would thus be a world where creatures are neither struck by the rightness of some states of affairs nor require anything of the world, as if, deprived of any ideals, they do not aspire to anything. Or so might someone be inclined to imagine if he or she held the deontic view of desire that is defended in this thesis.

Leaving this brute intuition aside, a question arises. What does it mean to represent a state of affairs as *to be* true? This chapter aims at answering this question in four steps. In the first part, distinctions that are relevant for delineating variants of the deontic view are addressed. Leaving these variants to one side, the second part approaches the core of the view by presenting some *prima facie* motivations in its favour. Since I defend a particular version of the deontic view, the third part aims to begin to motivate it in the course of a discussion of the main deontic alternatives that are present in the recent literature. This will help to introduce constraints on a plausible deontic view of desire. In the fourth and last part, I present the deontic view I defend, a view which relies on the deontic mode of desiring. According to this position, desiring that p is representing p *as what ought to be* or *as what should be*. This, I think, captures what is convincing about the alternative deontic pictures of desire as well as the standard views of desire, yet without suffering from their flaws. The deontic mode is thus, I contend, the key to understanding desire.

3.1. Varieties of Deontic Views

Let me start by presenting three distinctions that will help to clarify the theoretical options open to defenders of the deontic view. As for the axiological view, one distinction concerns what type there are of deontic (vs. evaluative) properties or concepts, another is the

distinction between mode and content, and the third is based on the contrast between doxastic and non-doxastic versions of the view.

Types of deontic entities

As distinct types of deontic properties and concepts seem to exist, one should expect there to be a variety of deontic views. Let me mention some common types of deontic concepts without committing myself to any view about how they relate to one another. Such types include those of the concepts of reasons, norms, requirements, rightness, and maybe merit, appropriateness or fittingness.[203] This list is not exhaustive and, for some, might contain co-extensive concepts and even concepts which are not deontic. For this reason, it is worth saying a word about what is meant by "deontic" here.

One natural way of capturing the boundaries of the deontic is the following. On the one hand, deontic entities, as a type of *normative* entity, should be distinguished from non-normative entities like colour and shape. On the other hand, since normative entities admit of the distinction between the evaluative (e.g. the good, bad, better) and the deontic, deontic entities should constitute a *sui generis* type of normative concept, distinct from the evaluative type. I shall leave this controversial issue aside for the moment and assume that the deontic corresponds to the conceptual space alluded to[204].

Considering only standard deontic concepts, three deontic views of desire suggest themselves. First, one might think that desires essentially involve a relation with a particular kind of reason, namely practical reasons or reasons to act in certain ways. Second, one might think of desires as representations that are essentially related to norms. If the right and the required are other ways of talking about norms, as I am inclined to think they are, then views of desire corresponding to those concepts will be merged into the view relying on norms. A variant of this view is the picture I shall eventually adopt. Finally, if it is assumed that appropriateness constitutes a *sui generis* deontic concept, one might conceive of desires as being essentially related to appropriateness. But if appropriateness is not distinct from rightness and similar deontic concepts, the appeal to appropriateness will be redundant. I shall eventually turn to this issue. As it will be apparent later, the distinctions between types of deontic concepts are relevant for assessing distinct deontic views.

[203] On the relation between requirements and ought-to-be, see Chisholm 1964. On deontic concepts, see for instance Ogien & Tappolet 2009 and Tappolet *forthcoming*.
[204] See more observations on pp. 95 and 164.

Mode vs. Content

Like the variants of the axiological view, deontic views can differ with regard to the "location" of the deontic feature. Indeed, the deontic feature can figure either in the *content* or in the *mode* of the representation[205]. For instance, one might think that desires literally represent that their content is, say, right. In that case, the deontic feature figures in the content of the representation. This is compatible with desires being an attitude or merely a deontic seeming, where it is assumed that seemings do not constitute an attitude. Alternatively, the deontic feature might be involved in the *mode* of the representation. For instance, one might represent p under the mode or guise of rightness. If so, desiring is a deontic *attitude* or a deontic *stance* one takes. This distinction will appear significant below, since the view I favour relies, as mentioned several times, on the deontic mode[206].

Doxastic vs. Non-doxastic Deontic Views

It is worth making it explicit that the deontic approach does not entail that in desiring that p, one necessarily *believes* or *judges* that p is right. Nor does it consist in identifying desires with such epistemic attitudes (for short, deontic beliefs)[207]. Although deontic views can take this doxastic form, non-doxastic variants exist as well. For instance, one might conceive of desire as a non-doxastic seeming directed at what is right or, alternatively, as the attitude of taking content to be right, without these states being doxastic in nature. Adopting a non-doxastic variant looks like a promising way to go, since it seems – at first glance, at least – that desires can be decoupled from deontic beliefs[208]. This being said, despite the relevance of the distinction between doxastic and non-doxastic views, deontic doxastic accounts will not be explored here, for reasons already mentioned[209]. Still, the distinction is worth mentioning in order to avoid confusions and because it will eventually help us to understand better the view I favour.

[205] More on modes on §3.4.1.2. Mode and Content.
[206] See p. 116 and §9.1. Deontic beliefs.
[207] See Gregory *unpublished* for the view that desires are beliefs about reasons for actions.
[208] This said, one might defend a deontic doxastic account of desires, by distinguishing between types of deontic beliefs (for instance, all-out judgements vs. *prima facie* judgements). I shall ignore this possibility here.
[209] See p. 34 for more details.

Finally, it is worth noting that proper deontic views identify desiring with some deontic representation. These should be distinguished from views stating that desires *entail* some deontic representation. For reasons already mentioned in previous chapters, entailment views will not be explored here[210].

Before discussing deontic views in the light of some of those distinctions, it is worth outlining the *prima facie* advantages of adopting the deontic approach to desire.

3.2. Deontic Motivations

For ease of exposition, I shall for the moment restrict this discussion to the view according to which desiring is representing a state of affairs as required or as what ought to be. Moreover, I shall concentrate on the three crucial *desiderata* of our investigation, namely direction of fit, the DODP and desiderative consonance. Finally, I should warn the reader that this section aims at *sketching* the line of argumentation the defender of the deontic view will be happy to embrace, as the remainder of this dissertation aims at developing those arguments in detail with the help of the view that relies on the deontic mode.

How do deontic views fare with the direction of fit of desire? *Prima facie* at least, they imply that the direction of fit of desiring is world-to-mind. For it is natural to think that representing p as required (or as what ought to be) is satisfied if, and only if, p obtains. Indeed, requirements and norms of the ought-to-be type are satisfied when their content obtains. If Sam ought to call Mary, the norm is satisfied when its content obtains, i.e. Sam calls Mary. Now, the satisfaction of a norm does not entail that the norm *really* is sound. For even crazy norms can be satisfied. If desires are representations of norms or other deontic entities, then it is expected that this deontic representation will inherit those features of norms. In other words, the satisfaction conditions of the representation differ from its correctness conditions. If this distinction is sufficient to draw the conclusion that the representation has the world-to-mind direction of fit, as I argued it is[211], it follows that the deontic representation mentioned has the world-to-mind direction of fit.

[210] See pp. 34 and 62. However, see §9.5. Desiderative Explanation on this subject.
[211] See p. 48.

This can be motivated further by attending to the nature of the deontic. It is indeed common to think of deontic entities as being essentially directives, i.e. as having the function of providing criteria that the *world* or at least agents should meet. Now, this amounts precisely to what the metaphor of direction of fit tries to capture with the world-to-mind direction of fit.

Let us move on the DODP. Consider that desires represent their content as something that is required to obtain. Is it possible to represent p both as *obtaining* and as *required to obtain*? Intuitively, the answer to this question is in the negative. For if p is represented as obtain*ing*, why would one represent p as *required to* obtain? And how could one do so? *Prima facie*, it therefore seems that deontic representations satisfy the DODP. Moreover, the directive nature of deontic features suggests that the view is on the right track in this respect as well. If deontic features have the function of changing the world, then it would be odd for them to go on existing when the relevant change has occurred. If this is correct, deontic representations might inherit this property of the deontic feature mentioned and thus vanish when one believes that the request has been met. Although this picture requires careful defence, these considerations are sufficient to demonstrate the initial appeal of the view[212].

Let us move finally to the *desideratum* on explanation, since it has played an important role in the dialectic of this dissertation. Recall that we wanted desires to be explicable by evaluations and, at the same time, to be able to explain motivations. Now, at first sight at least, it seems that the deontic approach nicely fits with the contours of this conceptual role. Indeed, it is plausible to think that representing p as required is explained by some positive representation of p and can also explain one's motivation to act in favour of p[213]. For instance, Sam might be struck by the goodness of inviting Mary to the opera. On this basis, he represents inviting Mary to the opera as required. This then motivates him to write a message to Mary and thus invite her to the opera. *Prima facie*, Sam's mental states are consonant with each other.

[212] See chapter §6. Argument III – The Death of Desire Principle for the defence of this claim.
[213] For substantial elaboration of this claim, see §5.1. Deontic Desiderative Consonance.

Although much more remains to be said, the deontic approach seems promising as far as the three *desiderata* mentioned are concerned. This is not yet to say that it avoids the difficulties of standard accounts of desire, as such a claim would require a careful examination of the view. Still, this suffices to show its intuitive appeal.

However, given the variety of possible deontic views and the fact that not all of them are on a par, it is worth discussing them in more detail.

3.3. Deontic Alternatives

In this section, I shall briefly sketch and discuss three variants of the deontic approach, or at least views that seem to approach desire from the deontic perspective (more on this shortly). Each has been presented in the recent literature. The first appeals to the notion of practical reasons (§3.3.1), the second relies on that of reward (§3.3.2), while the last seems to constitute a version of the view that involves the deontic mode (§3.3.3). They have been put forward by Scanlon, T. Schroeder and Velleman, respectively. The aim of this discussion is to help to determine which constraints a promising deontic account of desire should meet and to begin to steer us towards the position I favour. For this reason, I shall not do justice to all the relevant details of those views.

3.3.1. Scanlon and the Practical Rationality View of Desire

What if desires were essentially related to practical reasons or reasons for actions? One way of understanding this relation is to think of desires as involving a tendency to "see" reasons to act in favour of the obtaining of their content, as Scanlon does. As an example, consider his description of thirst (assuming that thirst is a desire to drink):

> "Suppose I am thirsty. What does this involve? First, there is the unpleasant sensation of dryness in my mouth and throat. Also, there is the thought that a cool drink would relieve this sensation and, in general, feel good. I take this consideration, that drinking would feel good, *to count in favor of* drinking, and I am on the lookout for some cool drink. This description includes three elements: a present sensation (the dryness in my throat), the belief that some action would lead to a pleasant state in the future, and *my taking this future good to be a reason for so acting.*"[214] (italics mine)

[214] Scanlon 2000: 38

The author equates desire with the last component mentioned, namely a tendency to take certain things to be reasons to act. In the terminology used in this dissertation, desires end up being deontic representations in virtue of somehow representing practical reasons.

Scanlon, however, recognises that conceiving of desires in those terms is not sufficient. Indeed, other attitudes, such as evaluative belief, might involve the same kind of tendency and do so in the absence of desiring[215]. In believing that taking some drug is good, one also takes a future good to be a reason to act, but one might instantiate this evaluative belief without the corresponding desire.

In order to refine the picture that was just presented, Scanlon appeals to the idea that desires are attention-consuming, contrary to evaluative beliefs. This constitutes his view of desires in the directed-attention sense:

> "A person has a desire in the directed-attention sense that p if the thought of p keeps occurring to him or her in a favourable light, i.e. if the person's attention is directed insistently toward *considerations that present themselves as counting in favour of p*. (…) A person who has a desire in the sense I am describing has a tendency to think of certain considerations and a tendency to see them as reasons for acting in a certain way."[216] (italic mine)

Here is one example:

> "Suppose that, as sometimes happens, I am beset by a desire to have a new computer. What does this involve? For one thing, I find myself looking eagerly at the computer advertisements in each Tuesday's *New York Times*. I keep thinking about various new models and taking their features to count in favour of having them. This is what I called above a desire in the directed-attention sense. It has clear *normative content*, since it involves a tendency to judge that I have reason to buy a new computer."[217] (italic mine)

Leaving the details aside, Scanlon's final account of desire can be summarised as follows. To desire that p is to attend to considerations that speak in favour of acting in such a way that p obtains. Desires are thus representations of practical reasons.

As intuitive as it seems, how convincing is this account? I shall not discuss it in its full details, but will merely approach it in the light of the moral that emerged from our discussion of standard views of desire. In other words, the question is: does this account help with regard to the difficulties faced by the standard views of desire?

[215] Idem: 39
[216] Idem: 39-40.
[217] Idem: 43

As the above quotations testify, Scanlon's view can be interpreted in very different ways, depending for instance on the object of attention desires are supposed to involve.[218] The answer to our question will thus depend on the interpretations one favours. Let us begin by excluding one.

Some formulations of the view suggest that the link between desires and practical reasons consists in the fact that reasons are the *content* of one's attention when one desires. Now, if desire is identified with such an attention, practical reasons end up being the content of desire. But this is problematic, given that a plausible theory of desire should secure the intuition that desires are about states of affairs. Although some desires might be about reasons, it is dubious that all necessarily are. Despite appearances, this cannot be what the defender of this view has in mind.[219]

In order to avoid this problem about content while securing an essential relation between desires and practical reasons, the distinction between mode and content can be exploited here. One may indeed conceive of desires as being constituted by a peculiar mode which involves practical reasons. According to this option, desiring is representing a state of affairs, say p. But p is represented under the guise of reasons to act. If one prefers to put things metaphorically, desiring p would be endorsing or responding to reasons to act in favour of p, as it is plausible to think that representing content under the mode of practical reasons constitutes a response to practical reasons[220].

Although this view does not suffer from the problem of content mentioned above, it is not clear that it is an improvement when compared to the motivational view of desire. For it is not obviously true that the attitude of endorsing reasons to act in favour of p is satisfied if, and only if, p obtains. Rather, this attitude seems to be satisfied when the subject intentionally *acts* in favour of p. On top of this intuition, it appears that the satisfaction conditions of attitudes are identical to the "content" of the reason speaking in favour of the attitude or to what the reason speaks in favour of (independently of the attitude). Let us consider beliefs and assume that they are responses to reasons speaking in favour of the actual obtaining of

[218] At least four interpretations suggest themselves. (i) Desires might involve attention directed towards *reasons to act*. (ii) Desires might involve attention directed towards considerations represented *as being reasons to act*. (iii) Desires might involve attention directed towards *reasons speaking in favour of the obtaining of the content*. (iv) Desires might involve attention directed towards considerations *as reasons speaking in favour of the obtaining of the content*.

[219] Note that this problem is compatible with the thought that desires *entail* some degree of attention about the reasons to act. But this leaves open the question of whether desires *are* deontic representations.

[220] See p. 125 for the metaphor of responding to reasons.

some state of affairs. Now, the obtaining of this state of affairs is the satisfaction of the attitude one has when one responds to the reason in question. It is plausible that the fact that the satisfaction conditions of beliefs are the obtaining of their content goes hand in hand with the fact that beliefs are responses to reasons speaking in favour of *the actual obtaining of their content*.[221] The "content" of the reason or what the reason is about (say, actuality in the case of belief), is the other side of the coin of the satisfaction conditions of the attitude that constitutes a response to this reason. If this can be generalised to any attitude and if desires are responses to reasons to act, they will be satisfied by actions that bring about their content, not by the mere obtaining of content independently of the subject's action. But then the gain of the deontic view over the motivational one is lost. For this problem about satisfaction conditions impacts whether the view meets the *desiderata* on direction of fit and the DODP, as it did for the motivational view. After all, this is not surprising, as some formulations of the motivational view might actually involve deontic features like what ought to be done and therefore be similar to the interpretation of Scanlon's view examined here.

Let us take stock. The way to avoid the two problems mentioned by still defending a deontic view of desire involves first conceiving of desires as being representations that are about states of affairs. The deontic feature, if it figures in anything, should thus figure in the mode of the mental state – on the assumption that modes and content are our only options[222]. Second, the satisfaction conditions of the state should be the obtaining of p – rather than actions bringing about p.

Now, one interpretation of Scanlon, an interpretation that is supported by some of the examples he gives, suggests such an account[223]. The twist is to switch from practical reasons to reasons speaking in favour of the obtaining of the state desired. On this view, desiring that p is responding to reasons that speak in favour of the obtaining of p.[224] The content of this attitude is p, while its satisfaction condition is the obtaining of p. This seems thus to be a promising way of understanding desires from a deontic perspective.

[221] It might be that the satisfaction conditions of attitudes are inherited from the content of the reason, but my observation does not rely on there being this type of dependence.
[222] I assume that modes of presentations are features of the content, broadly understood. If so, appealing to them will not help either.
[223] See for instance, the description of a desire for a new computer (p. 43): "I keep thinking about various new models and taking their features to count in favour of having them".
[224] There is an ambiguity in the expression "reason speaking in favour of p" as this could either refer to a reason speaking in favour of the actual obtaining of p, which would be a reason to believe p, or a reason speaking in favour of the very coming-to-obtain of some p that does not yet obtain, which presumably is a reason to desire that p. I leave this worry aside here, since nothing important relies on it.

However, although the gain over the view relying on practical reason is important, it is worth noting that this version of the deontic view is far more congenial to the position I favour. Indeed, it is intuitive to think that responding to reasons speaking in favour of the obtaining of p is equivalent to or at least goes hand in hand with representing p as what ought to be. At any rate, this proposal no longer conjectures the existence of an essential relation between desire and practical reasons, but rather restricts itself to discussing reasons about the obtaining of states of affairs. This is, I think, a virtue – but it amounts to an important change. For this reason, I conclude that the most plausible interpretation of Scanlon's view merges into the kind of view I shall end up adopting. Before presenting it, however, let us first explore another view of desire that seems to be deontic in nature, as this too will steer us towards the deontic mode.

3.3.2. Schroeder and the Reward View

In his book *Three Faces of Desire*, Timothy Schroeder distinguishes between three aspects of desires: motivation, pleasure and reward. His claim is that rewards capture the essence of desire, whereas the other aspects, by contrast, do not. Since this view is meant to be an alternative to the standard views of desire, it is worth presenting it and trying to assess its relation to the deontic alternative. It will indeed turn out that the view can be interpreted as a variant of the deontic approach to desire.

Appealing principally to empirical studies about desire, Schroeder argues that desires construe their content as a reward, and, therefore, are representations of rewards.[225] *Mutatis mutandis*, aversions are representations of punishments. He writes:

> "To have an intrinsic (positive) desire that P is to use the capacity to perceptually or cognitively represent that P to constitute P as a reward. To be averse to it being the case that P is to use the capacity to perceptually or cognitively represent that P to constitute P as a punishment."[226]

It appears that this conception of desire crucially depends on what is meant by reward and how this notion should be understood. For the sake of argument, I shall assume that rewards as defined above do not collapse into the folk-psychological notion of reward. Indeed, from the perspective of common sense, a reward is the positive compensation either for some

[225] A reward view of desire is already present in Dretske 1988: 110-113. However, it is not clear that his view is meant to be distinct from a motivational view of desires, in contrast to Schroeder's, because of the emphasis put on the motivational power of representations of goals.
[226] Schroeder 2004: 131.

effort that has been spent or for some unpleasant experience that has been undergone. Now, it is implausible to think that any desire involves the representation that the obtaining of some states of affairs does constitute such compensation. Rather, in speaking of the "representation of rewards", the author means that the representation leads to a particular form of learning, which is mathematically describable, as revealed by the following quotation.

> "The effect of VTA/SNpc activity [ventral tegmental area/substantia nigra pars compacta, i.e. dopamine-releasing structures] that makes it the basis of reward is, most centrally, that it causes a certain form of learning, but this is learning in a very specific and perhaps unfamiliar sense. The learning (…) is not rote memorization of facts for conscious retrieval. Rather, this is learning triggered by specific types of events in the environment, causing changes in perceptual and motor capacities, changes in associations of ideas, and changes in behavioural dispositions."[227]

Although empirically justified, this definition does not help us to understand desire from the first-person perspective. But if the notion of reward that is relevant to this account is not the same as the pre-theoretical notion, and if the theoretical notion defined above does not help us in our descriptive task, how are we to understand the reward view from the first-person perspective?

In order for the view to constitute an alternative to the hedonic and motivational view of desire, as Schroeder claims that it does, rewards must be taken to refer neither to hedonic values nor to goals. Since there is no reason to think that desires bear an essential relation to any values except hedonic ones, the concept of reward cannot refer to non-hedonic values either. If by chance the concept of reward can be understood in deontic terms, this would nicely fit the intuition that the deontic view is *the* alternative to standard views of desire. I readily admit that the naturalistic spirit of the reward view does not invite one to think of desires as being deontic representations. The present observations are thus very speculative and might be far from what Schroeder has in mind. Still, on the face of it, there is at least one possible understanding of the notion of reward (and punishment) that is compatible with a first-person perspective on desire and seems to be deontic in nature.

Rewards and punishments are indeed the kinds of things that can be *deserved* or *undeserved*, *merited* or *unmerited*. Now, those notions sound deontic. Indeed, they are neither neutral concepts nor straightforwardly evaluative ones, which corresponds to what has been said earlier about the deontic[228]. Moreover, what is merited or unmerited seems to be equivalent to

[227] Schroeder 2004: 36.
[228] See p. 106.

rightness or at least to constitute a type of rightness and, in some sense, does provide some directions for subjects' actions. If so, representing p as a *reward* might be understood as representing p *as merited*, where this constitutes a variant of the deontic view of desire. Desiring a state of affairs would thus be representing this state as merited. For instance, desiring to see New York is representing seeing New York as what deserves to obtain.

As I stated above, the folk-psychological notion of reward goes hand in hand with the notion of effort and displeasure. By contrast, the notion of reward that involves appealing to merit does not bear this implication. Indeed, certain things merit being the case independently of any effort or displeasure. For instance, Mary might be said to merit being loved, just because she is lovable, independently of any effort she made or suffering she went through.

Even if it is assumed that the notion of merit obtaining is deontic, one relevant question to ask is how it should be understood. Does the view appealing to it constitute a *sui generis* deontic view or is it simply another way of formulating the view that desires are, say, representations of what is right? For the sake of argument, let us assume that it constitutes a *sui generis* deontic view. This can be motivated by the following distinction between what merits obtaining, on the one hand, and what is right, on the other. Although what merits obtaining is *eo ipso* right, the converse does not seem to hold. Consider an example, namely driving on the left side on the road in England. Since this is what is required by English law, it follows that it is right to drive on this side of the road. Still, is this state of affairs *merited*? Does it, so to speak, deserve to obtain? *Prima facie*, this appears to be questionable. States of affairs that deserve to obtain are states like being loved, seeing Paris, listening to good music, and so on. By contrast, it is odd to say that taking a bus ticket, switching the light, and any state that has instrumental value is merited. This suggests that only states of affairs that have final value merit to obtain. This consideration motivates the thought that the merit view is *sui generis*, i.e. does not collapse into the view appealing to rightness. However, this very distinction is problematic for the merit view, since desires can be final as well as instrumental[229]. If what merits obtaining are only states of affairs that instantiate final value, the view will have troubles in making sense of instrumental desires.

Two solutions to this problem suggest themselves: one can deny the existence of instrumental desires or allow for the existence of states of affairs that instrumentally merit obtaining. The

[229] I use here the distinction between final and instrumental value rather than that between intrinsic and extrinsic value, since there are reasons to think that the two distinctions differ. Nothing however relies on this here. On instrumental desires, see for instance Mele 2003 and Schroeder 2004.

first branch sounds too revisionary to my ears[230]. But it is not clear that taking the second branch does not collapse what merits obtaining into what is right or appropriate *tout court*. On this sense, some states of affairs might be said to *instrumentally* merit obtaining in virtue of being right or appropriate ways of bringing about other intrinsically valuable states of affairs. This would allow for instrumental merit and, if the merit view is correct, for instrumental desires. However, it is not clear that this way of understanding the view can help to distinguish it from some deontic views that do not appeal to merit. Indeed, it is reasonable to assume that what merits obtaining in this sense just is what ought to be or what is required. If so, the plausible reading of the merit view merges it into the variant of the deontic view that shall be defended here. As surprising as this seems, I thus think that the most sensible interpretation of Schroeder's view from the first-person perspective invites the adoption of the kind of view that is favoured by this thesis. Before presenting it, it is worth examining one last proposal, namely Velleman's conception of desire, as it lies in the vicinity of the view I shall adopt and the contrast between it and my view will prove useful.

3.3.3. Velleman's "Deontic" Mode

In several articles, David Velleman appeals to a deontic feature in formulating a conception of desire, and thus seems to propose a deontic view of desire[231]. His conception of desire relies on the distinction between attitude and content. Although Velleman does not mention modes, I shall move from the talk of attitude to that of mode, as it appears that his way of individuating attitudes rests on modes[232]. The thought is that desires involve a mode that differs from the modes of certain other attitudes, in particular from the mode involved in belief; this thought aims at capturing the distinction between the directions of fit of different types of representation. The following quotation reveals the contrast he has in mind:

> "The term 'direction of fit' refers to the two different ways in which attitudes can relate propositions to the world. In cognitive attitudes, a proposition is grasped as *patterned* after the world; whereas in conative attitudes, a proposition is grasped as a *pattern* for the world to follow. The propositional object of desire is regarded not as *fact* – not, that is, as *factum*, having been brought about – but rather as *faciendum*, *to be brought about*; it's regarded not as true but as *to be made true*."[233] (italics mine, except for the Latin)

[230] See Schroeder 2004: 153 for a similar hypothesis.
[231] See Velleman 2000.
[232] See p. 130 on the relation between modes and attitudes.
[233] Velleman 2000: 105.

Two features of this picture are relevant to the present discussion. The first concerns the deontic nature of the mode of desiring, while the second is an implication of the view concerning the direction of fit metaphor.

As formulated, the mode of desiring is described by appealing to expressions such as "to be made true" or "to be brought about". Now, it is natural to understand such expressions as being equivalent to "what ought to be made true" and "what ought to be brought about". This observation is motivated by the gerundive form of the Latin word *faciendum*, which translates as "what ought to be done". *Prima facie*, the mode of desiring seems thus to be deontic in nature.[234]

The metaphors used to characterize the mode of desire suggest that this interpretation is along the right track. In addition to the metaphor of pattern quoted earlier, a second appeals to dictates, while a last involves mandates. All three contrast with the metaphor of reflections and reports[235]. If patterns, dictates and mandates can be understood as providing directions for the world to follow, it is natural to think of those entities as being deontic in nature. They do indeed satisfy the test for instantiating the world-to-mind direction of fit, as their satisfaction does not amount to their appropriateness.

There is a difficulty with this interpretation, however. When Velleman specifies the mode of desiring in more details, it appears that he conceives of the deontic mode as being evaluative – rather than properly deontic. This is suggested by the following:

> "Expressions like 'regarding … as true' and 'regarding … *as good*' [where the latter refers to the mode of desiring] are intended to describe belief and desire in a way that elucidates the difference in their directions of fit. (…) we unavoidably describe them with a common attitudinal verb ('regarding') and different predicate adjectives ('as true', '*as good*'). But this construction – attitudinal verb plus differentiating predicate – must not be interpreted as invoking a further attitude directed toward a proposition containing that predicate. The desire that p is not to be analysed as an attitude toward the proposition that p is good; it must be analysed as an attitude towards p *as good*."[236] (italics mine)

[234] I shall assume that the expression "to be made true" can be interpreted as referring to what ought to be the case and not necessarily to what ought to be done. Indeed, if the latter interpretation is favoured, the view will suffer from the same problems as Scanlon's view.

[235] He writes (Velleman 2000: 111): "what distinguishes belief from desire (…) [is] that they [beliefs] treat their propositional objects as *reflecting* antecedently fixed conditions rather than as *dictating* conditions to be achieved (…). (…) they [beliefs] (…) treat those propositions as factual *reports* rather than *practical dictates* – as being already true of some completed (…) states of affairs rather than as *to be made true* by the completion of such states". (italics mine)

[236] Velleman 2000: 106.

This evaluative interpretation is suggested further by Velleman's conception of types of desires as being types of *approvals*. This contrasts them with cognitive attitudes, which are understood as being types of *acceptance*[237].

It appears that the mode of desiring *à la* Velleman is evaluative in nature. Now, as far as the dialectic of the present thesis is concerned, this does not constitute a significant improvement. For part of the motivation of the deontic approach was to avoid the problems faced by the axiological view. In order for the deontic view to constitute a genuine and promising alternative, the deontic talk should be taken literally.

The second feature of Velleman's account that is relevant to the present discussion concerns the directive nature of conations or their peculiar link to action. On his view, contrary to standard interpretations of the metaphor of direction of fit, the directive character of a representation does not amount to the representation instantiating the world-to-mind direction of fit. As he writes:

> "In my view, this notion [i.e. direction of fit] conflates two different distinctions. One is the distinction between the *cognitive* and the *conative* – the distinction between accepting, or regarding as true, and approving, or regarding as to be made true. The other is a distinction between the *receptive* and the *directive*, which are two different ways of attempting to accept what's true – namely, by accepting so as to reflect the truth, and by accepting so as to create the truth. If these distinctions are conflated under the heading 'direction of fit', then one and the same mental state can appear to have two different directions of fit, since a subject can attempt to accept what's true by accepting something so as to make it true. The resulting state is cognitive rather than conative, but directive rather than receptive: it's *directive cognition*. I would claim that this state of directive cognition is the state of intending to act."[238] (italics mine)

The thought is that directions of fit can either refer to the contrast between cognitions and conations as formulated above, or, alternatively, to the contrast between receptives and directives, which I understand in terms of distinct roles played by cognitive representations. Now, Velleman claims that those contrasts are at least partly orthogonal, because receptives and directives constitute two types of cognitions. This allows the possibility of directive cognitions, as suggested by the case of intentions. If so, the metaphor of direction of fit is wrong-headed.

[237] Idem: 115.
[238] Velleman 2000: 195.

I will not discuss the subtleties of this proposal in detail, but let me register one word of caution. As it will become apparent later, there are reasons to think that the contrast between cognitions and conations captured by the direction of fit amounts to the same contrast as that between receptives and directives. This alignment of the conative with the directive is motivated by thinking of the very nature of conations as attitudes bearing an essential relation to deontic features, which are directive entities. One advantage of this picture is that it guarantees a great heuristic value to the metaphor of direction of fit. By contrast, adopting Velleman's way of understanding and dissolving the metaphor does not constitute straightforward progress with regard to our *desideratum* on direction of fit. For his view implies that some representations in a sense have both directions of fit, as did the axiological view of desire. Independently of the general problems faced by representations instantiating the dual direction of fit, the motivation for this picture is dubious. Indeed, intentions clearly satisfy the test for instantiating the world-to-mind direction of fit, as their being performed does not amount to their being sound intentions.[239] The case nicely fits the contrast in direction of fit without needing to add a further distinction between cognitions. Since it *prima facie* guarantees that the direction of fit metaphor captures a clear-cut contrast between cognitions and conations, the equation of the deontic with the directive should be preferred[240]. Again, this is so if one wants to secure the result that the metaphor has great heuristic value.

Our discussion of the literature has revealed some constraints for a promising deontic view of desire. Let me summarise them. We are in search of an account of desire that acknowledges the intuition that desires are about states of affairs – rather than reasons – and are satisfied when their content obtains – rather than when a subject acts in favour of the obtaining of their content. Moreover, it should provide room for the existence of instrumental desires, avoid any merging of desire with evaluative states and be compatible with a clear-cut distinction between the directions of fit. Now, I believe that conceiving of desires from the perspective

[239] It is worth emphasizing that Velleman rejects the standard test for determining the direction of fit of some type of representations, on the ground that it cannot make sense of the direction of fit of assumptions (Velleman 2000: 111-112). Without entering into details, I believe that understanding assumptions and, more generally, imaginings as being representations in which content is represented under the guise of the possible can avoid the problem raised by Velleman. For representing content as possible is a case of cognition and is satisfied if, and only if, the content is possible – not necessarily actual. See p. 141 for more details.
[240] For the justification of this claim, see p. 140.

of the deontic mode is able to do justice to those subtleties. To see why, let me finally introduce the view I shall defend.

3.4. The Deontic Mode View

Desiring, I claim, is representing a state of affairs as what ought to be, where the deontic expression refers to the mode of desiring. This constitutes the deontic mode view, from now on called the deontic view of desire. Let me clarify the view by saying a few words about the crucial members of this definition.

3.4.1. Preliminaries

As a preliminary, two questions should be addressed. First, what is meant by "ought-to-be"? Second, what is meant by "mode"? Answering those questions will shed light on the specificity of the deontic view.

3.4.1.1. Ought-to-Do and Ought-to-Be

Myriads of norms exist. For instance, one ought to keep one's promise, to avoid unnecessary suffering and to eat properly. In those examples, the word "ought" refers to an obligation to act in certain ways and to which persons are subject. But in addition to this sense of ought, we also use the word "ought" (and "should") for what seems to be a closely related, still distinct purpose. We do say, for instance, that suffering from cancer ought not to exist, that Mary's being happy is how things should be and that things turned out the way they should. This use of the term "ought" intuitively differs from the previous one – as one should expect from the different expressions used to characterise each type, namely the norms of the ought-to-*do* type, on the one hand, and the norms of the ought-to-*be* type, on the other. The three following observations will help one grasp the distinction, at least superficially[241].

First, as suggested by the terms, norms of the ought-to-do type and norms of the ought-to-be type presumably differ with respect to the content of the norm. While the former are necessarily about actions, the latter can be about the mere obtaining of a state of affairs that does not constitute an action[242]. For instance, in saying that it ought to rain now, the norm is

[241] For more details, see §5.1.1.1.2. Ought-to-Be and Ought-to-Do.
[242] See for instance von Wright 1998.

satisfied by the fact that it now raining, where this does not involve any action. Although norms of the ought-to-be type might implicitly be about actions or imply norms about actions, on the face of it, this is not necessarily so. A lot more can be said, but this broad characterisation of the distinction suffices for present purposes.

This superficial distinction implies, second, that norms of the ought-to-be type do not state an obligation for subject to act in a certain way, at least not explicitly. This contrasts with norms of the ought-to-do type, where the person who is subject to the norm *eo ipso* stands under an obligation.[243]

Third, it is common to think that norms of the ought-to-do type, as obligations to act in certain ways, imply that agents *can* fulfil their obligation, as captured by the famous "ought implies can" *dictum*.[244] Since norms of the ought-to-be type can be about states of affairs that do not constitute actions, they do not require such a capability. They might require some distinct kind of possibility, for instance metaphysical rather than physical possibility[245]. This, however, merely suggests that 'ought's, whatever they are, require the possibility of their content, but not necessarily the subject's ability to act in such a way that the content obtains.

Humberstone presents the following example to motivate the distinction between norms of the ought-to-do type, that he calls "agent-implicating 'ought's", on the one hand, and norms of the ought-to-be type, called "situational ought", on the other.

> "a nineteenth-century humanitarian visits a nineteenth-century factory where children have to do all the dirtiest jobs, and as a result, don't usually live to the age of sixteen. On seeing this, the man is deeply shocked, and says, to himself or out loud, 'Children oughtn't to die like this'. This does not imply that the children in question cannot die, and ought to take steps to ensure that they do not die. 'Children oughtn't to die like this' does not mean 'Children ought to make a point of not dying like this' or 'Children ought to jolly well pull themselves together and stop dying like this', but rather, 'It oughtn't to be the case that children die like this'. Such a judgment is a judgment passed, as it were, not on the children, but on the situation, and I propose to call these 'ought's, which do not imply 'can's, "situational" 'ought's, as opposed to the more normal "agent-implicating" 'ought's, which do imply 'can's."[246]

So far, as mentioned, the distinction has been characterized quite superficially. One might indeed think that those apparent distinctions are compatible with the reduction of the ought-

[243] See Schroeder 2011.
[244] Idem.
[245] See §8.2.2.1. Types of Possibility – Wishes, Hopes, and Urges for more details.
[246] Humberstone 1971: 8.

to-be to the ought-to-do. One might even deny the contrast on the ground that the distinctions suggest that the ought-to-be talk is just another way of talking about positive values and does not belong to the deontic realm at all, appearances notwithstanding. I shall not discuss those important issues now, as the aim of this chapter is merely to present the deontic view.[247] Let me however observe that there are reasons to think that the ought-to-be constitutes a *sui generis* type of norm and is neither reducible to the ought-to-do nor to the axiological, as will be shown later[248]. In this chapter, I shall assume that this is so and that a relevant distinction between these two types of norms exists. The point of this distinction, as far as this chapter is concerned, is that the deontic view appeals to norms of the ought-to-be type and should not be confused with a view appealing to the norms of the ought-to-do type. In other words, desiring p is representing p *as what ought to be*, not *as what ought to be done*. Since the deontic view consists in conceiving of desires as constituted by the deontic *mode*, it is time to clarify what I mean by "mode".

3.4.1.2. Mode and Content

I shall first present a definition of modes, outline some of the semantic properties that will be relevant later on and end with some observations about the relation between modes and attitudes.

The Nature of Modes

It is common to distinguish between the mode of a representation, on the one hand, and its content, on the other.[249] Indeed, tokens of representations that are different in type can have the same content, say p, despite their difference in nature. For instance, desiring that p, believing that p, wondering whether p or being afraid about p are all about the very same state of affairs. Therefore content does not seem to help to distinguish between them, at least *prima facie*. The natural way out of this difficulty is to appeal to the *way in which*, *manner in which* or *guise under which* content is represented. For instance, desiring that p and believing that p differ in their respective *ways* of representing the same state of affairs. Those particular

[247] See Schroeder 2011 for other distinctions between the ought-to-do and the ought-to-be.
[248] See §5.1.1.1. Values, Ought-to-be and Motives – Anti-reductionism.
[249] See for instance Searle 1983 and Crane 2001: 31-32. The thought goes at least back to Franz Brentano.

ways of representing content are called *mode*s.[250] Appealing to modes can help in distinguishing between types of mental states while still describing the peculiarity of each type of representation from the first-person perspective. I shall assume that *representations*, at least the ones this work is interested in, are wholes composed of a mode and a content.[251]

Although this observation motivates the making of a distinction between mode and content, some clarification about modes is required. It is important to distinguish modes as I understand them here from modes of presentation. Consider perceptual perspectives. Seeing a cup of coffee from above and seeing it from the lateral perspective are two ways of representing the same thing. The representations have, therefore, the same content, despite the difference in the way it is represented and hence these ways of representing are called modes of presentation. Still, there is a distinction between modes of presentation and modes *tout court*. For on the one hand, it is natural to think that modes of presentations are features of the *content* of representations. Indeed, in our example, the two representations belong to the same type of representation, namely perceptual experience, despite their difference. Likewise, believing that a particular person is writing this sentence contrasts with the belief that *I* am writing this sentence. Although the state of affairs believed might be the same, namely the state of affairs of me writing a particular sentence, the way it is believed is different. But, again, it is natural to think that the difference lies in the *content* of the representation rather than in the mode, since both constitute instances of *belief*. But on the other hand, the appeal to modes earlier was motivated by the distinction between types of mental representations, like beliefs and desires, and not between species of representations that belong to the same general type.[252] It seems, therefore, that modes are ways of representing content which constitute *generic* properties of representations, in that they determine the general type of representation the token is an instance of. This is so at a certain level of generality, namely the level at which one distinguishes between desires, beliefs and other such types of representation. In other words, modes are the properties in virtue of which

[250] This leaves open the possibility of contrasting mental states in functional terms, since this might be one way of understanding modes. That said, appealing to modes is a promising way to go if one is interested in capturing the intentionality from a first-person perspective.
[251] I leave aside the case of entertaining a thought, a case which might be considered to involve no mode, as nothing relies on the assumption that all representations involve a mode.
[252] Although in a sense modes of representation determine *species* of representations, in turning for instance *non first-person* beliefs into *first-person* ones, the *genus* of those representations – for instance the fact that the representation is a belief – does not depend on the variation in mode of presentation. Since genus-species talk admits of different levels of generality and specificity, I shall leave this issue vague here, as this does not affect the rest of the thesis.

a particular token of a type of representation, say a belief, is an instance of that type of representation rather than another, say a belief rather than a wondering or a sorrow.

Now, in order for modes to serve as these generic properties, it should be assumed that each particular mode involves a particular feature that is such that the content is represented under a peculiar "guise", say representing content "as F". With this assumption in mind, it is plausible to think that modes contribute to the semantic properties of representations. Let us discuss how modes relate to semantics, as this will be important later.

Modes and Semantics

I shall pinpoint three semantic properties of representations that are partly determined by modes, namely the correctness conditions, the satisfaction conditions and the direction of fit of representations.

First, if representations are constituted by mode and content, it follows that modes contribute to the correctness conditions of representations. For if the content of some representation is represented under the guise of, say, being F, it follows that the representation is correct if, and only if, the world is as it is represented, i.e. the state of affairs represented *is* F[253]. For instance, the fact that a belief is satisfied if its content obtains can be explained by the fact that beliefs represent their content as obtaining rather than as, say, as having obtained.[254]

The move from mode to correctness conditions is not merely intuitive, but can also be motivated by the thought that content, though necessary, is not sufficient to provide the correctness conditions of some representation. Consider emotions, for instance enjoyment. Let us assume that emotions have correctness conditions and that these are evaluative in nature.[255] Enjoying that p, when p is obtaining, does not make the emotion correct. For the emotion to be correct, the very same p should not just obtain but also be pleasant. Assuming that enjoyment represents its content under the guise of the pleasant avoids this problem and delivers the right correctness conditions of the emotion.

[253] This is sometimes captured by the terminology of formal objects of representations. See Teroni 2007.
[254] This is not to say that this constitutes the only explanation. Still, it constitutes a reasonable one.
[255] See for instance Tappolet 2000 and Deonna & Teroni 2012.

Second, modes contribute to the satisfaction conditions of representations. This has been partly suggested by the previous observation, because the satisfaction conditions of some representations, namely cognitive representations, are identical to their correctness conditions[256]. But this can be generalised to non-cognitive representations as well. Indeed, if the content of a particular representation is represented in a different manner, it is to be expected that the conditions in which this representation is satisfied will differ as well. Moreover, the case of intentions, a type of non-cognitive representation, suggests that content is not sufficient for determining the satisfaction conditions of representations. Here is why.

Suppose that Sam intends to be in Paris tomorrow. Intuitively, this intention is satisfied if, and only if, Sam actually intentionally *goes* to Paris in such a way that he is then in Paris. But imagine that Sam turns out to be in Paris tomorrow without having done anything. For instance, suppose that tomorrow he suddenly wakes up in Paris. In this case, the content of the intention would obtain, and yet the intention would not be satisfied.[257] For an intention is satisfied only when what is intended to be done has been done *intentionally* or is *performed* by the subject. But nothing has been done intentionally or performed by the subject in this case. If so, it seems that appealing to the obtaining of content is not sufficient to account for the satisfaction conditions of at least some conative representations as well. By contrast, assuming that intentions represent their content as what ought to be done avoids this difficulty and delivers the right satisfaction conditions. Since we wish to end up with a unified account of satisfaction conditions, it appears that modes contribute to the satisfaction conditions of conative representations as well.

Third, it follows from the two previous observations that modes contribute to the direction of fit of representations. Recall that the direction of fit of a representation can be determined by the relation between its satisfaction and correctness conditions: if those conditions are identical to each other, the representation is cognitive; if they differ, then the representation is conative.[258] Taking this for granted and given the contribution of modes to both satisfaction

[256] See p. 48.
[257] In case one thinks that the example is not convincing because the intention is not about an action, see p. 129 for an example similar in spirit that nonetheless involves intentions about actions.
[258] See p. 48.

and correctness conditions, it is clear that modes impact the direction of fit of representations.[259]

In this sense, modes contribute to the semantic properties of representations. But more can be said. Indeed, not only is it intuitive to think of desires as involving a particular mode, it is also common to think of them as being *attitudes*. But what is the relation between modes and attitudes? I contend that reflecting on the nature of modes is a helpful way to approach the nature of attitudes, as I will demonstrate in the next sub-section.

Modes and Attitudes

Presenting a full account of the nature of attitudes is, of course, not my intention.[260] What is necessary for my purpose is merely to show how modes contribute to a better understanding of attitudes.

It is natural to think that attitudes, as types of representations, can be individuated by the specific mode they involve. After all, it would be surprising if the distinction between the mode of believing and that of desiring did not contribute to the corresponding attitudes being distinct. This, however, does not imply that a representation instantiating some mode and the representation being an attitude is the same thing. For there are some representations that instantiate a mode of some sort, but do not constitute attitudes. Consider perceptual experiences for instance. It makes sense to think that in perceiving that p, one represents p in a certain way (say, as present or as what is here and now). Still, it is counter-intuitive to think of perceptual experiences as being attitudes. This is motivated further by the thought that attitudes are stances one takes on the basis of certain reasons and constitute responses to these reasons[261]. Assuming that perceptual experiences are not reason-sensitive implies that they are not attitudes, which is a natural consequence. So far, it seems that attitudes are identified by means of their reason-responsiveness. Still, it is reasonable to think that modes contribute to the question of whether a representation is an attitude or not via the reason-responsiveness of the attitude, in the four following respects.

[259] See Searle 1983 and Velleman 1992 for the relation between modes and direction of fit and §4.2.2.2. Directions of Fit and Modes.
[260] See p. 315.
[261] Idem.

First, if attitudes are reason-responsive, they will depend on further representations, namely the representations providing the reasons for adopting the attitude. For instance, beliefs are adopted on the basis of representations which one takes to provide reasons to believe; in this sense, the former state depends on the latter. Now, this sort of dependence appears to rely on or at least to go hand in hand with the types of mode involved in the dependence relation. Indeed, it is natural to think that an attitude depends on a representation in virtue of the normative relation holding between the modes of the attitude and the representation. In other words, the mode of one representation (the attitude) might stand in a normative relation with the mode of another representation (the representation on which the attitude is based). For instance, it is intuitive to think that perceptual experiences constitute a basis for beliefs, i.e. for representing content *as actual*, in virtue of perceptual experiences representing content *as present* and because of some normative relation holding between the mode of the present and that of the actual.[262]

Secondly, the reason-responsiveness of attitudes and the dependence to which I have alluded imply that the mode involved in an attitude contributes to its rationality conditions. For the rationality conditions of an attitude state what the right grounds are for adopting that attitude. If the grounds for adopting an attitude depend on the modes involved, modes will also be relevant for determining what the right grounds are for adopting attitudes and therefore for determining their rationality conditions.

Third, although mental states that do not constitute attitudes also admit of degrees, as, for instance, perceptual experiences do, the strength involved in attitudes seems partly to depend on the reason-responsiveness of the attitude. More precisely, the degree of an attitude may be a function of the reasons the subject responds to and of the strength of those reasons. Put differently, how an attitude is graded will depend on what ground it is graded. But if so, and if the modes involved determine the bases, the strength of attitudes will at least partly depend on the mode involved. This, however, is not to say that the degree of attitude *consists* in the

[262] In case one is sceptical about the direction of explanation stated, which goes from the normative relations holding between modes to the reason-responsiveness of attitudes, it is sufficient for my purpose that some correspondence between modes and reason-responsiveness holds.

degree of what grounds it, as dependence is not identity.[263] Rather, it is intuitive to think that the degree of the attitude consists in the degree of the stance taken, in which case it is a feature of the mode of the attitude, despite being dependent on the basis as well. In other words, appealing to modes is a promising way to account for the distinct dimensions of strength.

Fourth, and finally, it is rational to expect that the subtypes of types of attitudes, for instance types of desires, will partly depend on the mode involved in the generic type of representation (in this case, desire). For if the generic mode allows for specific characterizations, those may serve as a basis for delineating subtypes of attitudes[264]. Consider for instance one relevant type of types of attitudes, namely their polarity. In this respect as well, it is plausible to think that this feature of attitudes depends on the mode. For, mental states that are polar opposites might be conceived of as instantiating opposite modes.[265] There is no reason to think that this cannot be generalised in such a way that the subtypes of attitudes match the contours of subtypes of modes, although this remains to be established in detail.

Now that what is meant by "mode" has been clarified and that some relevant implications of the appeal to modes have been examined, we are in a position to formulate the deontic view and develop it in all significant respects.

3.4.2. Formulating the Deontic View

The main claim of the deontic view is that the mode involved in desire is that of the ought-to-be. Accordingly, desiring that p is representing p under the guise of the ought-to-be, i.e. *as*

[263] See p. 16.
[264] See §8.2. Material Boundaries – The Deontic Typology for a typology of desires along those lines.
[265] This again is motivated by the thought that the polarity of content is not sufficient to distinguish between polar opposite representations. For instance, the polar opposite of the belief that p cannot merely consist in the belief that not p. Indeed, one might be irrational in both believing that p and believing that not p. By contrast, it is plausible that polar opposites are *contrary* attitudes, i.e. attitudes that cannot be held together. In this respect, the opposition between believing that p and disbelieving that p might constitute such an example. If this is correct, appealing to content is not sufficient to capture all types of opposition, whereas modes give us the needed supplementation.

what ought to obtain or, if preferred, *as what should obtain*[266]. In this sense, desires are constituted by the deontic mode.

Deontic View of Desires – A subject desires that p if, and only if, p is represented as what ought to/should be by the subject.

In order to better understand the proposal and since this this will prove useful when I turn to arguing in its favour, let me formulate an analogous proposal for belief. Intuitively, in believing that p, one represents p *as obtaining* or, if preferred, *as actual*. Belief, in contrast to desire, involves what can be called an existential mode.

Existential View of Belief – A subject believes that p if, and only if, p is represented as being actual by the subject.

According to this picture, the difference between desire and belief consists in the presence or absence of the deontic or existential feature in the mode. Allowing myself a formalisation that is means to capture the distinction, this difference can be formulated as follows, where "p" stands for content, "D" for desiring, "B" for believing, "*O*" for the deontic mode, "*E*" for the existential mode, the brackets for the mode and the parenthesis for the content:

D(p): {*O*}(p)

[to be read as: A subject desires that p if, and only, if she represents p as what ought to be]

B(p): {*E*}(p)

[to be read as: A subject believes that p if, and only, if she represents p as actual][267]

It is worth emphasizing that the deontic picture of desire relies on the presence of the deontic feature in the *mode*, not in the content of the attitude[268]. Given what has been said about the

[266] "Ought" and "should" are used interchangeably here.

[267] One might doubt this formal description, on the grounds that desiring is a relation and hence a two place-predicate. This invites one to formalise desires as follows: D(x,p). The deontic view of desire amounts then to the following equivalence, where "R" stands for representation and "o" for ought: D(x,p) if, and only if, R(x,o,p). *Mutatis mutandis*, believing that p is understood then as: R(x,e,p). As the aim of my initial formulas is to capture the thought that desires are deontic attitudes, from the first-person perspective, I shall favour it over the one just sketched. The latter indeed does not say much from the first-person perspective and might invite one to think that the deontic feature figures in the content of the representation, which is not what I mean. Still, nothing depends on this formulation.

distinction between mode and content, this component of the view is crucial.[269] It can be captured by the following metaphors. The presence of the deontic feature in the mode amounts to desires being essentially *directive* representations, in the same way as norms are essentially *directive* objects. Desiring p, one might say, is *oughting* p. By contrast, the presence of the existential mode turns beliefs into essentially *receptive* representations, just as reflections might be said to be essentially receptive entities.

To my knowledge, the deontic view has no adherent in the recent literature.[270] However, if I interpret him correctly, Alexius von Meinong has defended such a picture of desire. He explicitly states that there is an essential relation between desires and the ought-to-be, as should be clear from the following quotes.

> "In the field of desires, *obligation* (ought, *Sollen* [where this refers to the ought-to-be according to the author]) and *instrumentality* (*Zweckmässigkeit*) are obviously our objects of presentation [i.e. formal object]."[271] (italics mine, except for the German)

> "the exclusive objects of desire [i.e. formal object] is, *oughtness* and *end* (*Sollen* and *Zweck*)".[272] (italics mine, except for the German)

Although nothing has yet been said about instrumentality, the view I propose in this thesis can appeal to instrumental 'ought's to make sense of instrumental desires, as the obtaining of some states of affairs might be required, or taken as something that ought to be, as a means to the obtaining of others[273].

Moreover, in Meinong's view, the relation that desires bear to the ought-to-be is meant to concern the act or mode of the attitude rather than its content.

> "This relationship [the relation between desire and ought-to-be] would be analogous to that between a sense-experience and an object of sense, or between a feeling and the object which we call 'beautiful'

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[268] This of course does not prevent *some* desires from being about what ought to be (e.g. Mary desires that Sam should leave).
[269] See §9.1. Deontic beliefs and §3.4.3. Reformulating the Deontic Mode View for the relevance of this distinction.
[270] Stampe 1987 provides a formulation of his view which sounds similar in spirit to the one defended in the present thesis. He writes (p. 340):
> "It is surely of the first importance in the philosophy of mind to recognize that the mind is occupied not just with states of affairs that do obtain, but with states of affairs that ideally *are* to obtain: with representations not conformed to the way the world is, but to which the world might better *be* conformed."
[271] Meinong 1917: 91.
[272] Meinong 1917: 96.
[273] See p. 121.

> [i.e. the ought-to-be is the formal object of desire]. In short, all difficulties disappear if we admit that an object is apprehended by a desire, which, as the object's presentative, does all that can be asked of a means of apprehension. [i.e. desires involve a specific mode]"[274]

The view that I shall defend in this dissertation can be conceived of as neo-Meinongianism about desire[275]. Before developing it further in the light of the implications presented earlier, I wish to pause to give it a more intuitive touch. Indeed, since the view formulated so far might appear mysterious and even counter-intuitive at first glance, it is worth offering reformulations of it that are more illuminating.

3.4.3. Reformulating the Deontic Mode View

In this section, I provide two reformulations of the deontic view that are meant to capture the significance of the presence of the deontic feature in the mode rather than in the content of the representation.

The first reformulation relies on the nature of 'ought's. It makes sense to think of 'ought's as being, in essence, requirements. The fact that p ought to be is nothing but the fact that p is required to obtain. Or at least, it is natural to think that 'ought's' imply requirements. For instance, when a person is subject to a norm, she is *eo ipso* required to do certain things. If so, and if desires involve a deontic mode, it follows that desiring is the attitude of *requiring* some state of affairs to be the case.

It is worth noting that the attitude of requiring should not be confused with the speech act of a request or demand. Rather, it is plausible to think that these speech acts constitute proper linguistic expressions of desires and thus inherit the mode involved in desire.[276] Similarly to the attitude of acceptance often appealed to when describing the mode of belief, the attitude of requiring should be conceived of in non-linguistic terms[277].

[274] Meinong 1917: 37.
[275] Let us note one point of departure however. Meinong conceives of feelings and desires as emotions, while our picture was meant to demarcate desires from emotions. However, this difference might be merely terminological, since the conception of emotions I assume here seems to correspond to what Meinong calls feelings. If this is so, the disagreement is merely verbal.
[276] More on this on §5.2.3.1. From Modes to Moore's Paradox.
[277] See for instance Velleman 2000: 112 for the conception of belief as acceptance. The thought goes at least back to Brentano.

The second reformulation relies on the normative (as opposed to non-normative nature) of the deontic mode. If desires involve a deontic mode, then desires are normative representations, just as evaluative attitudes (e.g. emotions) are. One way to understand the contrast between normative and non-normative or descriptive attitudes is to think of normative attitudes as being incompatible with indifference about their content. In this sense, they constitute *cares*. *Caring* is used here as a term of art and should not be assimilated to the affective dispositions constituted by cares, despite the fact that the latter are a type of the former. The thought is that evaluative attitudes, for instance, are incompatible with indifference about their content and in this sense are cares. This is suggested by the observation that evaluative statements are incompatible with the corresponding neutral statements. It is indeed infelicitous to say at the same time that p is good and neutral. If normative attitudes in general constitute cares, the same can be said for deontic attitudes: a subject taking p as what ought to be, where this is part of the mode of the attitude, cannot be indifferent about the very same p. This again can be motivated by an examination of deontic statements, as it is infelicitous to say at the same time that F is required and neutral. By contrast, non-normative attitudes are compatible with indifference about the obtaining of their content. For instance, in believing that p, one might be indifferent about p. Even in believing that p is good, one might be indifferent about the obtaining of the content of the evaluation, namely p, as when one forms the belief in the context of giving advice to someone.[278]

Still, even though it has been established that all normative representations are cares, the story is not yet finished as the cases of desire and emotion show that there are different ways of caring about things. Something more has to be said to reformulate the deontic view by appealing to cares. Since desiring that p is desiring that p *be actual* (as suggested by the initial intuition of this chapter) and is incompatible with representing that p obtains (as stated by the DODP), the type of care desires involve is caring about *the very coming to obtain* of a state of affairs that is believed to be yet to come. In a sense, it is "*caring whether*" some state of affairs obtain. This is distinct from caring about states of affairs one represents as obtaining or as having obtained, as in enjoying p or feeling guilt about p. This constitutes our second reformulation of the deontic view.

Desireless creatures thus neither require states of affairs to obtain nor "care whether" some states of affairs obtain. This is because they do not represent any state of affairs under the

[278] More on deontic beliefs on §9.1. Deontic beliefs.

guise of what ought to be. This, I hope, allows for a more intuitive grasp of the view to be explored in the rest of this dissertation.

3.4.4. Unfolding the Deontic Mode View

Let me develop the view in the light of the implications of the appeal to modes that I presented earlier. I shall merely *mention* the implications of the view, since the careful defence of some of them sets the agenda for the rest of this dissertation, beginning with the semantic properties of desires implied by the deontic view.

The Deontic Mode and the Semantic of Desire

On the deontic view, the satisfaction conditions of desires turn out to be the obtaining of the state of affairs desired, namely the fact that p. This is implied by the presence of the deontic feature in the mode. Indeed, norms are such that for a norm to be satisfied, its content should obtain. Therefore, if desires represent their content under the guise of the ought-to-be, it follows that the representation is satisfied when their content obtains in the mind-independent world. There is nothing revisionary here.

Given what I have said about modes above, the deontic view admits of correctness conditions for desires. But in the following respect, the implied picture of the correctness conditions of desire is revisionary. According to the deontic view, a desire that p is correct if, and only if, p ought to be (or is right, or required)[279]. A desire for p is incorrect if, and only if, it is not the case that p ought to be, i.e. if and only if it is either the case that p is wrong (ought not to be) or that it is deontically neutral (neither ought to be nor ought not to be). This account will be motivated in a later chapter[280].

Turning now to direction of fit, the deontic mode implies that desires have the world-to-mind direction of fit. This follows from the fact that the satisfaction conditions of desires implied by the view differ from their correctness conditions. This too will be justified later in more detail[281].

Let us now move to the features of desires *qua* attitudes that are implied by the deontic mode.

[279] The "right", the "required" and the "ought-to-be" are used interchangeably here.
[280] More on this on chapter 7. Desiderative Normativity – A Deontic Approach.
[281] More on direction of fit in chapter 4, starting on page 138.

Desires as Deontic Attitudes

As the deontic mode admits of reason-responsiveness, desires end up as attitudes on the deontic view – or, more precisely, as deontic attitudes. Indeed, it is reasonable to assume that a subject's representation of some content as what ought-to-be is motivated by further mental states belonging to that subject and is a stance taken on the basis of those mental states. As it will later become apparent, evaluative states precisely might be the kinds of state that ground deontic attitudes, i.e. desires.

For this reason, the deontic view provides room for the justification of desires. On the deontic view, a desire for p is justified if, and only if, the subject is presented with a sufficient reason that speaks in favour of the rightness of p, absent defeaters. A desire for p is unjustified if, and only if, the subject is presented with a sufficient reason speaking against the rightness of p (for instance some reason speaking in favour of the wrongness or the deontic neutrality of p), absent defeaters. If it is possible to have a desire in the absence of the reasons of the type mentioned, the desire will be a-rational. This possibility implies a weakening of the link between attitudes and reason-responsiveness as it had been presented earlier, but I think that nothing important here relies on this issue. As was true of the account of the correctness conditions, this account of the rationality conditions is revisionary.

With this picture in mind, and assuming that the strength of an attitude depends on that of the reasons grounding the attitude, the deontic view conceives of how a desire is to be graded as depending on the strength of the reasons speaking in favour of the rightness of some state of affairs one responds to, as specified earlier. The strength of the desire will then consist in the degree of requirement to which the desire requires what it requires. Since this depends on the possibility of norms or rightness admitting of degree, the view merits careful justification that will be provided in due course[282].

Finally, if norms admit of distinct types, those delineations will mirror the typology of desires. At least this is the story that the friend of the deontic view will tell. For instance, as far as the polarity of desire is concerned, it will be captured by the polarity of norms. Indeed, positive norms ("it ought to be that p") admit of contraries (negative norms of the form "it ought not to be that p") and contradictories (it is not the case that it ought to be that p). The

[282] See p. 329.

deontic view implies that desire and aversion are polar opposites in virtue of the opposition between the positive and negative norms. More will be said in this respect later on[283].

3.4.5. The Deontic Mode View and Deontic Alternatives

Now that the view has been presented in detail, I shall bring this chapter to a close by briefly presenting how the view fares with regard to the constraints that emerged in the course of our discussion of competing deontic views of desire. This will demonstrate the potential of the alternative that is to be defended and synthesize the main results of this chapter.

As mentioned, the deontic mode view relies on the presence of the deontic feature in the mode rather than in the content of the attitude. This guarantees that the contents of desires are states of affairs, despite desires bearing an essential relation to the ought-to-be. Moreover, the satisfaction conditions of a desire that p, as conceived in the deontic mode view, are nothing but p. There is nothing in the view that requires acting in favour of p for the satisfaction of desire to hold. In this respect, the view does not suffer from the problems of Scanlon's view.

Second, the account provides room for instrumental desires. Indeed, there is no reason to restrict representations of what ought to be to what finally ought to obtain. One might as well represent that some state of affairs should obtain for instrumental reasons. The account can thus acknowledge instrumental desires, contrary to what has been said about the merit view.

Finally, the mode of the ought-to-be seems at first sight to be distinct from any evaluative mode. Although this requires justification, the deontic view certainly does not imply such an identification, as one motivation for the view precisely lies in the thought that deontic attitudes can be motivated by evaluative states[284]. Moreover, given the corresponding picture of cognitions that has been sketched, the deontic view does not imply that some representations instantiate both directions of fit. Assuming that intentions also involve a kind of deontic mode is sufficient to guarantee that they are a type of directive representation. Although this also requires careful defence, the view is *prima facie* compatible with a clear-cut distinction holding between cognitions and conations[285]. If so, the deontic view can capture the advantages of Velleman's picture without suffering from its difficulties.

[283] See §8.2.4. Material Boundaries IV: The Polarity of Norms and Desiderative Polarity.
[284] See §5.1. Deontic Desiderative Consonance.
[285] See 4.2. Direction of Fit – The Proposal.

For those reasons, I believe that the deontic view constitutes our best candidate among deontic conceptions of desires that had been presented in this panorama. It is therefore time to move to the defence of the view. As mentioned in the introduction and since the proposal relies on norms of the ought-to-be type, the *prima facie* justification of the view consists in the thought that appealing to norms of the ought-to-be satisfies the relevant *desiderata* of our investigation. In the next part of the thesis, four *desiderata* are examined, namely direction of fit, desiderative consonance, dissonance and the death of desire principle. This examination will provide the main arguments in favour of the deontic view of desire and open the substantial positive part of this inquiry.

Part II | Defending the Deontic View:
Desiderative Direction of Fit,
Desiderative Consonance and Dissonance,
&
The Death of Desire Principle

4. Argument I – Desiderative Direction of Fit

"It's not right, lament in the Muses' house…
….that for us is not fitting…."
Sappho, *Fragments, On the Muses*

As a matter of fact, some things fit to one another, while others do not. And as nicely captured by the poem quoted, although the world may fit our desires, it sometimes fails to fit them. This said, whatever happens, there is an intuitive sense in which the world *is supposed* to fit our desires. After all, desires, in a sense, are out to be made true. This constitutes the intuition that the metaphor of the world-to-mind direction of fit of desire aims at capturing and which is the topic of this chapter. More precisely, I shall argue that the deontic view of desire presented provides an elegant way of understanding this vexed metaphor with the help of the deontic mode that is essential to the view. Let me begin by presenting the conundrum in more detail.

4.0. The Issue – Fit and Direction of Fit

Although the metaphor of direction of fit is a technical tool, the intuition behind it extends much further and captures some common-sense phenomena, as suggested by the following description.

> *The Movie*
> It is five o'clock. The clock strikes five. Mary is standing on the sofa, barefooted. Sam is filming the whole scene, with the script in his hands. There is a pair of shoes under the sofa. All the while, Sam is thinking. He believes that Mary knows and is afraid that she knows. And indeed Mary knows. She wants Sam to leave the room. At some point, Sam asked Mary to turn her head left and then said to stop. Mary did turn her head left. That is the end of the movie.

In this description, some things fit into one another, but others do not. For instance, the clock fits the time. The movie fits the script. Some thoughts fit the world, while the world does not fit others. Some shoes fit feet, while others do not, and so on and so forth.

But more can be said. There are indeed at least two ways things might fit into one another, namely two *directions* of fit. On the one hand, some representations are supposed to fit the

facts.[286] For instance, the clock is supposed to fit the time, and not the other way around. Indeed, were a mismatch to happen, i.e. were the clock to misrepresent the time, the clock should be adjusted – not the time. Similarly, beliefs and their linguistic expressions (e.g. assertions) are supposed to fit the world. Again, in case some assertion or belief turns out to be false, the representation should be changed – not the facts. For, changing the facts rather than the representation would be cheating. Those representations are thus said to instantiate the *mind-to-world* direction of fit.

On the other hand, some representations are such that the *world* is supposed to fit them and thus have the reverse – *world-to-mind* – direction of fit. For instance, the movie is supposed to fit the script and not the other way around. In case of mismatch, the scene should be played again such that *it* fits the script. Changing the script so that it fits the scene would again be inappropriate. This applies also to desires, wishes, intentions and needs as well as for their linguistic expressions (orders, commands, vows, prayers). For instance, giving up a desire only in virtue of the world failing to realise might be unwarranted, as this may constitute bad faith or inauthenticity. Although there are reasons to cease to have some desires, their mere frustration does not necessarily constitute sufficient reason to discard them. The world is thus supposed to fit desires and similar types of representations. Or so goes the metaphor.

Directions of fit are thus meant to capture a clear-cut contrast between types of representations, including mental representations. The cartography of the mental that is put forward by the metaphor impinges on several philosophical debates, in particular in philosophy of mind and moral philosophy[287].

However, as intuitively compelling as the metaphor of direction of fit is, its interpretation has proved to be a very contentious issue. In order to proceed carefully, two groups of problems should be distinguished.

The first concerns *fit* in contrast to *direction of fit*. Although this issue is rarely addressed, understanding the nature of fitting is a promising starting point, provided that *directions of fit* somehow involve *fit*. Assuming that fit is a relation invites us to ask at least three questions.

[286] In what follows, for reasons of simplicity, I shall concentrate on cases of fit that involve representations. As suggested by the case of shoes and feet, one might think that fit relates other entities than representations. Still, I shall ignore this complication here.

[287] Concerning philosophy of mind, this impacts mainly issues concerning norms of the mental (see for instance Velleman 1992, 2000), functional roles of mental representations (Millikan 2005), doxastic voluntarism (Millgram 1997), rationality (Zangwill 1998), the relation between desires and emotions (Goldie 2003), among others. Concerning moral philosophy, the metaphor is mainly used to approach the issue of motivating and normative reasons for action (Smith 1994, Dancy 2000, Velleman 2000, Wallace 2006), among others.

(I) What is the essence of this relation? (II) What are its *relata*? (III) Is fit a normative relation (for instance, a positive one) or a neutral one? An illuminating account of directions of fit should have something to say on those questions, as the answers to those questions might constrain a plausible interpretation of the metaphor.

The second group of puzzles addresses the issue of *direction* of fit proper. Since talking about directions of fit is highly metaphorical or constitutes at least a figurative way of speaking, the main question concerns the meaning or interpretation of the metaphor. In this respect, several interpretations have been offered. They can be classified in at least three ways, depending on their normative as opposed to their descriptive spirit. Let me mention them in order to give an idea of the kind of controversies the metaphor has given rise to.

At least three descriptive interpretations, i.e. interpretations the crux of which does not rely on norms, have been offered. First, directions of fit have been said to refer to a contrast between distinct *directions of causation* instantiated by representations. In a nutshell, the thought is that beliefs are typically caused by the world, while desires typically cause events in the mind-independent world.[288] Other descriptive interpretations rely on the contrast between the distinct *content* of representations or between the distinct *modes* under which content is represented in each type of representation[289].

By contrast, some interpretations appeal to norms, as the classical interpretation drawing on a contrast between distinct functions of representations: the function of fitting facts that contrasts with the function of bringing about facts[290]. Alternative interpretations appeal to a distinction in the rationality conditions of mental representations, the norms of correctness for types of representations or the ethics of attitudes[291].

Finally, the metaphor may be captured by the very contrast between representations constituted by a norm and representations that are not so constituted. One influential interpretation of the sort appeals to the existence of two types of background principles that

[288] See Searle 1983.
[289] See respectively Gregory *forthcoming* and Velleman 1992, maybe Searle 1983. It is worth noting that Searle merely states that directions of fit depend on modes (1983: 12) rather than defending an interpretation that appeals to them.
[290] Searle 1983, Smith 1994, Millikan 1995.
[291] See respectively Zangwill 1996, Tenenbaum 2006 and Wollheim 1999: 49.

govern mental representations and which differ with regard to their relation or absence of relation to the normativity of the representation[292].

The main issue surrounding directions of fit is to establish (IV) which, among those interpretations, captures the grain of truth of the metaphor, if any.

Two further puzzles depend on this general one. (V) The first questions the possibility of representations instantiating both directions of fit, as the so-called *Pushmi-Pullyu* representations.[293] (VI) The second concerns the heuristic value of the metaphor. If it is assumed that the metaphor does not have heuristic value, as it fails to establish any clear-cut contrast between types of representations, then it would be better to get rid of this misleading way of talking.[294] The answer to those questions will depend on the interpretations one favours.

The proposal of this chapter is to approach the issue of direction of fit with the help of the deontic view combined with some observations on the metaphysics of the fitting relation. In the first part, I argue that fit is a type of correspondence that leads to satisfaction (§4.1). Directions of fit then, it is argued, are ways for satisfaction to obtain that are understood as distinct norms regulating satisfaction. The world-to-mind direction of fit, I contend, is captured by the fact that the *world* should conform to our desires for satisfaction to occur – rather than the other way around. In this sense, the interpretation favoured is normative. This contrast between norms for satisfaction is then explained by the type of mode involved in types of representations, in particular the presence or absence of a deontic mode (§4.2). Indeed, the thought is that representing content *as what ought to be*, which I think is what desiring is, is equivalent to the norm that the *world* should conform to the representation for it to be satisfied. In this sense, the crux of the interpretation will turn out to be descriptive. This is not contradictory, as the description of the intentionality of desire essentially involves the presence of a deontic feature and thus implies the existence of a norm for satisfaction, as we shall see. This proposal is finally motivated further by examining the standard accounts of directions of fit (§4.3), before drawing two important implications that follow from it (§4.4).

[292] See Humberstone 1992.
[293] See pp. 50 and 312.
[294] See for instance Sobel & Copp 2001 and Milliken 2008.

4.1. Fit – Metaphysics

In this section, I shall argue for an account of the fitting relation (§ 4.1.1), before tackling the issue of the normative vs. non-normative nature of the relation (§ 4.1.2).

4.1.1. The Nature of Fit

The account that is to be defended is the following. Fit is a kind of correspondence relation, the kind leading to satisfaction or success. Let us consider each member of the definition in turn, from the more general to the most specific.

4.1.1.1. Fit and Correspondence

In order to defend the claim that fit is a kind of correspondence relation, it is necessary to provide a sketch of what is meant by correspondence.

The nature of Correspondence: A Sketch

Consider three examples of different types of correspondence. First, ring trees are said to correspond to the age of the tree ("natural correspondence"). Second, in a schema, symbols might correspond to objects, relations, or other entities ("conventional correspondence"). Finally, metaphors and analogies rely on the statement of some correspondence holding between their members ("metaphorical correspondence"). For instance, in asserting that Juliet is the sun, it is meant that some correspondence between Juliet, on the one hand, and the sun, on the other, holds.

Paying attention to what is common to each type of correspondence, it appears that correspondence involves some identity in structure holding between two entities. By identity in structure, I mean that there is some identical relation and/or property instantiated by two entities. This suggests the following preliminary account of correspondence.

> CRRSPNDNCE1 – *Structural Identity*: x corresponds to y if x and y *share some property F and/or some relation R*[295].

Although necessary, structural identity is not a sufficient condition for correspondence. Indeed, lots of things share some properties and/or relations, while we are reluctant to think of them as corresponding to each other. For instance, the property of redness is common to all red things. If correspondence were nothing but structural identity, all red things should

[295] Of course, non-natural properties and relations, like the property of instantiating some property, will not be sufficient here. I leave this issue aside here.

correspond to each other. But this is counter-intuitive: those things are better said to *resemble* each other, on a minimal sense of resemblance, rather than *correspond* to each other. If this is correct, there is more to correspondence than structural identity.

One way out of this difficulty is to focus on dyadic properties or relations. Indeed, it is reasonable to think that fit involves correspondence holding between entities in virtue of some dyadic property or relation. Let me clarify what I mean here with some examples. Consider the correspondence holding between Mary, on the one hand, and the sun, on the other, as stated by Mary's lover. Those objects instantiate some common properties and thus resemble each other, for instance both are concrete objects. Still, this does not constitute the guise under which those objects correspond to each other. Rather, it is plausible to think that the correspondence relies on those objects standing in similar relations to further entities. More precisely, the correspondence is accounted for by the fact that the sun bears a crucial relation to the rest of the solar system in the same way as Mary bears a similarly important relation to, say, Sam's well-being. Since the correspondence holds in virtue of some further entity than the *relata* stated in the correspondence statement, it is natural to think that correspondence holds in virtue of some dyadic relation involved.

To turn to our previous counter-example, namely the redness instantiated by all the red objects, this suggests that adding a dyadic relation is sufficient for the talk of correspondence holding between them to make sense. For instance, this is achieved by conceiving of the red objects as being the things preferred by Mary, which might correspond to green objects, which are the things preferred by Sam.

The appeal to dyadic relation easily accounts for representations being the bearer of correspondence. As representations are intentional, they somehow refer to the world. Some dyadic relation is thus part of what they are.[296]

The presence of this dyadic component allows for the possibility of mapping from one domain to another, which is an intuitive way of representing correspondence. We thus end up with the following account of correspondence:

[296] This suggests that it is sufficient that one *relatum* of the correspondence relation be the bearer of some dyadic relation or relational property.

> CRRSPNDNCE2 – *Mapping*: x corresponds to y if, and only if, x and y instantiate some particular property F and/or some particular relation R, & *the property F and/or relation R is dyadic, allowing for mapping between x and y*

I assume that this account of correspondence captures necessary features of correspondence, which is sufficient here for clarifying what I mean by correspondence. Entering into more detail is far beyond the scope of this dissertation.

Fit, Structural Identity, and Mapping

Turning to the fitting relation, it appears that each case of fit satisfies the constraints on correspondence as defined. Indeed, in each case of fitting, there is structural identity in virtue of some dyadic relation, which allows for mapping from one domain to another. For instance, the beliefs fit the world when some correspondence holds between the representation, on the one hand, and the world, on the other, partly in virtue of the representation being *about* the world. *Mutatis mutandis*, other types of representations can be the *relata* of the correspondence relation by means of their aboutness. We end up with the following provisionary account of fit.

> FTNSS 1 – *Correspondence*: x fits y, or vice-versa, if *there is a correspondence relation between x and y*.

However, not all cases of correspondence mentioned above are cases of fit. For instance, does a symbol fit the entity it stands for? In which sense, if any, does Juliet fit the sun in the metaphor mentioned above?[297] Intuitively, the answer to these questions is negative. If these are cases of correspondence that do not involve fit, as they seem to be, we should conclude that fit is a species of correspondence, among others. The question is to know which type of correspondence it is, i.e. the specific features of fit. To this question I turn now.

4.1.1.2. Fit and Satisfaction

The proposal of this section is that fit is the kind of correspondence which leads to satisfaction or success. Let me start by saying a word about what I mean by satisfaction here.

[297] Note that the non-metaphorical meaning of the expression might fit the facts. Still, the metaphor literally relates objects and states thus a different relation than fitting.

The satisfaction of a representation is partly the obtaining of its content in the mind-independent world[298]. For instance, a satisfied belief is a true belief, i.e. a belief the content of which obtains.

Still, satisfaction involves more than obtaining of content. Indeed, the modality under which content is represented is relevant for satisfaction to occur. The content might obtain, but not in the way required by the relevant modality, in which case fitting is not instantiated. For instance, consider a futurist symphony and assume that by chance the present configuration of sounds (the noise of cars, the rhythm of feet, and so on) corresponds to the content of the symphony. Has the symphony been satisfied? Intuitively, it has not. For a symphony being satisfied is a symphony being intentionally and correctly performed. Since in our example the content obtains non-intentionally, we are reluctant to think that the symphony has been satisfied, i.e. performed, despite its content being the case. One might even be reluctant to think that there is any symphony involved here. If this is so, fit is not merely obtaining of content, but obtaining of content *in the right way*. Assuming that the content of symphonies is represented as what ought to be performed, this suggests that the relevant way for content to obtain depends on the way the content is represented or the mode of the representation.

Defined as such, it is clear that fitting of representations involves their satisfaction. Going back to the examples mentioned in the initial scenario, it appears that each case of fit involves some representation and its respective satisfaction conditions. For instance, the fact that Mary is afraid constitutes the satisfaction of Sam's belief that she is afraid. The fact that Mary turned her head left constitutes the satisfaction condition of Sam's order that Mary turn her head left, and so on and so forth. By contrast, the cases of correspondence that do not constitute fit, like metaphors and symbols, are cases where there is no satisfaction holding between the *relata*, since symbols and metaphors are not satisfied by their corresponding entities. This does not prevent the statements expressed from fitting or not the world, as statements do have satisfaction conditions.

Finally, let me explain why I stated that fit is the kind of correspondence that *leads* to, or one could say *come with*, satisfaction. One might indeed conclude from the previous observations that fit *is* nothing but satisfaction. This identity claim however is problematic for the following reason. Recall that fit is a symmetric relation. Thinking of fit as a type of

[298] Recall that the mind-independent world refers to facts that are independent from the representation that fits them. Those facts might still concern further mental states of the subject, as soon as those mental states are distinct from the one fit relates. See p. 57.

correspondence relation and assuming that correspondence is symmetric is a way of making sense of the asymmetry of fitting. Satisfaction however is not clearly symmetric. After all, it is not clear that satisfaction is a relation rather than a property of representations or other realisable entities, assuming there are any. And even if it is assumed that satisfaction is a relation, it does not seem to be symmetric. Indeed, if the world satisfies some representation, it does not follow that the representation satisfies the world. After all, the only realiser is the world. For this reason, I opt for the claim that fit is a correspondence relation that leads to, or comes with, satisfaction. This, I think, both acknowledges the symmetry of fitting and the thought that not just any instantiation of the correspondence relation constitutes fit.

If this is on the right track, our final picture of fit is the following.

> FTNSS 2 – *Satisfaction*: for any x and y, x fits y if, and only if, x corresponds to y & *there is satisfaction between x and y*.

Mismatch, on the other hand, is the absence of satisfaction, i.e. either the obtaining of distinct content (say q instead of p) or the obtaining of content in the wrong way (as in the example of the symphony above) or both.

Assuming that only representations are the bearers of satisfaction, the *relata* of the fitting relation are facts, on the one hand, and representations, on the other[299]. This is due to the fact that satisfaction is the "realisation" of representations and that facts are the "realisers" of the "realisable" entities constituted by representations.

Now that we have a better grasp on the essence of fit, we can approach the issue of the normative or descriptive nature of the relation, as this will set constraints on a plausible interpretation of the metaphor of direction of fit. The next section addresses this issue.

4.1.2. The Normativity of Fit

Is fit a neutral, i.e. descriptive, relation or a normative one? In this section, I shall motivate the thought that fit is a good thing and thus a normative relation with the help of the following allusive observations.

[299] One reason to think that only representations are the bearer of satisfaction is the intimate relationship between satisfaction and modes. If only representations involve modes and if satisfaction is a feature of entities that instantiate modes, then only representations are the bearers of satisfaction. This said, nothing important relies on this restriction.

It is intuitive to think that fit is a good thing. For, all things being equal, true beliefs are better than false ones, satisfied desires are better than unfulfilled ones, performed intentions better than unexecuted intentions, and the like. How could that be so if satisfaction did not constitute some defeasible good in itself?

This claim should not be confused with the two following ones. First, it does not state that fitting is a good thing *all things considered*. For some representations, for instance some desires, might be bad (say, for moral reasons). In that case, *all things considered*, their satisfaction will be bad as well. Still, this does not prevent satisfaction from instantiating some value, *all things being equal*. Intuitively, all things being equal, the world is better off with satisfied representations than with unsatisfied ones. Second, it is not part of the picture that *correspondence,* for instance truth, is a good thing. It is indeed contentious to consider truth as a good thing. Since I claim that true *representations* are valuable – rather than truth itself, the present proposal does not suffer from this counter-intuitive result.

This intuition can be motivated with the help of the following observation. Suppose that you are being asked how a good life would look like. It is plausible that, among other things, a certain amount of true beliefs, satisfied desires and performed intentions will be part of the answer. This indeed would lead to a life which instantiates some amount of correspondence with the world, which is what is expected for lives that fare well. By contrast, systematic false beliefs, frustrated desires and unperformed intentions seem to be part of a life full of failures and thus of a bad one.

This being said, an important proviso is worth mentioning. Given the very intuition driving the metaphor of direction of fit, a good life is not just any life full of satisfied mental states, *whatever the way satisfaction happens*. For instance, a life full of beliefs that have become true in virtue of the subject modifying the world so that it fits the belief is a life full of cheating and thus fails to meet the value of satisfaction alluded to before. If this is correct, fitting has some value but only when other conditions are met. If one prefers, *ways of fitting* are valuable, rather than fitting itself.

I confess that no serious argument has been provided here in favour of the normative nature of fitting. Still, the observations mentioned suffice to show that it is not absolutely far-fetched

to consider fitting or at least ways of fitting as being a good thing. I shall come back to this issue in due time.[300]

With this picture of fit in mind, we can now move to directions of fit proper.

4.2. Direction of Fit – The Proposal

In order to provide our argument for the deontic view of desire by appealing to the interpretation of direction of fit the view delivers, it is worth starting by making explicit the *desiderata* a plausible account of directions of fit should meet. These will constitute the guidelines of our discussion of alternative interpretations and set the agenda of our defence of the deontic approach to this issue.

4.2.1. *Desiderata*

A convincing interpretation of the metaphor should satisfy at least six constraints.

Firstly, the interpretation should provide a neat distinction between cognitive and conative representations or, at least, between the prototypes that are beliefs and desires (and maybe perceptions and intentions). In the absence of a clear-cut contrast at least concerning the paradigmatic cases mentioned, the metaphor would lose much of its heuristic value. Note that this is not begging the question against the existence of *Pushmi-Pullyu* representations, insofar as those concern less prototypical states. Nor does this imply that all types of representations have a direction of fit[301].

Secondly, a promising interpretation should not merely account for the fact that some representations share the same direction of fit, but rather it should leave open the existence of different ways to instantiate the same direction of fit or the existence of distinct species of the same direction of fit. For instance, a previous chapter has motivated the existence of the difference between the direction of fit of desires and that of motivations or representations of goals, despite both constituting species of the world-to-mind direction of fit. Given our account of fit as satisfaction, this is not surprising, as each direction of fit is an umbrella term for distinct kinds of representations, such as desires and intentions, which presumably have distinct kinds of satisfaction conditions. If fit is nothing but satisfaction, and as satisfaction

[300] See p. 162.
[301] Imaginings are sometimes said not to have any direction of fit (Searle 1983). Contrast with Velleman 1999.

conditions can differ between representations having the same direction of fit, the existence of species for each type of direction of fit naturally follows.

Thirdly, a plausible interpretation should account for the distinction between belief and desire by some asymmetry in the relation holding between each type of representation and the facts, as directions of fit are asymmetric[302]. However, it should do so by keeping the *relata* of the relation fixed, namely accommodate the thought that the *relata* are facts and representations. Indeed, the initial appeal of the metaphor lies in the thought that representations like beliefs and desires, despite sharing the same satisfaction conditions, differ with regard to the relation they bear to satisfaction, i.e. a relation that instantiates the same *relata*. Accounting for the metaphor by changing the *relata* does not capture the asymmetry in such a strong way.[303]

Fourthly, an ideal interpretation should explain why not conforming to the requirements that are part of the metaphor is blameworthy and, more generally, illuminate the prohibitions stated. At least two types of prohibitions are present.

The first concerns the case of changing what should not be changed, i.e. a wrong change. For instance, one may not change the world rather than one's belief in order for one's belief to fit the facts. Conversely, one may not change one's desire in order for the desire to be satisfied. Those impermissible changes go with the charge of bad faith, inauthenticity, imposture or, more generally, cheating.

Second, the inappropriateness can stem from the *absence* of changing what should be changed, which is a case of a wrong absence of change. Consider the case of cognitions. For instance, in case one realises that one's belief is false and sticks to it, one can correctly be deemed to be irrational – this might be a case of stubbornness or self-deception for instance. This failure is partly a failure to adjust beliefs to facts, via the reasons to believe one is presented with, and thus partly involves the requirement of the direction of fit of belief.

Now, although telling, those prohibitions and the blames that go along with them need to be explained. Why are some representations such that some changes or absence of changes turn out to be inappropriate? Any account of direction of fit should answer this question convincingly.

[302] See p. 56.
[303] See p. 56 for an example of an interpretation that does not satisfy this constraint.

Fifthly, an elegant interpretation should make sense of the standard test for determining the direction of fit of representations that relies on whether or not satisfaction conditions and correctness conditions coincide[304]. Why does the identity or distinction between satisfaction conditions, on the one hand, and correctness conditions, on the other, have anything to do with the direction of fit of the representation? This requires an explanation as well.

Finally, a persuasive interpretation should shed light on the evaluative character of fitting, if fit is indeed a good thing[305].

Those *desiderata* reveal how providing an interpretation of the metaphor is not a trivial task.

4.2.2. The Proposal – Directions of Fit, Norms for Satisfaction and Modes

If fit is the type of correspondence relation holding between realisers and realisable entities that leads to satisfaction of realisable entities and since it constitutes a symmetric relation, the task of providing an interpretation of the metaphor amounts to capturing the relevant asymmetry between desires and beliefs that is admitted by satisfaction.[306] In this section, one candidate is presented (§4.2.2.1.), explained (§4.2.2.2.) and motivated (§4.2.2.3.). In a nutshell, the thought is that directions of fit are captured by distinct norms for satisfaction, which are in turn explained by the presence or absence of a deontic feature in the mode of the representation. This, I contend, satisfies each requirement for a plausible interpretation of the metaphor that have been just presented.

4.2.2.1. Norms for Satisfaction

As the task is to find out an asymmetry (direction of fit) admitted by a symmetric relation (fit), let us consider one way of reaching an asymmetric relation starting with a symmetric one.

(I) Consider a symmetric relation. For instance, consider the relation "being one meter from". This relation is symmetric, in the sense that, necessarily, if x is one meter from y, then y is one meter from x.

(II) Consider then a species of this relation that is asymmetric. For instance, the relation "being one meter on the left from" is a species of the relation mentioned earlier. This species of the relation, contrary to the general relation, is asymmetric,

[304] See p. 48.
[305] See §4.1.2. The Normativity of Fit.
[306] Fit, like any type of correspondence, is symmetric: necessarily, if x fits y, then y fits x.

provided that it is necessarily the case that, if x is one meter left from y, then it is not the case that y is one meter left from x.

(III) Consider finally that the state of affairs involving the asymmetric relation should obtain or, if preferred, consider the norm about the obtaining of the asymmetric relation at stake. For instance, consider that it ought to be that x be one meter left from y (N_1). The thought is that this norm stands in asymmetric relation to the norm about the obtaining of the asymmetric content of the former, namely to the norm that requires *y* being one meter left from x (N_2). Now, the two norms neither differ with regard to the relation to be instantiated ("being one meter left from") nor with regard to the *relata* (x and y), but rather differ in virtue of the ordering of the *relata*. To speak metaphorically, the distinction concerns the "direction" of the norm.[307]

This, however, does not prevent the more general relation, namely "being one meter from", from being symmetric. If this is so, symmetric relations can be turned into asymmetric ones, by specifying them in the relevant way.

The question is whether the asymmetric relation between the norms of the type mentioned is sufficient to account for a distinction in direction of fit. Although the recipe presented is a promising starting point, it is insufficient as such to capture a distinction in direction of fit. Let me explain why the failure will be instructive.

Part of the metaphor of direction of fit, as stressed many times, consists in the existence of prescriptions concerning some changes. Now, the asymmetric norms mentioned do not capture these. Consider the norm according to which it ought to be that x is one meter left from y. Now, imagine a case of mismatch, i.e. x is one meter right from y. In order to meet the norm, all that should happen is that x be one meter left from y. But this can be done by modifying the location of x or that of y interchangeably. Although x is supposed to be one meter on the left from y, this does not entail that modifying y in such a way that it ends up being one meter on the right from x is unwarranted. In other words, the ordering in question, namely the spatial ordering, is not sufficient to capture the existence of impermissible changes. As directions of fit consist in such prohibitions, more than norms about asymmetric

[307] This is compatible with the fact that it ought to be that x fits y is identical to the fact that it ought to be that y fits x, which shall be relevant later (§5.1.1.1.2. Ought-to-Be and Ought-to-Do). Still, adding the adjusting relation is sufficient to guarantee the asymmetry between the two states.

content and, by extension, asymmetric norms, are needed in order to account for the metaphor.

More positively, we are in the quest of a norm about a type of ordering such that this ordering is (i) a type of fittingness, (ii) is asymmetric, (iii) is analysable in terms of changes and (iii) is a specification of a symmetric relation, namely fitting. In this way, we shall end up with a norm about changes, which is nothing but the type of prescription we are looking for, starting from the symmetric relation constituted by fit. Now, one likely candidate is norms about adjustments or conformity. Let us describe how this proposal fits the bill.

First of all, adjustment can specify ways for satisfaction to obtain. For instance, the fact that a belief adjusts to the world is nothing but one way for satisfaction of the belief to occur, while adjusting the world to one's belief constitutes another.

Now, as this example suggests, adjustment is an asymmetric relation, which leads to two ways for satisfaction to obtain. Indeed, if x adjusts to y, then it is not the case that y adjusts to x, for the very same x and y and at the same time. For instance, if Sam adjusts to Mary's schedule, then it is not the case that Mary adjusts to Sam's schedule, at least not in the same respect and at the same time. Although there is a sense in which mutual adjustment exists, this does not turn adjustment into a symmetric relation, since the *relata* of mutual adjustment typically should be changed in order for the case to make sense[308].

But what is adjustment? It is plausible to analyse adjustment in terms of change. Adjustment indeed can take place when there is mismatch between the things that adjust one to another. Now, in a case of mismatch, if *x* adjusts to y, what changes is x – not y. Were x to change, then x would adjust to y.

So far, this is a descriptive analysis of adjustment. But adjustment can also be the object of a norm. It might be that it ought to be the case that x adjusts to y, for instance. If norms are prescriptions, as they intuitively are, the norm about adjustment will turn out to be a prescription about changes. In other words, norms about adjustments are norms about the type of changes that should obtain in case of mismatch. As adjustment is asymmetric, norms about adjustment will end up being asymmetric as well. The norm that x should adjust to y

[308] For instance, when it is said that the dance between Sam and Mary involves mutual adjustment, this means that Sam's movements (MS_1) should adjust to some of Mary's movements (MM_1) and that Mary's next movements (MM_2) should adjust to Sam's previous one (MS_1). Were they to adjust to the very same movements at the very same time, dancing would not be possible.

thus requires that x changes in case of mismatch – instead of y. Rather, the norm that y should adjust to x stands in the asymmetric relation to the norm that x should adjust to y.

It thus seems that norms about adjustments are norms about (i) ways for satisfaction to obtain that are (ii) asymmetric and (iii) analysable in terms of changes. This does not prevent the satisfaction of norms about adjustments from consisting in states of affairs that instantiate some symmetric relation, namely correspondence. These norms thus satisfy the constraints that emerged from the discussion.

Let us fill this recipe with the relevant *relata* of our investigation. Although a belief being satisfied and a desire being fulfilled are states where some kind of correspondence, i.e. a symmetric relation, between representations and the world is instantiated, appealing to norms of adjustments for satisfaction to obtain can help us draw a relevant asymmetry. Indeed, some representations are such that the *representation* should conform to the facts. If some facts obtain, the representation is such that, for satisfaction to hold, the *representation* should adjust to the facts, and not the other way around. This means that, in case of mismatch, the representation should be changed – not the facts. This norm can be roughly formulated as follows.

> For any representation, direction of adjustment for fitting [$\downarrow f$][309] and norm for satisfaction [O],
>
> *Mind-to-World Norm for Satisfaction:* O(representation $\downarrow f$ world)
>
> [to be read as: *the representation* should adjust to the world for satisfaction to obtain]

This is the case for beliefs and for any representation instantiating the *mind-to-world* direction of fit. For, as said many times, *beliefs* should conform to the world – rather than the other way around.

By contrast, some representations are such that, for satisfaction of the representation to hold, the *world* should adjust to the norm, not the representation. This norm for satisfaction can roughly be formulated as follows.

[309] The symbol « ↓ » should be read as follows: what stands on the left of the arrow is the subject of the norm of fitting for what stands on its right.

For any representation, direction of adjustment for satisfaction [↓*f*] and norm for satisfaction [O],

World-to-Mind Norm for Satisfaction: O(world ↓*f* representation)

[to be read as: *the world* should adjust to the representation for satisfaction to obtain]

This is the case for desires and any representation with the *world-to-mind* direction of fit.

Let me offer two further formulations of the proposal that hopefully might help better understand it.

The first involves functions. It is reasonable to think of fitting as a function, i.e. a well-behaving relation consisting in some argument and one – and only one – value. Assume then that the argument of a function is the *conditioning* entity or what regulates the value, while the value constitutes the *conditioned* entity or what is regulated by the argument. With this assumption in mind, the contrast in norms for satisfaction can be formulated as follows. For some representations, the argument or conditioning entity are *facts*. In that case, the representation has the mind-to-world direction of fit. By contrast, some representations are such that the *representation* itself is the argument or conditioning entity. If so, the representation has the world-to-mind direction of fit.

The second formulation is a further metaphor proposed by Velleman, namely the metaphor of pattern. Since a pattern can be conceived as what one should adjust to or a conditioning entity, this boils down to the same contrast as the ones just mentioned. The thought is that the pattern is sometimes the world, sometimes it is a representation. If the former, the direction of fit is mind-to-world; if the latter, the direction of fit is the converse.

This table summarises our formulations:

		***Mind-to-World* Direction of Fit**		***World-to-Mind* Direction of Fit**	
Norms for Satisfaction		O(representation ↓*f* world)		O(world ↓*f* representation)	
Argument of the Fitting Function: Conditioning Entity	Value of the Fitting Function: Conditioned Entity	world	representation	representation	World

Pattern for Satisfaction	Patterned for Satisfaction	world	representation	representation	world

Before presenting the virtues of this proposal, it is worth pausing for a while. The norms of satisfaction the proposal relies on might seem to be quite mysterious. Where do those norms come from? In the absence of such an answer, one might think that the present proposal does not constitute progress, since it would explain the obscure by the even more obscure (or at least the equally obscure). Moreover, one might be suspicious about the thought that the *world* is subject to norms and complain that this amounts to a restatement of the metaphor rather than an account of it. For we knew from the beginning that the world is supposed to conform to our desires; what we wanted is a non-metaphorical explanation of this fact. If so, it seems that no progress has been made with our proposal, or so one might think.

I concede that something more has to be said. This is why I provide some explanation of this proposal in the next section. This explanation will enlighten the source of those norms for satisfaction and provide an explanation of why the world can be said to be subject to norms. The key to those mysteries, I think, is nothing but the deontic view of desire, along with a view of belief that shares its spirit.

4.2.2.2. Directions of Fit and Modes

Why would satisfaction come with norms? And why would the *world* be subject to norms of this kind? One way of answering these questions is to appeal to the core approach of this dissertation, namely the existence of specific modes instantiated by representations.[310] In a nutshell, the distinction between two types of modes can easily account for the existence of asymmetric norms for satisfaction and in such a way that the world ends up being subject to some norms for satisfaction. Since satisfaction, as said earlier, partly depends on modes, appealing to modes in order to account for norms of satisfaction is a natural way to go[311].

In order to motivate this explanation, let me recall the proposal about the modes of, respectively, beliefs and desires.

[310] See Velleman 1992: 105, Woodfield 1982: 84, although they do not mention modes.
[311] See §4.1.1.2. Fit and Satisfaction.

Let us assume, on the one hand, that beliefs represent their content as being actual. Put more intuitively, in believing that p, one takes a stance with regard to the way things are in the mind-independent world. One represents a state of affairs as *actually* being such and so, i.e. as obtaining.

By contrast, let us assume that desires represent their content as what ought to/should obtain. More intuitively, in desiring that p, one takes a stance as well, not with regard to the way things actually are, but with regard to the way things should be. One represents a state of affairs as what *ought to/should* be.

This contrast can be generalised to other types of representations[312]. On the one hand, cognitions in general can be thought of as representing their content as *being such and so*. For instance, on a perceptual experience that p, p is represented as being *present* or presented under the mode of the *here and now*. In remembering that p, p is represented as being *past*. To feel an emotion amounts to taking a state as instantiating some *value*, and so on and so forth. On the other hand, conations in general can be conceived as representing content as what *ought to be such and so*. In needing that p, one represents p as what *necessarily* ought to be. In wishing that p, one represents p as what *ideally* should be. In intending that p, one represents p as what ought *to be done*. Although a lot more can be said in order to defend these descriptions, they are plausible, at least from the first-person point of view.[313]

With those assumptions, we end up with a more general contrast between types of representations. For some type of representations, content is represented as *being such and so*, while for another type of representations, content is represented as what *ought to be such and so*. Let us call "receptive" or "existential" the first type of mode, and let us call the second type "directive" or "deontic". Each type of mode can respectively be formulated as follows, where "{}" stands for the mode, "E" for actuality, "O" for oughtness, "x" for the specification of the mode, and "p" for content:

Receptive or Existential mode: $\{E_x\}$(p)

Directive or Deontic mode: $\{O_x\}$(p)

For instance, believing and desiring p can be described as follows:

[312] Again, by representation I mean the whole state made of mode and content.
[313] See chapter 8. Desiderative Typology – A Deontic Approach for more details.

B(p): {*E*}(p)

D(p): {*O*}(p)

Going back to the cases of fit mentioned in the initial scenario, it appears that there is a correspondence between the types of modes involved and the directions of fit. Indeed, any representation instantiating a receptive or existential mode has the *mind-to-world* direction of fit, while any representation instantiating a directive or deontic mode has the *world-to-mind* direction of fit. For instance, it is reasonable to think that clocks represent their content as being the case, while scripts represent their content as what ought to be. According to the proposal of this paper, this is not a coincidence. On the contrary, the type of mode involved, i.e. the presence or absence of the deontic feature in the mode, can account for the directions of fit understood as distinct norms for satisfaction. In a nutshell, the thought is the following.

Since the satisfaction of representations partly depends on the mode of the representation, and since the modes might involve a norm or not, it follows that there exist ways satisfaction should obtain or norms for satisfaction. Let us clarify this proposal by presenting the case of desires first.

Assuming that desires represent their content as what ought to be implies that the satisfaction conditions of the representation is the obtaining of p. Consider the analogous case of norms: if one ought to F, then the norm is complied with when one F-s. But there is more. Indeed, the presence of the deontic mode comes with the existence of a norm for satisfaction. Given that the mode is deontic, the fact that desires represent their content as what ought to be is *equivalent* to the fact that, for satisfaction of the representation to hold, the world should conform to the desire. Again, the case of norms should help one understand why this is so. If norms require their content to obtain, it follows that it is not the norm that should conform to the world, but the other way around. This follows by the very nature of norms, i.e. their essentially directive character. If this is so, the following identity between the deontic view of desire and the direction of fit of desire, as defined in the previous section, holds:

(D(p): {*O*}(p)) = O(p $\downarrow_f$ D(p))

[to be read as: the fact that desires represent their content as what ought to be is equivalent to the fact that the world should conform to the desire for satisfaction to occur]

By contrast, consider the case of beliefs. If beliefs represent their content as obtaining, it follows that the belief is satisfied if, and only if, p. So far, nothing differs from the case of desire. However, if beliefs represent their content *as obtaining*, it follows that, for satisfaction of the representation to hold, the *belief* should conform to the facts. This is due to the commitment to the way things are in the mind-independent world that comes with the mode of believing. Observe however that, in this case, the norm is not equivalent to the mode of belief, contrary to the case of desire. Given that, in the case of beliefs, there are no norms involved in the mode, the norm for satisfaction cannot be identical to the mode involved in beliefs, contrary to the case of desire. Still, it is reasonable to think that the norm for satisfaction *is implied* by the mode of belief. In other words, the satisfaction of beliefs requires that the representations conform to the facts *in virtue of* beliefs being representations as of facts. If so, the mode involved in beliefs *implies* the norm for satisfaction of belief that has been presented earlier.

$(B(p):\{E\}(p)) \rightarrow (O(B(p) \downarrow_f p))$

[to be read as: if beliefs represent their content as actual, then the belief should conform to the world for satisfaction to occur]

The correlation between the directions of fit and the presence or absence of a deontic feature in the mode of the representation is thus not a coincidence. For the latter either is identical to or is the ground of the former.

Now that our proposal has been elaborated in more detail, let me present its virtues in the light of the *desiderata* introduced earlier.

4.2.2.3. Fitting the desiderata

In this section, it is argued that the proposal meets all the *desiderata* presented earlier[314].

[314] See § 4.2.1. *Desiderata*.

Firstly, it appears that the proposal implies a clear-cut contrast between cognitions and conations. Demonstrating this rests a lot on the notion of satisfaction involved in the proposal, as suggested by the two following observations.

First, although desires can themselves be correct or incorrect and therefore might be subject to norms, those norms are not about *their own satisfaction*. Indeed, the fact that desires should meet, say, moral requirements, amounts to the fact that, for the moral requirement to be satisfied, some desires should be adopted (or discarded). This, however, is not equivalent to the fact that desires should conform to the facts in order for *the desires* to be satisfied. This account thus does not imply that desires have both directions of fit, although it provides room for norms about desires. In this respect, the contrast is neat.

Second, the proposal does not imply that all representations have a direction of fit. Recall that one contentious case is imagination. Here the defender of the account might go two ways. First, without specifying further the satisfaction conditions of imaginings, one might think that neither norm formulated is true of imaginings. For, neither imaginings should conform to the world nor should the world conform to our imaginings. This suggests that imaginings do not have any direction of fit, a conclusion which some people will be happy to be embrace. Nevertheless, a second route is possible, a route which implies that imaginings have the cognitive direction of fit. Since the account depends on the satisfaction conditions of representations, the extent to which imaginings turn out to have a direction of fit will depend on the existence or not of satisfaction conditions for imaginings. Now, if imaginings involve a mode, and if modes contribute to the satisfaction conditions, they will turn out having satisfaction conditions. It is plausible indeed to assume that imaginings involve the mode of possibility: in imagining that p, one represents p as being possible. If so, it follows that imaginings are satisfied, not when their content obtains, but when their content is possible. Moreover, by instantiating such a mode, imagining constitute representations of how things are in some possible world and will therefore have the mind-to-world direction of fit. If so, imagining something that is impossible, for instance when one is being told to imagine an impossible story, is epistemically wrong in the same sense that false beliefs are. This indeed would amount to not conforming to the norm of imagining what is possible. The direction of fit of imagining, on our picture, thus depends on the very contentious issue of the satisfaction conditions of imagining. Leaving this issue unsettled, I believe that the account fits our intuitions concerning the direction of fit of imagining, for either imaginations will have the cognitive direction of fit or they will not have any.

Let us move to the second *desideratum*, namely the one concerning the relevant level of generality and specificity that comes with each direction of fit. As it has been suggested by my observations about imagining, the proposal can make sense of the intuition that some representations share the same direction of fit, while leaving open the existence of distinctions in the way they instantiate it. If imaginings have the cognitive direction of fit, they instantiate it in a way distinct from the way that beliefs do, given the distinction in satisfaction conditions and in the modes involved. Similar considerations hold for the contrast between desires and intentions. The modes of desires and intentions, as specified, imply that intentions are satisfied when they are performed by the agent. By contrast, a desire is fulfilled when the state of affairs desired obtains, where this is in principle distinct from any action of the subject. In this respect, the direction of fit of desire does not boil down to that of intentions, which is a virtue[315]. This however does not prevent desires and intentions from being required to instantiate the world-to-mind direction of fit, since in both cases the world, either events *tout court* or events consisting in actions of the subject, should adjust to the representations. Since those distinctions depend on satisfaction conditions and as those depend on modes, the proposal can explain away those subtle distinctions and similarities belonging to each direction of fit.

As far as the third *desideratum* is concerned, namely the one concerning the *relata* of the relation, the proposal sketched ends up with the right *relata*. Indeed, the asymmetric norms of satisfaction are both about the adjustment holding between facts and representations. Given that the difference lies merely in the direction of the adjustment, the *relata* are kept the same. This is at least so in the case of belief and desire. Although other representations, like emotions and imaginings, are satisfied by more specific facts than the obtaining of their content, the proposal guarantees at least that the *relata* are kept the same in the paradigmatic cases. In this respect, it is in line with the initial appeal of the metaphor, while the departure from the letter of the metaphor has been motivated by the distinctions in ways of instantiating a similar direction of fit.

[315] See §4.3.1. Functional Roles for an account that does not meet this constraint.

Fourthly, the proposal has the resources to explain the prescriptions and blames surrounding directions of fit in a straightforward way, given that it consists in the existence of norms. Any norm indeed is such that not complying with it can be conceived of as cheating or as inappropriate. More precisely, the account captures the prohibitions involved as follows. On the one hand, changing the facts rather than one's belief is inappropriate given that this is not in line with the mode of believing and the attending norm that follows from it. Likewise, not changing one's belief in a case in which one is presented with a sufficient reason to do so is wrong because beliefs should conform to the facts and given that the subject has all she needs to realise the wanted adjustment. On the other hand, it can account for the thought that changing one's desire in a case of mismatch may be inappropriate, given the very nature of desiring, i.e. its deontic character.[316]

Fifthly, the proposal can make sense of the test for determining the direction of fit of some representation. Indeed, since in the case of beliefs, the belief *itself* is supposed to conform to the world, the satisfaction of the belief is the belief being appropriate, as the belief has satisfied the norm (or, if preferred, the believer has complied with it). Nothing in the norm implies that the obtaining of p is in itself appropriate, since adjustment is asymmetric and so are the norms on adjustments. By contrast, as desires are not supposed to do anything as far as their satisfaction is concerned, their being satisfied, although a good thing, does not turn the desire into an appropriate one. Taking the norm literally, what is appropriate, if anything, is the obtaining of the state of affairs desired. The proposal can thus explain why the coincidence or absence of coincidence of satisfaction and correctness conditions is relevant for determining the direction of fit of some representation.

Finally, the picture can make sense of the thought that fitting is a good thing. As I shall argue in the next chapter, it is plausible to think that norms are grounded on values. In other words, if p ought to be, this is because p is good, all things being equal. If this is so and if there are norms for satisfaction, it is not surprising that satisfaction is a good thing. However, not just any way of realising satisfaction is good, as captured by the very intuition driving the metaphor. If it is assumed that only some ways of bringing about satisfaction are good, it

[316] It is worth noting that no other blames than the ones mentioned follow from the norms sketched, which, as it appears on p. 145, constitutes a virtue as well.

appears that norms about those ways of realising it exist. Now, this is nothing but the proposal at hand, given that adjustment will be good only in some circumstances. What is thus good in fitting is captured by the directions of adjustments that are proper to each type of norm.

If the observations put forward are correct, it appears that the proposal meets every *desideratum* presented and constitutes an illuminating interpretation of the metaphor. Now, in order to motivate it further and understand its place within the spectrum of already existing interpretations, it is necessary to examine its advantage over the main competing interpretations of the metaphor. This is particularly so given that our account, despite being very close to the formulation of the metaphor, does not constitute the standard way of explaining it. To this task I now turn.

4.3. Direction of Fit – Hermeneutics

In some respect, the present account is revisionary. Indeed, the standard interpretation of the metaphor relies on the contrast, *Humean* in spirit, between cognitions, on the one hand, and motivations, on the other. As far as desire is concerned, the direction of fit of desires is nothing but the motivational power of desires, as opposed to the motivational inertia of beliefs.

The standard intuition is often captured with the following slogan: as beliefs aim at being true, desires aim at being satisfied. As Schroeder puts it:

> "Everyone can agree that there are some mental states capable of being true or false, inaccurate, veridical, or the like, but not fulfilled, frustrated, executed, or impeded, and that there are mental states for which the opposite is true. Mental states with the former qualities have the belief-like direction of fit, while mental states with the latter qualities have the desire-like direction of fit."[317]

In the similar vein, Goldie writes:

> "Beliefs and desires are attitudes, held by a person towards a particular content; (…). On this view, it is possible for there to be two thoughts which involve different attitudes towards the same content

[317] Schroeder 2004: 155.

> (believing that p and desiring that p), and these attitudes are contrasted by what they 'aim at', namely, it is said, truth and realization or satisfaction, respectively."[318]

Despite its intuitive appeal, there are at least two reasons to doubt this picture. First, according to a long-standing tradition and given what has been said about fit, truth is one type of satisfaction. On this view, true beliefs are satisfied beliefs. If this is right, then the putative asymmetry between desires and beliefs vanishes, since both attitudes would aim at satisfaction. Even if it is assumed that distinct types of satisfaction are involved, the slogan as it stands is insufficient.

Moreover, and this constitutes a second problem, it is common and reasonable to think that desires have correctness conditions. As beliefs, desires might go right or wrong.[319] If this is right, then one might consider that desires also aim at being correct, where this would amount to their aiming at the (truly) good or the (truly) right or whatever captures the correctness conditions of desire[320]. Although some contrast still holds in virtue of satisfaction not being identical to correctness in the case of desire, contrary to the case of belief, this distinction, as stressed before, is better to be explained. Something more has to be said. In what follows, I shall present three influential accounts that provide a more detailed interpretation of the metaphor and that share the spirit of the standard *Humean* divide just sketched.

4.3.1. Functional Roles

The standard way of refining the previous intuition is to appeal to functions or functional roles. Beliefs, it is reasonable to assume, have the function of fitting the facts. As Dancy puts it, they are "out to fit the world".[321] By contrast, desires do not have the function of fitting the world; rather, they aim at making the world fit them. As Dancy puts it, "desire is out to get the world to fit it".[322] Since the only way to make the world conform to our desires is by acting, this functional role is nothing but the motivational function of desires. This contrast between functions is thus said to capture the distinction in direction of fit. Leaving some details aside[323], the same thought can be found in Millikan:

[318] Goldie 2000: 72.
[319] See §0.4.6
[320] See chapter 7. Desiderative Normativity – A Deontic Approach.
[321] Dancy 2000: 12, although Dancy does not endorse a functional interpretation of direction of fit.
[322] Ibidem.
[323] Millikan 2005 accounts for the direction of fit of desires in terms of function of desires, but not for beliefs.

> A representation is directive when it has a proper function to guide the mechanisms that use it so that they produce its satisfaction condition. Like a blueprint, it shows what is to be done. Desires are directive representations. To see how this might be so, it is important to remember that the proper function of an item can be a function that it is unlikely to perform. Perhaps the sad fact is that an overwhelming majority of our desires never become satisfied. Many (e.g., the desire to square the circle) may even be incapable of becoming satisfied, or (e.g., the desire that it rain tomorrow) may be incapable of being satisfied by normal operation of those mechanisms that are designed to help fulfill desires. This has no bearing on the claim that desires are satisfied when things proceed "properly", that is, when things proceed in the ideal sort of way that accounted for the survival and proliferation of those integrated systems whose job it is to make and use desires.[324]

It is worth noting that this account does not suffer from the problems mentioned earlier, since the function of beliefs might be said to involve correctness, while that of desire is restricted to satisfaction understood as the action of bringing about the content of the desire.

This picture, however, is problematic, at least as far as the direction of fit of desire is concerned.

The main problem concerns the *relata* of the relation. According to the functionalist picture, a belief that p is well-functioning if, and only if, *p*, while a desire is well-functioning if, and only if, *the subject brings about that p*. As it appears, the *relata* of the first relation are not the same as that of the other, for acting in favour of p might be distinct from the obtaining of p, as mentioned earlier[325]. If so, this picture violates our third *desideratum* as did the motivational view of desire.[326] This problem then impinges on at least three other *desiderata*.

First, given that the function of desire is tied to action, it is not clear that this picture can provide room for the subtle distinction between the direction of fit peculiar to desires and that of intentions. For, in both cases, there would be fitting when the subject acts in such a way that the content of the representation obtains. Put differently, the direction of fit of desire has been collapsed into that of intentions. This is problematic, as noted above.

Moreover, given the *relata* of the relation, the functional picture cannot make sense of the prohibitions involved in direction of fit with the right details. The account does provide room for impermissibility, since, in cases of mismatch between desires and the world, the subject

[324] Millikan 2005: 4.
[325] See p. 72.
[326] Note that it will not help the view to think of the function of desires as that of being satisfied. Although this avoids the problem just mentioned, this is not sufficient to contrast desires from beliefs, since the function of beliefs is also to be satisfied, i.e. true.

should act in such a way that the desire gets satisfied. This however captures too much. Indeed, this implies that in cases in which the subject does not act in such a way that the desire is satisfied (or at least in ways she believes the desire can be satisfied), she should be blamed for the absence of action. But this is counter-intuitive. Consider a lucky subject who by chance gets a desire satisfied independently of her actions. On the present account, this subject should be blamed, since she did not comply with the norm of direction of fit, namely acting in such a way that her desire gets satisfied. But why should one be blamed in a case in which a desire gets satisfied by chance? Note that the case of intentions is different. In intending to F and failing to bring about F, subjects can rightly be blamed. But there is no reason to think that the same holds for desires. Although the picture can make sense of part of our blames surrounding direction of fit, it seems to add an unwarranted one. This, I believe, is due to the presence of a wrong *relatum* in the relation, namely actions.

Finally, it is not clear that the functionalist picture can explain the value of fitting between representations and the world. It is true that meeting the function can generally be considered as a good thing. This said, the present picture can merely make sense of the value of acting in line with one's desire, since this constitutes the function of desire. It remains silent about the value of satisfied desires, where the satisfaction is not due to the action of the subject. This, I believe, is an unwelcome lacuna.

Note that those problems all rely on the way the function proper to desire has been conceived, namely along motivational lines. This leaves open a functional interpretation of the direction of fit of desire in terms of a distinct function. But I shall not develop this thought here, since this does not constitute an influential way of understanding the metaphor. Before leaving the standard account, let us move to a second interpretation meant to capture the same *Humean* contrast.

4.3.2. Smith's Counterfactuals

Although Smith defends a functional interpretation of the metaphor as well, he proposes to understand the relevant functions – and thus the directions of fit – by the following counterfactual relations:

> "For the difference between beliefs and desires in terms of direction of fit can be seen to amount to a difference in the functional roles of belief and desire. Very roughly, and simplifying somewhat, it amounts, *inter alia*, to a difference in the counterfactual dependence of a belief that p and a desire that

> p on a perception with the content that not p: a belief that p tends to go out of existence in the presence of a perception with the content that not p, whereas a desire that p tends to endure, disposing the subject in that state to bring it about that p. (…) We might say that this is what a difference in their direction of fit is."[327]

I shall not discuss this proposal in detail and leave aside some qualifications of the previous quotation. Let me restrict myself to two provisos about the perceptual state mentioned.

In order to avoid some problems, it should first be noted that such a state is to be understood as perceptual in the wide sense of providing us with a reason speaking in favour of the non-obtaining of p. Perception typically provide us with reasons speaking in favour of the actuality of some state of affairs and hence of the inactuality of the contradictory state, but other sources of reasons might play this role as well.

Secondly, the formulation should be amended in such a way that the reason in question constitutes a conclusive reason. Indeed, one might be presented with some inconclusive reason speaking in favour of not p, for instance in being aware of bad perceptual conditions such as darkness or coloured spots. In this case, one will not tend to respond to the reason speaking against the actuality of p and give up the belief that p, which constitutes the rational thing to do[328]. The view can thus be summed up with the following pair of conditionals.

> For any state of affairs p,
>
> If B(p) and the subject is presented with conclusive evidence that not p, then B(p) tends to cease to exist, i.e. the causal role of beliefs is representing the world;
>
> If D(p) and the subject is presented with conclusive evidence that not p, then D(p) tends to endure, i.e. the causal role of desires is transforming the world.

Let us examine whether this account constitutes progress compared to the functionalist account of directions of fit presented in the previous section.

A first problem concerns the truth of the conditionals. Taken literally, each conditional is false, because of the existence of irrationality. One might for instance believe that p, being presented with conclusive evidence to the contrary, but still go on believing that p. Self-deception might be such a case. As subjects might do so systematically, they will have lots of beliefs that do not go with the tendency stated in the conditional. Likewise, one might tend to

[327] Smith 1994: 115.
[328] See Sobel & Copp 2001: 47.

cease to desire p just because one is presented with evidence that not p. This again would be irrational. Still, nothing precludes such a case to happen and even to obtain systematically.

In the light of this problem, let us reformulate the conditionals by appealing to a requirement or norm of rationality, as follows:

> O(B(p) & Conclusive Reason that not p → ¬(B(p))) [329]
>
> [to be read as: one ought to cease to believe that p if one believes that p and is presented with a conclusive reason speaking in favour of not p]
>
> ¬O(D(p) & Conclusive Reason that not p → ¬(D(p)))
>
> [to be read as: it is not the case that one ought to cease to desire that p if one desires that p and is presented with a conclusive reason speaking in favour of not p]

In other words, rational subjects cease to believe that p when presented with conclusive evidence that speaks in favour of not p in virtue of complying with the first norm of rationality. By contrast, it is not irrational to go on desiring that p when presented with conclusive evidence that speaks in favour of not p. This suggests that such a norm does not exist in the case of desire. Rather, if anything, rationality requires to act in favour of p.

I shall not discuss this proposal in detail.[330] Rather, I shall concentre on the question whether it constitutes an advantage over the standard functional picture presented earlier.

In order for Smith's counterfactuals to constitute an improvement of the functionalist picture presented earlier, the counterfactuals should either explain the functional role of representations or constitute a reformulation of the same thought that avoids the problems presented. But, it appears that the function of representations can explain the conditionals as reformulated rather than being explained by them. If so, appealing to those conditionals does not constitute an advantage over the functionalist picture presented earlier. Let me clarify why the conditionals stated can be explained by the function of representations.

Let us assume that the function of beliefs is to be expressed by the following norm.

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[329] The norms are wide-scope (Broome 1999), but nothing relies on this here.

[330] One problem for instance concerns again the case of imaginings. Since it is not required to cease to imagine when presented with a conclusive reason speaking against the content of imaginings, imaginings satisfy the conditional proper to desire. This is problematic, since imaginings have the cognitive direction of fit, if anything. However, given that the case of imagining is a border-line case as far as direction of fit is concerned, I shall leave this complication aside.

O(Bp ↔ p)

[to be read as: one ought to believe that p if, and only if, p]

O(¬(Bp) ↔ ¬p)

[to be read as: one ought not to believe that p if, and only if, not p]

Since this formulation admits of well-known problems, it should be amended by taking into consideration the evidence subjects are presented with[331].

O(Conclusive Evidence that p → Bp)

[to be read as: one ought to believe that p if one is presented with conclusive evidence in favour of p]

O(Conclusive Evidence that not p → ¬(B(p)))

[to be read as: one ought not to believe that p if one is presented with conclusive evidence in favour of not p]

Now, let us assume that a subject believes that p and is then presented with conclusive evidence that not p. What she should do is cease to believe that p, according to the conditional. This however can be explained by the function of belief. In other terms, one should cease to believe that p when one is presented with conclusive evidence that not p *in virtue of* the fact that one should not believe that p if one is presented with conclusive evidence in favour of not p. If so, no progress has been made, since the key remains the functional role of belief.

A similar problem holds in the case of desire, as the function of desire can be conceived of as that of acting in such a way that one's desire become true. In that case, the norm stated in the conditional proper to desire would be to act in favour of the obtaining of one's desire if one is presented with conclusive evidence that speaks in favour of its non-obtaining. But this counterfactual can be explained by the very norm of desiring, i.e. the motivational function of desire. But since accounting for the direction of fit by the motivational role of desire suffers from the problems mentioned, Smith's proposal does not fare better than the standard functional picture. This is not surprising as Smith intended to provide an analysis of the functional role of types of representations.

[331] See for instance Boghossian 2005: 211.

Note finally that if one doubts that the conditional is explained by the norm stating the function of belief on the ground that the norms and the conditionals are equivalent, the point is even stronger.

4.3.3. Humberstone's Background Intentions

Let us present a last influential attempt to flesh out the standard account of direction of fit, namely Humberstone's proposal. On this view, in forming mental states, subjects adopt background intentions that are distinct in kind, depending on their concern for truth or absence of such a concern. When subjects form attitudes in line with the criterion that the attitude is successful only if its content is true, then the subject is in a belief state. This "concern for truth" is constitutive of what beliefs are. In the case of conations, the subject is not regulated by such an intention[332]. Rather, subjects form a conation insofar as they adopt the background intention that the attitude should be fulfilled. Humberstone emphasises this aspect: unlike beliefs, there is nothing normative about desires as attitudes, since the only normativity concerns the content of desire. This normative contrast appears clearly by paying attention to Humberstone's conditional intentions for beliefs and desire, respectively:

B(p): *Intend* (¬(B(p)) | ¬p)

D(p): *Intend* (p | D(p))[333]

As the author puts it, what is conditioning and what is conditioned differs in each case.

This picture importantly differs from the previous ones.[334] But does it constitute an improvement? Again, I shall not discuss the proposal in full detail but stick to observations that are relevant to reveal the advantage of the deontic account proposed.[335]

Focusing on desire, one might wonder why desires cannot be governed by a similar norm than the one of beliefs. It is plausible indeed that the formation of desire is regulated by a concern for the desirable (be it understood as the good or the right or other). A conditional similar to that of belief might thus be formulated as follows:

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[332] On Humberstone's talk of intentions, see 1992: 74-75.
[333] Humberstone 1992: 75. The formulation has been slightly modified with regard to the parenthesis in order to secure harmonisation.
[334] See Humberstone's critic of the previous alternative in Humberstone 1992: 63-71.
[335] For instance, imaginings and perceptual experiences are intuitively not formed by any background intention of the sort. This is problematic, insofar as one thinks that they have the cognitive direction of fit.

D(p): *Intend* (¬D(p) | ¬(p is desirable))

It is worth noting that, for Humberstone's picture to encompass the direction of fit of cognitions in general, including emotions, it should accommodate constitutive principles similar to the one formulated about desire. For instance, in assuming that emotions have the cognitive direction of fit and essentially are evaluative states, the norm regulating their formation should involve values. No restriction to non-normative entities should be part of the norms for cognitions. But if so, it is not clear that the contrast between cognitions and conations remains.

Drawing this conclusion however would be too quick. Indeed, this problem can be avoided as far as the background intentions are restricted to the *satisfaction* of representations. This amendment after all is what our exploration on the nature of fit suggests. On this version, there is a grain of truth in the proposal. Even if there is a sense in which desires might be governed by norms of the type mentioned, the absence of satisfaction does not regulate the change of desire. The principle of desiring the desirable thus does not imply any principle of ceasing to desire in case of mismatch. In the case of cognitions, by contrast, background intentions governing representations *eo ipso* govern changes of the representation in case of mismatch: the intention of believing the truth is nothing but the intention of having satisfied, i.e. correct, beliefs. For the sake of argument, let us assume that the following refined formulation is correct.

B(p): *Intend* (¬(B(p)) | ¬p), i.e. *Intend* (having satisfied, i.e. correct, beliefs)

D(p): *Intend* (p | D(p)), i.e. *Intend* (satisfy desires), no intention to adopt correct desires

Let us concentrate on the principle governing desires. A first difficulty concerns again the *relata* of direction of fit. At first sight at least, one might understand this background principle as being a background intention, i.e. conceive of it as an intention proper. If so, the background intention to satisfy one's desire is the intention to act in such a way that one satisfies one's desire. If this is so, we end up with the same problem than the standard functionalist picture concerning the *relata* of the relation and the problems that follow from this.

The way out of this difficulty is to understand background intentions in a non-literal sense[336]. A plausible way to do so is to conceive of background principles as norms that are internal to representations, as follows:

B(p): O(¬(B(p)) | ¬p), i.e. O(not believe unsatisfied, i.e. false, beliefs)

D(p): O(p | D(p)), i.e. O(the content of one's desire is true)

In forming a belief, one forms an attitude by complying with the norm of believing what is true. One thus complies with a principle about the very having of the belief itself. But in forming a desire, one does not comply with a norm about the formation of desire. One merely forms it in the light of the principle that the content of the desire become true. Since the norm governing desires can be understood as an ought-to-be rather than an intention proper, this formulation avoids the problem just mentioned. So how convincing is this picture?

I believe that this constitutes a promising picture, since the norms stated are true of beliefs and desires. This however goes with a difficulty if those norms are to be concealed with the spirit of Humberstone's picture. Recall that for the author, the direction of fit concerns distinct background principles, which regulate the subject's behaviour and are "internally" constitutive of the representations. Now, from the truth of the norms formulated, it does not follow that desires and beliefs are internally *constituted* by them. Indeed, it is possible to adopt an "externalist" picture according to which those norms are true of the relevant representations without subjects forming them actually complying with them. For instance, the function of beliefs can be expressed by the very same norm, without assuming that this norm or function is internally constitutive of what beliefs are. Even if it is assumed that the formation of belief is not regulated by such a norm, beliefs are such that one should not have unsatisfied beliefs. In other words, all one needs to account for direction of fit is that the norms be true for beliefs and desires without them being necessarily internally constitutive of what those attitudes are. But if so, the very spirit of Humberstone's view has been lost.

What is more, one might wonder whether the particular norms that presumably are internalised in the case of beliefs and desires are not dependent on the existence of mind-independent norms of the sort. Consider the norm for desire. Any norm actually satisfies it, since the satisfaction of any norm requires that its content obtain as long as the norm is in place. This is true with or without the internalisation of norms by subjects. Rather, if one has

[336] This is precisely what Humberstone suggests (1992: 81).

internalised a norm, then one ends up being subject to the norm of satisfaction presented. If so, it is plausible to think that the internal regulation of norm is explained by the norm itself. *Mutatis mutandis*, the norm might be true for the internal regulation of desire in virtue of being true of a subject instantiating a desire *period*. Although desires satisfy the norm in question, this does not entail that they are internally regulated by this norm. If so, the background intentions, although on the right track, can be explained by the fact that desires are subject to a norm on their satisfaction. Now, one straightforward way to do so is to adopt the deontic account of direction of fit that has been defended in the previous section. I thus believe that our proposal can make sense of the grain of truth present in Humberstone's without suffering from its flaws.

I leave here the discussion of the most influential interpretations of the metaphor and shall conclude by presenting two implications of the deontic account provided.

4.4. Direction of Fit and Deontic Mode – Implications

Recall that two subsidiary issues about direction of fit concerned the possibility of "*Pushmi-Pullyu* representations" as well as the heuristic value of the metaphor. Let me briefly address each issue in turn in the light of the present proposal.

According to our interpretation, there are no representations instantiating both directions of fit, for the following two reasons. First, the satisfaction conditions of representations are one and only one for each representation. This follows by assuming that one token representation has only one content and one mode, not more, which is reasonable. If so, norms for satisfaction will be only of one type for each type of representation. Second, as it shall be argued in a next chapter in more detail, some receptive types of modes are incompatible with some directive ones.[337] For instance, the mode of the actual is incompatible with the mode of the deontic. Now, the candidates of *Pushmi-Pullyu* representations typically involve mental states instantiating those two types of modes about the same content. This, as we shall see, is a psychological impossibility. A lot more can be said in this respect. In particular, it is worth examining how the present picture understands the direction of fit of presumed candidates for *Pushmi-Pullyu* representations. Because the scope of this chapter was to argue in favour of

[337] See §6.4. Explaining the DODP – A Deontic Explanation.

the deontic view rather than address all the relevant aspects of direction of fit, the detailed analysis of such cases will not be presented now[338].

A second implication concerns the heuristic value of the metaphor. If the picture provided is on the right track, the metaphor states a neat and clear-cut distinction between types of representations. In this respect, it is of important heuristic value to understand the mental cartography and captures an important distinction in the way representations relate to the world. Getting rid of it would be to renounce an important divide in the world of the mind and, more generally, of representations.

If what has been said in this chapter is correct, not only does the deontic view deliver the right direction of fit for desire, but it does so in providing an explanation of the norms for satisfaction that are at the core of the metaphor. Being at the same time revisionary and very close to the letter of the metaphor, the deontic interpretation of the metaphor captures, I think, the world-to-mind direction of fit of desire. The question now is to know whether the deontic view can do so by accounting for the other crucial *desiderata* of our inquiry. This is the task of the next two chapters.

[338] See p. 312.

5. Argument II – Desiderative Consonance and Desiderative Dissonance

"Catherine Earnshaw, may you not rest as long as I am living. You said I killed you – haunt me then. The murdered do haunt their murderers. I believe – I know that ghosts have wandered the earth. Be with me always – take any form – drive me mad! Only do not leave me in this abyss, where I cannot find you! Oh, God! it is unutterable! I cannot live without my life! I cannot live without my soul!"
Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*

"He wanted all to lie in an ecstasy of peace; I wanted all to sparkle and dance in a glorious jubilee. I said his heaven would be only half alive; and he said mine would be drunk: I said I should fall asleep in his; and he said he could not breathe in mine."
Emily Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*

Sometimes, we do not understand why some people desire what they do. As suggested by the second quotation, we often fail to understand the good people seem to see in certain things when they desire them. The disagreement lies between desires of different people and is grounded on the different stances people take towards the world.

But there are more dramatic types of dissonance, which makes the task of understanding each other even more difficult. For instance, in one and the same person, desires might fail to be in line with other representations of the subject, with how the subject *herself* takes things to be at the time. This dissonance is more puzzling, as it lies in the relation one's desire bears to one's other representations of the same subject at the same time. If the desire was consonant with the subject's other representations, we would have a clue in understanding it, we would see the good this person sees in what she desires, despite possibly being in disagreement with her. But in the absence of such a consonance, people's desires seem mysterious to us. How could we understand someone desiring something despite her own perspective on things speaking in favour of the absence of this mental state? Conversely, how can we understand the absence of a desire despite the very same subject seeing things in the same way as someone having such a desire? In addition to these odd ways of desiring, some combinations of desires with the subject's further representations or linguistic expressions uttered by her might even be inconceivable and thus constitute psychological impossibilities. Consonance and dissonance of this kind, namely intra-personal, is what this chapter is concerned with.

As revealed by our discussion of the standard views of desire, providing a promising picture of desiderative consonance and dissonance does not constitute a trivial task. The aim of the present chapter is to approach those issues with the help of the deontic view, moving from consonance to dissonance as the chapter progresses.

Let me remind the reader that for the deontic view to fulfil the *desideratum* on consonance, it should account for the particular explanatory role desires play in our mental economy (§5.1.1), in such a way that these explanations turn out to be informative (§5.1.2). This constitutes the first aim of this chapter. In this respect, the upshot of this chapter is that desires can be explained by evaluative representations and explain motivations *in virtue of* norms of the ought-to-be type being grounded on values and grounding in turn norms of the ought-to-do type. These explanatory relations are not merely consonant, but provide an insight into the rationality of the subject. In that sense, they fit the requirement on explanation adequately.

But there is more to be said. Indeed, our discussion of the standard views of desire in the light of the *desideratum* on explanation has revealed that this *desideratum* bears an interesting relation to the one on dissonance. As mentioned above, the failure to meet the former impinges on the failure to meet the latter, or so I have argued.[339] And this is not surprising. Since the *desideratum* on explanation concerns felicitous relations desires bear to some further attitudes, it is expected that it will help to approach the issue of infelicitous combinations, which is the object of the *desideratum* on dissonance. Indeed, it is plausible that at least some infelicitous combinations are distortions of felicitous ones. This, however, is not to say that the *desideratum* on dissonance is equivalent to the one on explanation. Indeed, explanatory consonance, it has been argued, requires distinct mental states. But not all types of dissonance involve the combination of desires with distinct mental states, as revealed by *contradictory* dissonance. Nonetheless, focusing on consonance constitutes a promising starting point for addressing the issue of dissonance, which is the reason why this chapter will address the latter issue as well (§5.2).

In this respect, the second task of this chapter is to demonstrate how the deontic view fares with distinct types of dissonance involving desires. The types of dissonance I will be concerned with are irrational combinations (§5.2.1), contradictory statements (§5.2.2) as well as cases of a Moore's Paradox involving desires (§5.2.3). To put things in a less abstract manner, the candidates I shall put forward are the following, among others. It is irrational to evaluate a state of affairs positively and not to desire it. Alternatively, it is irrational to desire a state of affairs and not be motivated to act in favour its realisation. Or so I claim (§5.2.1).

[339] See pp. 55 and 85.

On the other hand, it is impossible to desire a state of affairs and not represent this state as what should be, i.e. not requiring it to be the case (§5.2.2). Finally, asserting "p! I do not desire that p" or "Let it be that p! I do not desire that p" is as odd as saying "p and I do not believe that p", among other similar cases (§5.2.3). Since those cases of dissonance are plausible and are implied by the deontic view, it appears that the deontic view can fit our requirements on dissonance as well. But let us start with mental harmony before exploring mental cacophony.

5.1. Deontic Desiderative Consonance

In the light of the moral of the first part of this inquiry, the deontic view should provide room for, and account for, the following explanatory relations: desires are partly explicable by positive evaluations and can partly explain dispositions to act. On the face of it, the deontic view meets this requirement. On the one hand, it makes sense to explain why Sam is representing p as what ought to be or why he is requiring that p obtains by appealing to his positive evaluation of p. On the other hand, it is intuitive to explain why Sally is motivated to act in favour of p by citing her representing p as what ought to be or her requiring that p be true. If those explanatory relations are transitive, positive evaluations can partly explain dispositions to act, which is intuitive as well. But are the stated explanatory relations better than the ones examined in previous chapters?

The answer to this question depends on at least two issues.

The first concerns values, norms and motives (or what ought to be done); i.e. whether the properties, which the aforementioned attitudes bear an essential relation to, stand in the same explanatory relations[340]. In other words, the issue depends on whether values can explain or ground what ought to be, and whether what ought to be can in turn explain or ground motives[341]. Indeed, it is reasonable to assume that explanatory relations between mental states are inherited from the explanatory relations holding between their corresponding essential properties. If the explanatory relations mentioned hold between the corresponding properties,

[340] For ease of exposition, I shall speak of explanatory relations between properties. If this sounds dubious, one might replace the talk of properties with the talk of states of affairs instantiating those properties. Nothing important here relies on this. I assume also that motives are equivalent to what ought to be done.
[341] I assume that the explanatory relations are equivalent to grounding relations, or at least grounding relations of some type. Nothing important is supposed to rely on this issue in the present work.

and if desires are essentially deontic representations, this will *eo ipso* provide an explanation of the particular explanatory role of desires.

The second issue concerns the extent to which the aforementioned explanatory relations involving desires are informative. For, if the relations stated are uninformative, then no progress will have been made, as this was the worry facing standard views of desire.

These issues will be addressed in turn and serve to motivate the intuitions undergirding the picture. To put my cards on the table, I hold that the deontic view meets the first challenge, which implies that it meets the second as well.

5.1.1. Values, Ought-to-be and Motives – Explanatory Consonance

The background hypothesis of this section is the following. Deontic representations are partly explained by evaluative states and in turn partly explain motivations *in virtue of* the fact that values partly explain norms of the ought-to-be type, which in turn partly explain motives. If those explanatory relations are transitive, motives are partly explained by values. The question remains as to whether values, norms and motives do, in fact, stand in such a relation.

At first approximation at least, it seems to be so. On the one hand, it makes sense to consider that p ought to be *because* p is valuable.[342] For instance, it is plausible to think that it ought to be that people heed traffic lights in virtue of the value that heeding traffic lights has as a means to preserving the value of human life. On the other hand, motives for acting in certain ways seem to be explainable by what ought to be. Going back to our example, the fact that it ought to be that people heed traffic lights does provide people with a motive for acting in such a way that traffic lights are complied with. The rightness of the resulting state of affairs might merely constitute some part of the explanation of the motive for acting as one might also appeal to the evaluative property grounding the rightness so as to provide a (more) complete explanation. Still, this is not to say that deontic features do not partly explain motives, provided that explanatory relations can be transitive, at least to some extent.[343]

[342] See Scheler (1973: 184): "every ought has its foundation in a value (and not vice-versa)". See also Mulligan 1998, Ogien & Tappolet 2009 and Tappolet *forthcoming*.
[343] This leaves open the fact that desires provide some further explanation of action, see p. 317 for some observations.

In order to motivate this picture, let us proceed by examining claims that are contrary to the thesis that the relevant properties stand in the aforementioned explanatory relations. At least two types of claims should be denied.

If the picture put forward is sound, it follows first that reductive claims about such properties are false. For values to explain norms, at least when they are about the same state of affairs, norms should not be reducible to values or at least to the same type of value – nor the other way around. Otherwise, the explanation would be vacuous. This holds, *mutatis mutandis*, for motives and norms and, if transitivity holds, for motives and values. The motivation behind those thoughts consists again in the intuition that informative explanatory relations are irreflexive.[344]

Secondly, the picture provided implies that claims stating that opposite directions of explanation hold between the *relata* are misguided. Indeed, for values to explain norms, values should not merely be distinct from norms, but, on pain of circularity, norms should not explain values; *mutatis mutandis* for norms and motives. The motivation behind this thought lies in the intuition that informative explanatory relations are asymmetric.

If the alternative claims mentioned do not resist analysis, this will provide us with some motivation for the picture defended in this section. Note that I will restrict myself to considerations that will be relevant for other parts of this thesis, since a detailed inquiry of those issues is far beyond the scope of this thesis. Let me address each issue in turn.

5.1.1.1. Values, Ought-to-be and Motives – Anti-reductionism

I shall argue first that the ought-to-be is not reducible to values (5.1.1.1.1) and claim next that motives are not reducible to the ought-to-be (5.1.1.1.2). This will motivate the claim that motives are not reducible to values either.

5.1.1.1.1. The Irreductibility of Ought-to-be to Values

What if norms were nothing but values in disguise? On this view, the fact that it ought to be that p is nothing but the fact that p is, or would be, good. This, as far as the present project is concerned, would be a devastating result.

[344] See p. 59.

Here is a *reductio* of the claim that the ought-to-be is reducible to values.

Suppose that a complex state of affairs S is made of the conjunction of the states of affairs p, q and r at the same time. Suppose further that this complex state is positive in value. If S is good and if what ought to be is reducible to the good, then S ought to be. This however is dubious. Imagine that p is having an ice-cream, q is saving a child from drowning and r is enjoying a delicious whisky. The state of affairs S composed of those three states of affairs is good, since it would be good to save the child while enjoying an ice-cream and a sip of whisky. What would be bad in it? After all, this state of affairs is good from both a moral and aesthetic point of view. But do we want to say that this state of affairs ought to obtain? Do we want to say that a subject should, if presented with the opportunity, save a child from drowning while having ice-cream and enjoying whisky, where all those states are part of what is right to do? Intuitively, this would be an odd thing to say. Rather, we are inclined to think that the right thing to do is to save the chid from drowning *period*. Were someone to intend to bring about the conjunctive state of affairs S, she would be deemed to be capricious and to lack elegance in caring about what is superfluous.[345] This however is not to say that the resulting complex state of affairs is bad. Presumably, the state of affairs has greater value than that of each conjunct taken in isolation. This notwithstanding, the resulting state of affairs does not seem to be required. If this is correct, positive norms cannot be identical to positive values.

This being said, this in itself is not sufficient to establish that the ought-to-be is not a *type* of value, as the defender of the evaluative conception of the ought-to-be might be inclined to think. Although good, the complex state of affairs might not instantiate the type of goodness that constitutes rightness. One natural question that should be raised when confronting this possibility concerns the boundaries of the type of value constituting rightness. For, if norms are a type of values, they should be different from other types of values, as moral values differ from hedonic values. But one problem in this respect is that norms themselves admit of a variety which precisely embraces that of types of values, at least to some extent[346]. For instance, there are moral norms, prudential norms and so on. If so, the defender of the reduction of norms to values should point to another criterion for the typology than the

[345] See §8.2.3.1. Requirements of Well-Being, Superfluity and Capricious Desires for a deontic account of caprice, including examples that do not rely on distinct types of values.
[346] One might be dubious about the existence of aesthetic norms, but I shall leave this issue aside here.

standard types of values. But this is not an easy task. In the absence of an answer to this puzzle, the burden of proof lies with the defender of the evaluative picture of the ought-to-be.

Moreover, even if it is assumed that some relevant distinction can be found, structural differences between norms and values preclude the reduction of the former to the latter, as revealed by the following observation.

Going back to our example, considerations about the gradability of values and norms are instructive. As mentioned, intuitively, the value of the complex state of affairs is higher than the value of each conjunct in isolation. In other words, the state of saving the child while enjoying whisky and ice-cream is intuitively better than, say, the state of enjoying ice-cream taken in isolation. Now, although by hypothesis each conjunct is right (all things being equal), there is a sense in which one state "ought more to obtain" than the other, namely saving the child. Saving the child has indeed priority over the other conjuncts. It is not clear however that the sense in which saving the child "ought more to obtain" than the other conjunct is the same sense in which the value of the conjunction of the states is better than the value of each conjunct. Indeed, although states of affairs can be more and more positive along a continuum of value, it is counter-intuitive to think of states that ought to obtain getting "righter" along such a *continuum*. Either a state ought to obtain or it is not the case that it ought to, which precludes the existence of continuous gradability for norms. This is not to say that in a sense some states of affairs should not "more obtain" than others.[347] Still, the gradability of norms, if any, is not reducible to the gradability admitted by values. This suggests that norms do not constitute a type of value.[348]

5.1.1.1.2. Ought-to-Be and Ought-to-Do

Are motives reducible to what ought-to-be? If it is assumed that one has a motive to do F if, and only if, one ought to do F, this amounts to asking whether what ought to be done is reducible to what ought to be. Things are more controversial here, since one might think that motives or the ought-to-do is a type of ought-to-be[349]. Despite the fact that the ought-to-be operator is about states of affairs, while the ought-to-do is about actions[350], the latter might be

[347] See p. 330 for such a proposal.
[348] If one thinks that norms do not admit of degrees at all, then our observation is all the stronger.
[349] In what follows, I assume that motives, reasons for action and ought-to-do are equivalent and ignore problems of equating them (see Broome 1999 for instance), since nothing important relies on this.
[350] More on this distinction, §3.4.1.1. Ought-to-Do and Ought-to-Be.

conceived as being the ought-to-be operator taking actions under its scope. The fact that Sam ought to kiss Mary would be nothing but the fact that it ought to be the case that Sam kisses Mary. In other words, the ought-to-do would be a determinable of the ought-to-be rather than a *sui generis* type of norm. Something more should be said in order to distinguish the two, as required.

Here are two observations speaking in favour of the non-reducibility of motives (or the ought-to-do) to the ought-to-be.

The first observation concerns passive transformations of statements involving the ought-to-do and ought-to-be operators. It has been claimed that statements involving the ought-to-do operator are not reducible to statements that involve the ought-to-be operator and that take actions as their content because the corresponding passive transformations of these statements are not equivalent.[351] Consider the statement "it ought to be that Sam helps Mary". This is equivalent to the statement "it ought to be that Mary is helped by Sam". Indeed, the two states of affairs required to obtain are the same, given that one is the passive transformation of the other. Now, if the statement "Sam ought to help Mary" were reducible to "It ought to be that Sam helps Mary", then the former statement would be identical to "Mary ought to be helped by Sam". This however is counter-intuitive. Indeed, the presumed equivalence misses the fact that *Sam* is under the obligation of helping Mary, while Mary does not stand under any obligation. Moreover, the statement "it ought to be that Mary is helped by Sam" is compatible with the existence of a distinct person being subject to the norm of bringing about that Mary is helped by Sam, which is not equivalent to the initial obligation stated that concerned Sam and only Sam. Appealing to distinct operators allows clarifying the distinction.

(i) O-to-be(Sam helps Mary)

(ii) O-to-be(Mary is helped by Sam)

(iii) O-to-do(Sam helps Mary): Sam has to see to it that Sam helps Mary

(iv) O-to-do(Mary is helped by Sam): Mary has to see to it that Mary is helped by Sam

[351] Harman 1973, Geach 1991, Schroeder 2011. The thought goes back to St Anselm already. On the distinction between ought to do and ought to be, see for instance Wedgwood 2006, 2007, Schroeder 2011, Jackson 1985.

If what ought to do were merely a type of what ought to be, (iv) should be equivalent to (iii) in virtue of (i) and (ii) being equivalent. But given what has been said, (iv) is not equivalent to (iii). This suggests that the ought-to-do is not reducible to the ought-to-be, since if this were so, the asymmetry presented would not exist.[352]

A second observation concerns explanations. Reducing one property to another type is compatible with some explanatory relations holding between them, at least if the properties stand in the determinable-determined relation. Indeed, it is plausible to explain the instantiation of some generic property by appealing to the instantiation of a specific property of the genus. For instance, by assuming that the beautiful is a species of the good, one can explain why a thing is good by appealing to the fact that it instantiates beauty. Assuming that the ought-to-do is a type of the ought-to-be, it is expected that instantiating the latter is explained by instantiating the former. This, however, is counter-intuitive, for the following two reasons.

First, it precludes the explanation of several norms, namely the norms that are not about actions, for instance the fact that it ought to be sunny tomorrow. One could of course appeal to a counterfactual explanation of the sort: p ought to be because of the fact that, if it was possible to act in favour of p, one should do so. Still, why should the norm of the ought-to-be type be explained by that of the ought-to-do? In the absence of a satisfactory answer to this question, the move seems to be unmotivated.

Moreover, independently of the previous worry, explaining the norms of the ought-to-be type by the norms of the ought-to-do type seems a counter-intuitive order of explanation. Indeed, it is natural to explain that an action should be done, even counterfactually, by the fact that the resulting state of affairs should obtain – rather than the other way around.[353] For instance, if Sam ought to kiss Mary, this is because a kiss between Sam and Mary ought to be. It is intuitive to think that the normative properties of some actions are explained by those of the result of the action, as it is to think that the value of some action depends on the value of the state of affairs resulting from the action. Now, there is no reason to think that norms differ

[352] Against the distinction between ought to do and ought to be, see Finlay & Snedegar 2013.
[353] See Chisholm (1964: 149): “I shall suggest that, as Nicolai Hartmann put it, "the ought to be" determines "the ought to do."”

from values in this respect. The asymmetry mentioned suggests that the ought-to-be grounds the ought-to-do – rather than the other way around.

For those reasons, I believe that motives cannot be reduced to the ought-to-be, despite what the superficial difference between the operators suggests.

Let me summarise the discussion so far. I have argued that 'ought's cannot be reduced to values and that motives or the ought-to-do cannot be reduced to the ought-to-be. By transitivity, this suggests that the ought-to-do cannot be reduced to values either.[354] Since there are reasons to think that values, 'ought's and motives are distinct, we can now address the issue of the right explanatory relations between them. Indeed, although one might agree that some distinctions and explanatory relations hold between the properties mentioned, it still remains for us to clarify which directions of explanation are right.

5.1.1.2. Values, Ought-to-be and Motives – Directions of Explanation

According to our picture, the positive value of a state of affairs explains why the state ought to be. This in turn explains why subjects ought to bring it about. This claim is to be contrasted, as mentioned earlier, with claims stating other directions of explanation, for instance the explanation of values by norms, among others[355]. Given what has been said in the previous section, the directions of explanation laid out seem to be the right ones, for the following reasons.

Consider that values are explained by norms, as Kantians are inclined to think.[356] This is intuitive, since for any positive state of affairs, one might think that a corresponding norm about its obtaining exists. This game between *aficionados* of the priority of values and defenders of the priority of norms can be played for a while, since the norm about the state of affairs that was supposed to account for the positive value of its content might in turn be said to be a good norm, and so on and so forth. In order to escape this battle of intuitions here, I will not enter into the subtleties of this important debate. Rather, and somehow simplistically, I shall make use of the example of the complex state of affairs presented earlier in order to

[354] Even if one is sceptical about the transitivity of the explanations provided, our objection about the reduction of the ought-to-be to positive values encompasses the ought-to-do as well, as revealed by our example.
[355] This is the option Kantians are inclined to defend. See Ogien & Tappolet 2009 and Tappolet *forthcoming* on this issue.
[356] More on this on §9.6. Values and Norms.

motivate the explanation of norms by values. Indeed, if the positive value of any state of affairs was grounded some norm about its obtaining, we should explain the value of the complex state of affairs mentioned above by a norm of this kind. But, as we said, there is intuitively no requirement that this complex state of affairs obtain, despite being good, which amounts to say that no suitable norm reveals itself.[357] If so, values are not to be explained by the corresponding norms, but the other way around. Although a lot more can be said, this observation suffices for my present purposes[358].

As far as the possibility of the ought-to-be being explained by motives is concerned, we already mentioned considerations suggesting that this possibility is unpromising[359].

For those reasons, the picture outlined seems to be on the right track. A speculative claim about the nature of the ought-to-be will provide us with a final consideration in its favour. It is tempting to think that the ought-to-be, in virtue of constituting a type of norm, is nothing but an "entity" that is essentially directive, where "directive" means that the entity provides some directions for the world to be. This contrasts with what can be called "receptive entities", which intuitively depend on the way the world is, like reflections for instance. Now, in order to understand the directive nature of the ought-to-be, it is promising to appeal to the explanatory relations favoured here. On the one hand, how would norms provide the world with directions if they were not based on values? If norms did so independently of values, they would lack any plausible ground and complying with them would be arbitrary. But as soon as one is aware of the background value grounding the norm, complying with it ceases to appear arbitrary. Without values, norms seem thus mysterious. On the other hand, norms of the ought-to-be type would fail to provide the world with successful directions if they did not constitute a ground for practical reasoning in providing subjects with motives for acting. Since acting is a straightforward way of bringing about goodness, norms of the ought-to-do type naturally supplement norms of the ought-to-be type. Although this talk of norms being directive is highly metaphorical, I believe that it captures quite intuitively the nature of the norms of the ought-to-be type. If the observations put forward are right, it is not surprising

[357] Although there might be general norms accounting for why the state of affairs is good, this does not impact the present observation, since at least some explanatory relations discussed concern desires and other mental states with the same content.
[358] See 7.2.3.1. Caprice and Values for more details on the case at stake.
[359] See p. 181.

that norms stand in the suggested explanatory relations. On the contrary, this way of talking nicely fits the essence of the ought-to-be.[360]

Since it is plausible that the explanatory relations instantiated by mental states depend on those holding between the properties they essentially relate to, the preceding considerations suggest that evaluations ground desires, which in turn ground motivational states. As the explanatory relations between values, ought-to-be and ought-to-do mentioned are neither reflexive nor state wrong directions of explanation, it follows that the corresponding explanations involving evaluations, desires and motivations do neither suffer from the problem of reflexivity nor from that of direction of explanation. But in order to proceed carefully, we should examine whether those explanations are informative. The reason is that sound explanations, in addition to being non-reflexive and stating the right direction of explanation, should also be informative. As long as the informative character of the explanations provided has not been revealed, one might remain suspicious about their soundness as explanations. Let me address this issue briefly.

5.1.2. Evaluations, Deontic Attitudes and Motivations – Informative Explanatory Consonance

Our discussion of competing views of desire has suggested that the peculiar information provided by the explanations mentioned concerns the rationality of the subject. More precisely, a subject instantiating the mental states mentioned is, all things being equal, rational, contrary to other types of combinations.

For instance, the combination of the desire that p with the evaluation of p as (all things considered) good is rational, all things being equal. This is accounted for by the grounding relations holding from positive values to norms of the ought-to-be type. On the other hand, it is irrational for a subject to desire that p and evaluate that p is, all things considered, negative. Our picture accounts for in terms of the absence of a grounding relation holding from negative values to positive norms. *Mutatis mutandis*, when being told that a subject positively evaluates that p and represents p as what ought to be, absent defeaters, we learn that the subject is rational[361]. This is why we can better understand someone's request when the person expresses her positive evaluation of the state requested. This is due to the grounding

[360] See a similar point concerning the direction of fit of norms on p. 95.
[361] On the rationality conditions of desire, see chapter 7. Desiderative Normativity – A Deontic Approach.

relation holding from values to norms, which accounts also for why we understand that a state of affairs ought to be as soon as we grasp the value of this state.

Similar considerations hold for the relation between representing p as what ought to be and being motivated to act in favour of p. For, if a subject is motivated to act in favour of p, while not representing p as what ought to be (all things considered), then she behaves in a strange way. This is linked to the fact that motives are grounded in norms of the ought-to-be type. By contrast, being motivated to bring it about that p and representing p as what ought to be (all things considered) is a rational piece of behaviour in virtue of norms of the ought-to-be type grounding motives. Explaining the motivation by the deontic representation is informative, as it informs us about the rationality of the subject just as we understand an obligation to act in a certain way insofar as we are aware that the resulting state of affairs ought to be. Or so runs the analogy.

If the observations put forward in this section are correct, the explanatory relations laid out are grounded on plausible explanatory relations holding between their corresponding normative properties. Furthermore, in virtue of inheriting those felicitous relations, they also inform us about an important aspect of a subject's behaviour, namely whether she is rational or not. This then gives us an insight into desiderative dissonance. Let us turn to this issue.

5.2. Deontic Desiderative Dissonance

As stressed earlier, not all cases of dissonance are on a par. Explanatory dissonance is distinct from incongruity involving an open contradiction, i.e. contradictory dissonance. Cases of Moore's Paradoxes, on the other hand, seem to constitute another type of disharmony.

In the light of these distinctions, I shall approach the issue of desiderative dissonance in three steps. It is first claimed that the deontic view of desire can make sense of some type of dissonance by appealing to the explanatory relations just sketched (§5.2.1.). The candidates for contradictory dissonance that are implied by the deontic view are then presented (§5.2.2.). Finally, deontic versions of the Moore's Paradox for desires are suggested (§5.2.3). In order to better understand these proposals, and since they rely on the deontic mode of intentionality, the relation between modes of intentionality and the type of dissonance at stake will be clarified on our way. This will be done by formulating recipes for each type of

dissonance starting from the modes of intentionality, before applying the recipes to the case of desire.

5.2.1. Desiderative Explanatory Dissonance – A Deontic Perspective

I have already emphasized that explanatory dissonance can be approached by explanatory dissonance. Let me make explicit this move in more detail (§5.2.1.1.), before applying it to the case of desire (§5.2.1.2.).

5.2.1.1. From Explanatory Consonance to Dissonance

Consider the following case of dissonance. Sam is told by Sally that Mary will not come to the party. Sam correctly believes that Sally is trustworthy. Yet, Sam does believe that Mary will come to the party and he is pretty sure about this. This, to say the least, is puzzling. Why does he still believe so, despite the sufficient evidence to the contrary he is presented with? In the absence of a further description of Sam's mind, this question remains unanswered. Moreover, the verdict of the dissonance is clear: Sam is irrational, since he does not respond properly to conclusive reasons provided by the evidence. By contrast, were he to respond to the reason by forming the relevant belief, he would behave rationally, so to speak consonantly. Put more generally, the dissonance involved in this case and in similar ones is of the following type:

> S is presented with conclusive evidence in favour of adopting an attitude (for instance, conclusive reasons in favour of p) and S does not adopt the attitude (for instance, does not believe that p, i.e. either S disbelieves that p, or believes that not p or has no doxastic attitude about p)

Assuming that this description is accurate, and that there is no disanalogy in this respect between belief and desire, suggests following recipe for ending up with a case of explanatory dissonance.

Consider that some mental state is a reason for adopting another. In other words, for two mental states S_1 and S_2, and some rationality requirement O, let us assume that the following rationality requirement holds:

$O(S_1 \rightarrow S2)$[362] [all things being equal]

In the example mentioned, the rationality requirement that is violated requires one to believe that p if one has evidence speaking in favour of p:

O(Conclusive Evidence in favour of p → Belief that p) [all things being equal]

Consider then that the requirement is not met. There are at least two ways this can happen.

The first is when subjects do not respond to the reason. The subject is thus in the former state in the absence of the latter. For instance, a subject has sufficient evidence in favour of p and does not believe that p. More schematically, the combination at hand is the following:

S_1 and $\neg S_2$

The case constitutes the absence of a response to a conclusive reason or, which is another way to say the same thing, a disregard of a conclusive reason.

By contrast, the second case is a situation where the all things being equal clause is not satisfied and hence the requirement does not hold. This means that the subject is presented with a reason to be in the latter state, but also with a countervailing reason not to. Nevertheless, despite this fact, the subject responds to the first reason in a way she should not. Assuming that the state S_3 defeats the reason provided by the state S1, the combination can be represented as follows:

S_1, S_3 and S_2

In this case, the subject wrongly responds to a sufficient reason that has been countervailed. She is not disregarding the conclusive reason countervailed, but rather the countervailing reason.

From those cases, it is sufficient to form a sentence in English expressing those combinations in order to reach a case of explanatory dissonance, namely irrationality.

[362] This requirement is wide-scope (see Broome 1999), but nothing relies on this formulation. Note that other requirements might hold in our example, for instance the norm of believing only when presented with sufficient evidence. I shall leave this norm aside, as the cases involving desire I am interested in do not rely on this type of norm.

There is thus symmetry between explanatory consonance and dissonance, on the one hand, and rationality and irrationality, on the other. The cases at hand will thus depend on one's view of the rationality conditions for the type of representation at stake. So far, nothing seems to depend on modes. One might thus wonder why cases of explanatory dissonance are addressed in this chapter. Still, as said in the introduction, it is plausible that the rationality conditions of a type of representation depend on the mode specific to the representation[363]. If this is correct, modes can help to reach cases of dissonance by means of the felicitous explanatory relations, i.e. the rationality conditions, they deliver.

With our discussion of explanatory relations of desires presented in the previous section and by filling the gaps of this recipe, we have the resources to present and better diagnose cases of explanatory dissonance involving desires.

5.2.1.2. Explanatory Dissonance for Desires

Let us start the desiderative cacophony. As stressed in the first part of the thesis, it happens that people desire certain things while being aware of the badness of the state of affairs desired or fail to desire something they are aware would be good. In the same vein, I have motivated the thought that some people desire states of affairs they are not motivated to bring about. In this section, I shall concentrate on dissonance of this kind by motivating in more detail the cases just mentioned, among others, with the help of the recipe just presented.

Rationality Requirements and Desire

Since the explanatory relations presented are two-fold, the two following rationality requirements constitute our starting point.

A. O(Reason speaking in favour of desiring that p → Desire that p)[364] [all things being equal]
B. O(Reason speaking in favour of being motivated to act in favour of p → Motivation to act in favour of p) [all things being equal]

[363] See p. 18.
[364] The *ceteris paribus* clause is meant to exclude the presence of maskers or defeaters that make the absence of desire rational.

Given the moral of the first part of the thesis, I shall assume that evaluations are reasons to desire and that desires are reasons to be motivated to act in favour of the obtaining of the desire. The corresponding rationality requirements are the following:

A. O(Positive Evaluation that p → Desire that p) [all things being equal]
B. O(Desire that p → Motivation to act in favour of p) [all things being equal]

Those are of course motivated by the very core of the deontic view, namely the thought that desiring that p is a deontic attitude. Assuming that deontic attitudes are justified by evaluations and in turn can justify motivations, the aforementioned requirements follow.

Consider now the following combinations corresponding to the different ways of not meeting the requirements just formulated, by beginning with the requirement concerning evaluations and desires.

Desiderative Explanatory Dissonance

Given that the consequent of the rationality requirement is a desire and that the requirement is an all things being equal requirement, two ways of not meeting it suggest themselves.

The first is the absence of the consequent in the presence of the antecedent. In other words, imagine a subject who evaluates p positively but does not desire that p, all things being equal. This could mean that the subject desires that not p, is averse to p or has no desiderative attitude about p at all. For instance, consider that Sam is struck by the goodness of telling the truth to Mary but does not desire to do so, in the absence of being presented with a sufficient reason not to tell her the truth.

The second is a case where things are not equal, as it happens sometimes. Consider for instance a subject desiring that p because she evaluates p positively on irrational grounds.[365] For instance, Sam desires to tell the truth to Mary because it appears to him that this is a good thing. But the reason why he is struck by the goodness of this state is that a person that he does not trust has advised him to do so. Another case involves the combination of a desire with a positive evaluation and an all-out negative evaluation of the state of affairs. Since the

[365] Since it has been said that evaluation constitutes a sufficient reason to desire but also the necessary basis of desire, the case is meant to illustrate the combination of desire and the absence of a sufficient reason to desire that acknowledges both aspects.

all-out negative evaluation constitutes a defeater of the positive evaluation, the positive desire for the state of affairs is irrational, despite being in line with the positive evaluation.

These are the deontic candidates for explanatory dissonance as far as desire and evaluation are concerned. Note that the axiological view can make sense of them by appealing to conflicts between types of evaluation. However, given that we have motivated the thought that desires can be explained by any type of evaluation, it is reasonable to think that cases like the ones mentioned might involve desires and evaluations, where these refer to distinct types of mental states.[366] This is suggested by the symmetry between rationality and irrationality.

Let us move to the rationality requirement holding between desire and motivation, namely.

O(Desire that p → Motivation to act in favour of p) [all things being equal]

If this norm is sound, the two candidates provided are the following.

The first is again the absence of the consequent in the presence of the antecedent. In this case, a subject desires that p, but is not motivated to act in favour of p, all things being equal. For instance, Sam desires to tell Mary the truth and is not motivated to do so, without having a stronger desire nor being presented with a sufficient reason not to be motivated to do so. The motivational view of desire cannot make sense of this possibility, since there cannot be desires without motivation whatsoever. But, as motivated in the second chapter, such cases seem to exist and are at least conceivable[367].

As before, the second case is a situation where things are not equal, because the desire of the subject is irrational or is countervailed by another desire. For instance, Sam is motivated to tell Mary the truth because he desires to, while believing that all things considered he should not desire so. Or Sam is motivated to do so – and only to do so – despite desiring more strongly not to tell Mary the truth. The only way the defender of the motivational view can account for the first case is by conceiving of the motivation as being irrational not in virtue of the irrationality of the desire, but by *constituting* such an irrational desire. However, given that our picture of rationality suggested that desires and motivations constitute distinct mental states, and given the symmetry between rationality and irrationality, there are reasons to think

[366] See §1.3.3. Objection III – Desiderative Explanation.
[367] See p. 93.

that two mental states are involved in the irrational case described. As for the second case, it is impossible on the motivational view, as one is more motivated to do what one desires more. But although odd and irrational, it seems too strong to think of such cases as impossible.

If this is right, the deontic view can make sense of the thought that situations like the ones mentioned are odd. Moreover, it has diagnosed this type of incongruity as involving irrationality rather than other types of dissonance. Since the statements do not seem to imply a contradiction, the verdict sounds intuitive to my ears. For, as we shall see now, other cases of dissonance implied by the deontic view are barely conceivable.

5.2.2. Desiderative Contradictory Dissonance – A Deontic Perspective

Contrary to the cases mentioned, combining a subject's desire with some of the subject's further representations is odd in virtue of an open contradiction holding between the members of the combination.

For the deontic view to be convincing, it should deliver intuitive candidates for contradictory dissonance. But since the view rests on the deontic mode, it should first be established that modes contribute to disharmony of this kind. This is the task of the next subsection.

5.2.2.1. Intentional Modes and Contradictions

How can we derive contradictory statements involving desire from the existence of the mode peculiar to desiring? Before tackling this issue, it is worth noting that our picture does not assume that modes of intentionality are the only way to approach contradictory dissonance. More modestly, the thought is that modes might be a way to reach cases of contradictory dissonance, which leaves open the possibility that other ways of producing such a contradiction exist. In order to present our method, let us start with the case of belief again.

Consider the following frame of mind. For the very same p, at the very same time, and for the very same subject, S believes that p and S does not represent p as being the case. For instance, Mary believes that it is raining but she does not represent that it is raining as being the case. This, I think, captures a contradictory state of mind. As contradictions are

impossible, this amounts to saying that Mary cannot instantiate the described combination, not even in moments of complete irrationality. In order to convince the reader and avoid some complications, let me present two provisos.

Firstly, it should be made explicit that the example concerns merely full beliefs or beliefs with a high degree of credence. For one might think that, in cases of uncertainty, one could represent a state of affairs as obtaining to some degree (say, .5) and as not obtaining to some degree (say, .5), as contentious as this picture is. Since the presence of degrees does not prevent the belief from constituting a representation of its content as being actual to some degree, namely the degree of the relevant belief, this subtlety does not affect our observation. It is sufficient to bear in mind that cases of the sort might be better understood as cases involving a conflict between *two* beliefs. Put differently, the inclination to think that the subject believes that p while not representing p as actual is explained by the subject both believing that p (to some degree) and believing that not p (to some degree), where those beliefs are distinct existences.

Secondly, one might think that the contradictory case described captures the structure of self-deception. The self-deceiving agent is indeed often portrayed as both believing that p and believing that not p at the same time. Now, one classical explanation of self-deception has it that one of the conflicting beliefs is motivated by desires, preferences or more generally a pro-attitude, rather than evidence only, whatever the details of the relation between the belief and the pro-attitude[368]. The self-deceiving agent might then believe that p for some reason (R_1, say sufficient evidence) but not represent p as true for some distinct reason (R_2, say well-being). As this explanation suggests, cases of this kind seem to involve several beliefs, as it is implausible that one and only one state responds to such conflicting reasons. It should thus be made clear that the contradictory case I propose concerns a belief formed through the right kind of reasons, i.e. epistemic reasons, and through one and only one reason.

Therefore, the case for contradictory dissonance under consideration is a situation in which one *and only one* belief that p is accompanied by the absence of representing p as being actual, for the very same p, at the very same time, and *for the very same reason*. The question remains to know whether such a case is conceivable, as is for instance the combination of the belief that p with an insufficient reason to believe p.

[368] See Deweese-Boyd 2012.

To say the least, such a combination is odd. And as I said, it is not clear that it is even conceivable. If what is inconceivable is impossible, it follows that such a combination is psychologically impossible. But more can be said. The combination appears to constitute an *open* contradiction. Consider a variation of the case, namely "S believes that p and S represents p as being actual". This variant consists in removing the negation of the second conjunct ("S does *not* represent p as being actual"). Now, moving from "S believes that p and S does not represent p as being actual" to "S believes that p and represents p as being actual" turns the statement into a tautology. For, specifying that Sam believes that p by adding that he *represents p as being actual* does not seem to add anything informative to the mere mention of the belief that p. The only information gained is a *specification* or a more fine-grained description of Sam's belief. But do we learn anything else about Sam's mind? No candidate suggests itself.

If this is right, this diagnosis invites us to *identify* believing that p with representing p as being actual. Given that it is plausible that representing a state of affairs as being actual captures the mode of believing, the combination of the belief that p with the absence of a representation instantiating this mode is impossible: it is an open contradiction.

With this example in mind, we can formulate the following recipe for contradictory dissonance.

i. Mental states and modes.

Let us assume that some mental state S essentially involves a mode of the type "as F", i.e. being in the state S *is* representing content as F.

ii. A state without its mode and a mode without its state.

Consider now a state and its mode and imagine one in the absence of the other. Two options are possible: either the instantiation of the mental state in the absence of its mode (a state without its mode) or the presence of the mode in the absence of the mental state (a mode without its state). Put schematically:

a. S & ¬(Representing content as F)
b. Representing content as F & ¬(S)

Please form an English sentence corresponding to each combination.

iii. Conceivability test.

Try to conceive of the combination stated in *each* sentence.[369] Consult next your modal intuitions. If you failed to conceive of *both* sentences, the combinations are contradictions. Indeed, if only one combination was conceivable – but not the other, this would mean that one conjunct of the combination depends on the other, without the conjuncts being identical to each other. For instance, it is impossible to conceive of a subject desiring that p and not evaluating p positively in some way (a state without a mode). But, as it is possible to imagine a subject evaluating p positively without desiring that p (a mode without a state), or so I have claimed, this suggests that evaluations are the ground of desires rather than being identical to them.

iv. Informativeness test.

In order to reveal whether the contradiction is open or close, remove the negation of the sentence. It is important to do so for *each* sentence.[370] Concentrate then on how informative or redundant the *two* members of each sentence are. If the sentences are uninformative because removing the negation has turned them into a tautology, the sentences in iii are *open* contradictions and you have reached a case of contradictory dissonance.

With the formulation of the deontic view in mind and by following this recipe, let me approach contradictory dissonance of desire.

5.2.2.2. Deontic Mode and Contradictory Dissonance

Two interesting cases of contradictory dissonance are delivered by the deontic view. Let us present them by following the recipe just formulated.

[369] It is crucial to pay attention to both sentences. Indeed, the candidates for desiderative contradiction put forward by standard views of desire do not come with similar modal intuitions for both sentences. For instance, although it is impossible to desire that p without evaluating p positively, the reverse combination seems to be possible, as argued earlier. Paying attention to both sentences is necessary for drawing a conclusion on the essence (rather than merely on the grounding relations) of desire from those impossibilities.
[370] See p. 176.

i. Desire and deontic mode

Let us assume that desiring p (S), as claimed in this dissertation, is representing p *as what should/ought to be* ("as F"), where this is equivalent to requiring p.

ii. A desire without the deontic mode and the deontic mode without a desire

Consider now one representation in the absence of the other, i.e. the two following cases.

a. Desire that p & ¬(Representing p *as what should be*)

Consider a desire in the absence of the deontic mode, i.e. S desires that p and it is not the case that S represents p *as what should be*. For instance, Sam desires to kiss Sally but does not represent kissing Sally as what should be; neither does he require kissing Sally.

b. Representing p *as what should be* & ¬(Desire that p)

Consider also the presence of the deontic mode in the absence of the corresponding desire. This is the case when S represents p *as what should be* and it is not the case that S desires that p. For instance, Sam represents kissing Sally *as what should be*/requires kissing Sally. But he does not want to kiss Sally. He might actually have no desire regarding Sally whatsoever.

iii. Conceivability Test.

Let us consult our modal intuitions. Are those combinations conceivable? Are there situations where subjects might end up being in such a state of mind? I do not think so. In order to motivate this thought, let us consider three putative situations where a subject seems to desire a state while not representing this state as what should be (case a. above) and examine whether they correspond to the combination at stake in all its subtleties.

Firstly, one might think that the combination is possible, as one could desire a state of affairs and simultaneously believe should not obtain. For instance, in the grip of an addiction, Cleo

desires to smoke, yet does not believe that she should smoke[371]. *Prima facie*, she desires that p and does not represent p as what should be.

I agree that such a case is possible. Still, it is distinct from the candidate for contradictory dissonance I have put forward. For, in Cleo's case, some attitude towards *p*, on the one hand (desire), is combined with the absence of a further attitude about *the fact that p should obtain*, on the other (belief). Now, our candidate involves a different structure, since the two conjuncts are about the very same content, namely *p*, given that desires involve the deontic mode. As emphasized, the presence of the deontic feature in the mode rather than in the content of the attitude is crucial.[372] This reveals the importance of the structural difference between the two cases. Cleo's case might constitute a case of a conflict of desire with a deontic belief, which might even be accompanied by a conflict of desires. This case constitutes an instance of irrationality and is thus not similar to the one I have proposed.

Secondly, one might think that our candidate for contradictory dissonance is conceivable provided that one can concomitantly desire that p and be averse to p. For instance, being addicted, Sally both desires to smoke and is averse to smoking. Contrary to the previous case, the content of both attitudes is the same. Although this combination might be irrational, irrationality is not impossibility. By extension, this does not prevent one from desiring that p and not representing p as what should obtain, in which case the considered combination is possible. By contrast to the previous objection, both attitudes involve a deontic feature as part of their mode, the latter attitude involving the negation of the positive deontic feature involved in the former.

For the sake of the argument, let us assume that it is possible to concomitantly desire that p and be averse to p, for the very same p. As a reply, I think that the alleged counter-example does not prevent the combination of desiring p and not representing p as what should be from being contradictory. Indeed, Sally's case can be understood as a case where she has conflicting attitudes, in which case she both takes p *as what should be* and *as what should not be*. But, as observed before, this does not rule out the assimilation of the former

[371]This case involves the absence of a deontic belief, but can equally well be formulated in terms of the presence of a deontic belief with negative content (Cleo believes that she should not smoke).
[372] More on this on §9.1. Deontic beliefs.

representation to the desire, in which case this does not constitute a counter-example to our claim.

Moreover, for the case to be a sound counter-example, recall that both attitudes should be held *for the very same reason*[373]. Now, in Sally's case, it is difficult to imagine that the desire and the aversion towards p are held for the very same reason. It is true that the reason might be similar in type: for instance, pleasure motivates both the desire to smoke (short-term pleasure) and the aversion to smoking (long-term pleasure). Still, it is unlikely that the very same type of pleasure, and thus the very same type of reason, motivates both attitudes.

Finally, if one is not convinced by those considerations, it is worth noting that the deontic view can deliver another candidate for contradictory dissonance corresponding to the combination of the desire that p and indifference whether p. On the deontic view, this amounts to conceiving of the desire that p in the absence of any deontic attitude (be it requiring or rejecting) towards p. This version of the case escapes the objection under discussion, since the Sally's case involves a deontic attitude about p.

Let us leave here the discussion of putative counter-examples to the inconceivability of the combination and discuss the move from the inconceivability of the case to the equation of desire with a deontic attitude.

Indeed, one might think that the fact that a subject cannot desire that p without representing p *as what should be* merely suggests that desires *depend* on representing content *as what should be*. Indeed, if desires are grounded on such a deontic representation, it follows that one cannot desire that p without being in the relevant deontic representation. But since dependence requires distinct *relata*, it does not follow that desires are such deontic representations. This contrasts with what is claimed here, namely the identification of desires to deontic representations, since dependence does not entail identity.

Although I agree that the case considered is insufficient to establish an identity between desires and deontic representations, the deontic view still has the resources to rebut this objection. Recall that the third step required to test one's modal intuitions with regard to two combinations, the first involving the presence of desire co-existing with the absence of the deontic attitude, while the second involves the absence of the desire paired with the presence of the deontic attitude. Now, this is useful here. For if desires depended on deontic

[373] See p. 192.

representations, then it would be possible to conceive of a subject representing p *as what should be* without desiring p. This would be equivalent to the case of a subject evaluating p without desiring that p. Now, the intuition of this section is that the combination of the deontic representation with the absence of the desire for p is as inconceivable as that of the desire for p with the absence of the deontic representation. Indeed, the two cases seem to be on a par as far as modal intuitions are concerned and the very same replies as the ones put forward about the second case equally apply to the first.

For these reasons, I think that the cases examined do not undermine my claim about the impossibility of the combinations proposed. In order to motivate the equation of desires and deontic attitudes further, let us move to the last step of our recipe.

iv. Informativeness Test.

Consider the following sentence. Anthony desires to watch the stars and Anthony represents himself watching the stars *as what should be.* Is the second conjunct of the sentence informative? Intuitively, it does not add any information, it only specifyies in more detail what the first conjunct consists in. The combination expressed is thus tautologous. In order to capture this intuition, consider the following piece of conversation:

- And then suddenly I desired to kiss her, said Sam.
- Interesting. I want to know more about this, replied Hector.
- I suddenly took kissing Sally *as what should be*, I required kissing her, I cared whether I kissed her. And so we kissed.
- I see. Was she pleased?

Intuitively, it is not clear that the second description does provide us with more information than the first and really meets Hector's demand for more information, unless Hector was asking for a more specific description of Sam's same state of mind.

By contrast, consider the following conversation:

- And then suddenly I desired to kiss her, said Sam.
- Interesting. I want to know more about this, replied Hector.
- I was struck by her sweetness. I was captured by her smile. I thought that this was the right time to try to kiss her. So I tried. And so we kissed.

- I see. Was she pleased?

In that case, Sam mentions the reasons for his desire and also describes the various mental states and behaviour induced by the desire. In this respect, the description is more likely to satisfy Hector's curiosity.

So far, I have only appealed to the intuition that the statement "S desires that p and S represents p as what ought to be" is tautologous. But one might not share this intuition. For the sake of argument, let us thus assume that this statement is not tautologous. If so, some difference between its two members should exist, a difference that does not consist in a level of description or other differences compatible with the identity of the conjuncts. But what could it be? Since the two conjuncts are mental representations, let us examine a case for the distinctiveness by appealing to distinct aspects of mental states. First, both attitudes have the same content, namely p. Second, they have the same satisfaction conditions, namely p. Third, they have the same correctness conditions, namely the rightness of p. If rationality conditions somehow depend on correctness conditions, they will turn out to have the same rationality conditions as well[374]. Fourth, they have the same direction of fit. Fifth, it seems that they have the same phenomenal character, assuming that they have one. So far, no contrast appears. If those properties of desires are the relevant ones for understanding the intentionality of desires, then it seems that no difference between the intentionality of the attitudes suggests itself. A promising explanation of this fact is that the two attitudes are actually one and the same. In the absence of a flagrant distinction between them, the burden of proof lies with our objector.

If this is so, it appears that the deontic picture offers plausible candidates for contradictory dissonance. This contrasts with the standard views of desire, as their candidates for contradictory dissonance can be interpreted as cases of irrationality rather than impossibility. Let us move finally to a last type of cacophony, namely the deontic candidate for a Moore's Paradox of desire.

5.2.3. Desiderative Moore's Paradoxes – A Deontic Perspective

Unlike previous combinations at hand, cases of Moore's Paradox are notorious for not constituting *open* contradictions. Indeed, it is possible to not believe that p (omissive case) or

[374] See p. 19.

to believe that not p (commissive case) while p obtains. This is nothing but a case of a false belief. As far as the task of this chapter is concerned, the question why cases of Moore's Paradox are infelicitous is thus still open. Since addressing this issue in detail is far beyond the scope of the present thesis, I shall leave substantial issues aside and stick to one plausible description – rather than explanation – of the standard Moore's Paradox[375].

Let us consider the omissive case, namely the assertion "p and I don't believe that p". How are we to describe the air of paradox involved in this assertion? Since this representation is an instance of an assertion, paying attention to the mental states expressed, namely the beliefs of the assertor, might prove fruitful. Intuitively, two beliefs are expressed. On the one hand, the first part of the assertion ("p"), if sincerely uttered, expresses the utterer's belief that p. For the standard way of expressing beliefs is asserting their content. If sincerely uttered, the assertion thus indicates the *existence* of the belief that p. But, on the other hand, the second part of the assertion ("I don't believe that p") expresses the utterer's belief in the absence of the belief that p. If sincerely uttered, it thus denies the existence of the belief that p. The air of paradox thus emerges from the fact that the sentence both indicates the presence and absence of the very same mental state.

Commissive cases can also be described as involving the expression of beliefs. In asserting "p and I believe that not p", subjects express the belief that p, on the one hand, and the belief that they believe that not p. The assertion indicates beliefs that are about contradictory content (p and not p). Hence, some oddity is involved.

In either case, we are warranted in saying that the assertion involves a dissonance in virtue of either contradictory attitudes or attitudes with contradictory content being expressed.

So far, if what has been said is on the right track, cases of Moore's Paradox can be considered by paying attention to the expression of mental states and the logical relationships holding between the mental states expressed. Modes have not entered the picture yet. Now, for the deontic view to have a say on Moore's Paradoxes, the paradox should be partly explained in terms of modes. Before presenting our deontic candidate for a Moore's Paradox (§5.2.3.2), it is worth making explicit how modes can contribute to this issue (§ 5.2.3.1).

[375] I ignore cases of Moore's Paradoxes which are not instances of linguistic acts but for instance concern the content of mental states (see Sorenson 1988), as my aim is not to provide a general explanation of the paradox. I shall also ignore candidates for Moore's Paradoxes of desires that do not rely on the three views examined in this dissertation. For an interesting further candidate and an extended discussion of Moore's Paradox for desires, see Wall 2012.

5.2.3.1. From Modes to Moore's Paradox

One straightforward way modes contribute to the Moore's Paradoxes mentioned concerns the relation between types of representations and their proper expression. Let us assume that the relation between the belief that p and its proper expression is not contingent. One way of accounting for it – not the only way – consists in conceiving of belief as involving some mode and of its linguistic expression as inheriting this mode.[376] For, other types of linguistic acts can be understood as involving distinct modes in virtue of the states expressed instantiating distinct modes as well. To mention some examples, one might explain why assertions constitute the proper linguistic expressions of beliefs by pointing to the fact that assertions inherit the receptive or existential mode of belief.[377] Orders, by contrast, do not constitute the proper expression of beliefs and thus do not share their mode. If this is so, modes determine what counts as the proper linguistic expression of some mental state and contribute to the modes of those expressions. Presumably, if some oddity is involved in the expression of these states, this can be accounted for by the modes that are essential to them. Since standard cases of Moore's paradoxes are puzzling in virtue of the mental states expressed, this can be explained by the presence of the mode peculiar to the mental state expressed. Again, this is not to say that there are no other explanations of the phenomenon as well, for instance one that appeals to functions of expressions. Still, this relationship between modes and linguistic expressions suffices for my purpose.

Indeed, appealing to this relation, the following recipe will help to reach cases of Moore's Paradox by the means of modes.

i. Mental state and mode.

Consider the mode of some mental state S and suppose that being in the mental state S is representing content "as F", i.e. being in the state S is representing p as F.

ii. Mode and Linguistic Expression.

Suppose that the proper linguistic expression of the state S inherits its mode ("as F"), i.e. expressing the mental state S is uttering p as F.

[376] See Searle 1983: 6 for the analogy between modes and illocutionary force.
[377] See p. 115.

iii. Expressing a mental state and the belief about the absence of the mental state.

Consider the proper linguistic expression of the mental state combined with the expression of the belief that one is not in the mental state expressed. This could be one of the two following combinations.

a. [omissive case] A first case is the combination of the expression of a mental state with the expression of the belief in the *absence of the state*. For instance, the expression of the belief that p with the expression of the belief that one does not believe that p.
b. [commissive case] The second case consists in combining the expression of the state with the expression of the belief that one is in a *state of the same type with contradictory content*, as expressing the belief that p with the belief that one believes that not p.

iv. First-person sentences.

Please form a sentence in English corresponding to the cases mentioned in the first-person. For instance, (a) "p and I do not believe that p" or (b) "p and I believe that not p".

v. Sentences in the third-person.

Next, form the corresponding sentences in the third person. For instance, (a) "it is raining and Mary does not believe that it is raining" or (b) "it is raining and Mary believes that it is not raining".

vi. Modal intuitions.

Consult your modal intuitions about each sentence. If sincerely uttering the sentence in the third-person is not odd, while it is so for the one in the first-person, then the latter is a case of Moore's Paradox.

With our formulations of the deontic view in mind and the aforementioned recipe, let us suggest a Moore's Paradox for desires along deontic lines.

5.2.3.2. Deontic Moore's Paradoxes for Desires

Given what has been said in the previous section, the deontic candidates for a Moore's Paradox depend on the proper expression of deontic attitudes. In this respect, I shall assume

that the linguistic expressions of deontic representations are speech acts with the world-to-mind direction of fit and the satisfaction of which are captured by fulfilment, i.e. the satisfaction of the expression can be independent of some action of the utterer[378]. Concretely, these are, among others, the linguistic acts of demands, orders, prayers, vows, and maybe others. For instance, "Please p!" or "Let it be that p!" are representations of the sort. As norms can be conceived as coming with an imperative mood, this is not surprising. I shall assume also that those expressions inherit the mode of deontic attitudes. We now have all the resources to fill the gaps of the recipe. Let us proceed step by step.

i. Mental state and deontic mode.

Let us assume that desiring that p is representing p *as what ought to be*.

ii. Linguistic expressions and deontic mode.

Proper linguistic deontic expressions, namely demands, orders, prayers, vows, and maybe others, inherit the deontic mode from the desire they express. In other words, expressing them is uttering their content *as what ought to be*.

iii. Expression of a deontic attitude and of the belief about the absence of the attitude.

Consider the following combinations:

a. The first is the combination of demanding p with expressing one's belief that one does not desire that p
b. The second is expressing the demand for p with the expression of one's belief that one desires that not p.

Consider also similar combinations for the other proper expressions of desires, for instance orders, prayers, vows, and so on.[379]

iv. First-person sentences.

[378] See p. 80.
[379] On similar expressions of desires, see Kenny (1963: 86): "The natural expression of these wants need not contain any reference to the speaker at all: he may say simply "If only the weather keeps fine!" or "Peter should marry Mary"."

Consider now the following sentences.

i. "Please p! I don't desire that p." (For instance, "Please that it rain! I don't want that it rain.")[380]
ii. "(Let it be that) p! I don't desire that p."
iii. "If only p! I don't desire that p."
iv. "Please p! I desire that not p."
v. "Let it be that p! I desire that not p."
vi. "(Let it be that) p! I desire that not p."
vii. "If only p! I desire that not p."

v. Third-person sentences.

Consider now the following sentences.

a. "(Let it be that) p! S does not desire that p."

For instance, "That it rain! Sam does not desire that it rain."

b. "If only p! S does not desire that p."
c. "Please p! S does not desire that p."
d. "(Let it be that) p! S desire that not p."
e. "If only p! S desires that not p."
f. "Please p! S desires that not p."

vi. Modal intuitions.

What are our modal intuitions? Are they the same for first-person and third-person sentences? I do not think so. Indeed, sentences in the third-person are common. For instance, there might be a conflict between the desires of different subjects. One might utter such a sentence when one expresses a desire and realises that someone else does not share this desire. So far, there is nothing mysterious, since desires are objects of disagreement.

By contrast, sentences in the first-person are odd, at least if they are sincerely uttered. For instance, the assertion "Let it be that p! I do not desire that p" is as mysterious as the initial

[380] Searle 1983: 9: "You can't say (…) "I order you to stop smoking but I don't want you to stop smoking" (…). The performance of the speech act is eo ipso an expression of the corresponding Intentional state; and, consequently, it is logically odd, though not self-contradictory, to perform the speech act and deny the presence of the corresponding Intentional state."

case of Moore's Paradox for beliefs in the sense that no situation turns it into a statement that makes sense. How could one indeed sincerely express a demand, prayer, order or vow about a state of affairs without desiring or wishing this state to obtain?

The only situations that correspond to this case, as far as I can see, are the following.

The first concerns subjects that do not master the concept of desire or the rules for the linguistic expression of desire. This case would not be a case of irrationality, but rather one of mistaken application of some concepts. Now, if this is the only situation where the sentences in the first-person make sense, this does not undermine such cases as candidates for the status of Moore's Paradoxes. On the contrary, similar descriptions have been offered for the initial case of Moore's Paradox involving belief[381]. My observation is thus all the stronger.

The second is a situation where the subject does not avow one of her desires, despite expressing it. Imagine that Sam goes to the psychoanalyst. At some point, he might express a desire for p, say for a romantic affair with Sally. "Oh, that I kiss Sally!", avows Sam. But as soon as his true self has expressed itself, Sam represses this desire by denying its existence in saying "I do not desire that p" (viz. that he have an affair with Sally). If it is assumed that one can express a desire without believing that one has it, the assertion would make sense. However, as before, this would be problematic if the Moore's Paradox for beliefs were not symmetric to the one mentioned. But similar descriptions apply to the case of belief. Sam might for instance express his belief that an affair with Sally would make him happy and immediately after censor this thought by denying that he has such a belief. If so, the two candidates are on a par.

My observation can again be motivated further by the symmetry between the deontic linguistic expressions, on the one hand, and deontic attitudes, on the other, as far as their semantic properties are concerned. Indeed, deontic linguistic expressions have the same satisfaction conditions, correctness conditions, and direction of fit as deontic attitudes. If our candidate for a Moore's Paradox captured another type of dissonance, for instance irrationality, some distinctions between the linguistic expressions and deontic attitudes should be established, distinctions that do not merely rely on the linguistic nature of the former as opposed to the mental nature of the latter,. But what could they be? I cannot think of any.

[381] See for instance Wall 2012: 67.

If this is correct, namely if sentences in the first-person are odd, while the sentences in the third-person are not, sentences in the first-person are instances of Moore's Paradoxes for desires. This conclusion follows from the recipe formulated earlier.

Note that this candidate for a Moore's Paradox is not original. Shoemaker already suggested the following candidates:

> In the case of desire, the Moore-paradoxical utterances would be ones like 'Please close the window, but I don't want you to' and 'How old are you? – but I don't want you to tell me.'[382]

To conclude our presentation, the explanation of the oddity involved in sentences in the first person is the same as the initial case of Moore's Paradox. The sentences consist either in the expression of the desire and the expression of the belief that one does not have the corresponding desire (in indicating that one has no desire about p) or, alternatively, in the expression of the desire and the belief that one has a desire about contradictory content (i.e. one desires that not p). If those linguistic expressions are sincere, subjects express the presence of a desire while indicating its absence or the presence of a conflicting desire. This accounts for their paradoxical character.

So far, I have motivated the deontic candidates for a Moore's Paradox by applying my recipe, which significantly depends on one's modal intuitions about the cases put forward. In order to avoid a battle of intuitions, let me make some observations that serve to demonstrate the advantage of the proposed candidates over the axiological and motivational ones, before turning to some objections to our candidates.

Let us assume that the axiological candidate for the omissive case is the following: "Hooray p! I don't desire that p". As mentioned earlier, it is doubtful that this captures the oddity involved in Moore's paradox, since there are situations where a subject might assert this, namely when confessing some irrational desire. This contrasts with the omissive case for belief that constitutes the initial paradox, since it is not clear that the latter constitutes a case of mere irrationality. This contrast has been motivated further in the first chapter by establishing distinctions between evaluations and desires that impact the evaluative candidate for the expression of desires. By contrast, our candidate relies on the deontic linguistic

[382] Shoemaker 1996: 45 in Wall 2012: 64.

expression of a desire, which combined with the mention of the absence of a desire, turns the statement into a mystery. This confers an advantage to our omissive candidate.

In order to understand the virtue of our proposal over the motivational ones, some further observations are required. *Prima facie*, some of our candidates, namely the assertions "Please p! I don't desire that p" and "Please p! I desire that not p", might be understood as motivational cases of Moore's Paradox. Indeed, demanding or ordering p might as well express one's motivation to act in favour of p. If so, one might think that the motivational and deontic views are on a par in this respect.

For the sake of argument, let us assume that motivations can be expressed by expressions of the sort mentioned and, for ease of exposition, let us call "motivational" the kind of imperative at stake. Despite this, I think that a distinction between the deontic and motivational candidates can be made manifest by our previous discussion of the motivational view.

A quick detour is necessary here. Consider the initial omissive case of Moore's Paradox for beliefs, namely "p and I do not believe that p". Given that the paradox depends on the expression of contradictory states, changing the place of the negation, i.e. "not p and I believe that p", should guarantee the air of paradox[383]. This assertion is paradoxical, since one expresses the absence of the belief that p ("not p"), while indicating the belief that p.

Going back to our motivational candidate and playing with the negation of the sentence "p! I do not desire that p", we end up with the sentence "not p! I desire that p"[384]. Now, given what has been said on the possibility of desiring without having any motivation to act, the latter statement, although odd, is not mysterious, at least not in the same sense as the one concerning belief mentioned earlier. Indeed, an irrational subject might express her irrational state of mind, by expressing the presence of a desire ("I desire that p") and the absence of the corresponding motivation ("not p!"). Since subjects might not be motivated to act, despite desiring that p, this is not surprising. If so, this motivational candidate is significantly different from the omissive case of Moore's Paradox.

[383] If one thinks that "not p" is too commissive, the case can be modified as follows "neither p nor not-p and I believe that p".
[384] Again if one thinks that "don't p" is too commissive, the case can be modified as follows "neither do p nor do not p! and I desire that p".

By contrast, assuming that the order is the expression of a deontic attitude, rather than the expression of a motivation, allows us circumvent this problem. Indeed, as mentioned, either there are no situations in which subjects desire that p and express the absence of requiring p, independently of whether they are motivated to act in favour of p or not, or there are such situations, but they are the same as the ones where Moore's Paradox for beliefs is understandable.

Let me bring this chapter to a close by considering two objections to our case for a deontic Moore's Paradox.

First, one might be suspicious about our candidate paradox, provided that it partly depends on the expression of the *belief* about one's desire. Now, as suggested by Wall about Shoemaker's case, this implies that our candidate does not constitute the exact desiderative analogue of Moore's Paradox for belief.[385] For the exact analogue should involve a second-order desire on the same account that the initial case involved a second-order belief. For this reason, and focusing on cases of Moore's Paradox that concern the content of attitudes as the belief about ‹p and I do not believe that p›, Wall suggests that the right cases for a desiderative Moore's Paradox are the following. The commissive case is the desire about ‹p and S desire that not p›, while the omissive case is the desire about ‹p and S does not desire that p›.[386] This has the merit of capturing the reflexive character of the Moore's Paradox that is absent from our cases.[387]

I will not discuss Wall's proposal in detail and do justice to all its subtleties here. Let me rather point to one difficulty that speaks in favour of avoiding the relevant reflexive desires. On the face of it, the reflexive desires in question are possible, and possible in situations where the subject masters the concept of desire. For instance, out of curiosity, one might want to experience what it feels like to have an ice-cream (p) while having no desire to have one (I do not desire that p) and end up having the desire about this very conjunction (‹p and I do not desire that p›). Likewise, for therapeutic purposes, one might wish to understand the pain felt by an addict who strongly desires some property while also desiring to get rid of the addictive desire. In the same vein, one might desire that ‹p without having the desire for p› on the

[385] See Wall 2012: 75.
[386] Idem: 64.
[387] Idem: 75.

ground that one would suffer in desiring that p until one does believe that the desire is satisfied. Now, our initial puzzle about Moore's Paradox precisely lay in the fact that there is no situation of that kind in which one could end up, unless one failed to grasp one of the concepts involved, for instance that of belief, or in case of censorship. Now, the cases of desires just mentioned seem to be actual and do not involve any conceptual failure, nor irrationality or censorship. For this reason, I believe that reflexive desires do not constitute the right candidate for a Moore's Paradox of desire. Similar considerations hold for the expression of reflexive desire which on the present account ends up being: "Let it be that p and let it be that I don't desire that p!"

The second worry concerns the general approach around which the picture revolves, i.e. the appeal to modes. One might object that cases of Moore's Paradox are better explained by appealing to constitutive norms of mental states without entering into considerations about modes.

For instance, one might explain away the oddity of the initial Moore's Paradox for beliefs by appealing to the fact that beliefs essentially aim at the truth. The speaker then would violate this constitutive norm for beliefs (or believers). Since desires might be said to be constituted by the norm of aiming at the good, this route is open in their case as well.

As a reply, it should first be noted that there are reasons to doubt that the constitutive norm of desire is that they aim at the good[388]. I think that it is more plausible to think that, if desires aim at anything, they aim at the right.

As for the core of the objection, I concede that Moore's Paradoxes might be explained by constitutive norms, since the appeal to modes was not meant to be the only way of approaching the issue. It might thus be that appealing to modes and norms are compatible, since correctness conditions and modes might be two sides of the same coin.

This said, although this is a very contentious issue, it is promising to explain the correctness conditions of some type of representation by appealing to the mode it involves.[389] Indeed, it makes sense, for instance, to explain why a belief is correct when its content holds by

[388] See chapter 7. Desiderative Normativity – A Deontic Approach. See Wall 2012 for a treatment of Moore's Paradox by appealing to a constitutive norm for desires, namely that of avoiding frustration.
[389] See p. 111.

pointing to the fact that beliefs represent their content as actual. Were beliefs to represent their content in a different manner, their correctness conditions would be different. By contrast, it is not clear that one can explain the particular modes by appealing to the correctness conditions of the representation. For instance, it would be mysterious to explain why beliefs represent content as being actual by the fact that a belief is correct if, and only if, its content obtains. This would be odd, since this amounts thinking of normative entities as being primary to descriptive ones. On our story, by contrast, the correctness conditions are not primitive, as they depend on the descriptive mode involved. Since it is plausible that normative entities are grounded on non-normative ones, as one might think it is the case for values, our direction of explanation is more intuitive. A treatment of Moore's Paradox that appeals to modes will then have the resources to explain constitutive aims as well.

If what has been defended in the last two chapters is right, the deontic view not only offers an elegant solution to the puzzle of desiderative direction of fit, but also does so in a way that accounts for consonance and dissonance involving desire, both cognitive and linguistic. In addition to delivering candidates for harmony and disharmony, the deontic view diagnoses them by appealing to the grounding relations implied by the mode, the very structure of the deontic mode and the relation modes bear to linguistic expressions. Let us continue our defence of the deontic approach by addressing the last type of infelicity I shall be concerned with, namely the incompatibility between desiring and believing the same state of affairs.

6. Argument III – The Death of Desire Principle

"You came, and I was mad for you
And you cooled my mind that burned with longing…"
Sappho, *Fragments on Love and Desire*, IV

"Affection follows Fortune's wheels,
And soon is shaken from her heels;
For, following beauty or estate,
Her liking still is turned to hate;
For all affections have their change,
And fancy only loves to range.

Desire himself runs out of breath,
And, getting, doth but gain his death:
Desire nor reason hath nor rest,
And, blind, doth seldom choose the best:
Desire attained is not desire,
But is the cinders of the fire.

As ships in ports desired are drowned,
As fruit, once ripe, then falls to ground,
As flies that seek for flames are brought
To cinders by the flames they sought;
So fond desire when it attains,
The life expires, the woe remains."
Sir Walter Raleigh, *A Poesy to prove Affection is not Love*

As nicely portrayed by these pieces of poetry, desires might fade away and cease to exist as soon as they are satisfied, like burning fires cool down and die. As if they were out there to be satisfied, satisfaction signifies the death of desire. More precisely, it appears that satisfaction kills a desire as far as the subject is aware of it being satisfied. Consider an example, so to speak the life of a desire.

Imagine that Sam sees a picture of the Niagara Falls and, struck by this marvel of nature, desires to see the Niagara Falls. A desire is born. As Mary offers to take a day off, Sam offers to take her at the Niagara Falls. There they are, in front of the falls, contemplating the breath-

taking view, impressed by the sounds, a bit annoyed by the other tourists. A desire is satisfied. What a romance. At some point, delighted and absorbed by the brightness of the falls, Sam says in a whisper: "I want to see the Niagara Falls. I really want to." Surprised by Sam's confession, Mary replies: "But we are at the Niagara Falls and you're contemplating them, Sam." "I know", replies Sam, "I am seeing the Niagara Falls now and I want to see them now." "You are a poet, Sam", replies Mary, still puzzled. End of the story.

We understand Mary's wonder well. What a strange thing to say that one wants to see the Niagara Falls when one is actually watching them. Why would Sam want to see them provided that he just has seen them? He should rather feel pleasure in experiencing the fulfilment of his desire. Maybe he wants to explore them further or be absorbed by their sublime look one more time. But it is odd to think of him as really wanting to see them, period, as soon as he has seen them and is aware of this fact. Put in more abstract terms, the combination of a desire with the representation that the content of the desire obtains, at the very same time and for the very same subject, is puzzling. Not only so, but according to the DODP, the combination is psychologically impossible. Sam thus misdescribed his state of mind. The aim of this chapter is to explain this psychological impossibility by appealing to the deontic view of desire. This will provide the reader with a third argument in favour of the deontic view.

Given that we distinguished between three types of dissonance in the previous chapter, it is worth exploring whether the combination of the belief that p and the desire that p falls under one of the types of dissonance examined. The following observations suggest that this does not seem to be so.

First, as stressed already, the combination of the desire that p and the belief that p does not constitute an open contradiction, contrary to the cases of contradictory dissonance mentioned in the previous chapter[390].

Moreover, the combination does not seem to constitute a case of irrational dissonance either. Indeed, the belief that p neither constitutes a reason not to desire that p nor does the desire constitute a reason not to believe that p. I shall turn to this issue later.[391]

[390] See §5.2.2.2. Deontic Mode and Contradictory Dissonance.

Finally, the assertion "I desire that p and I believe that p" does not constitute a case of Moore's Paradox. Indeed, recall that Moore's Paradoxes consist in the combination of the expression of an attitude with the expression of a belief about this attitude (e.g. the expression of a belief with the expression of a belief about the belief). Given that the assertion "I desire that p and I believe that p" expresses a desire for p (or a belief about the desire) and a belief that p (or a belief about this belief), it is not structurally similar.

For these reasons, a distinct explanation than the ones examined in the previous chapter seems required. However, this is not to say that such a combination does not involve a close contradiction, irrationality in disguise or some opposition that is similar to Moore's Paradox. This will depend on the careful examination of the case. Still, on the face of it, the treatment of the DODP requires another approach from the ones adopted in the previous chapter.

In order to provide an argument in favour of the deontic view by appealing to the DODP, I shall proceed in five steps. First, in order to avoid equivocations, I shall carefully formulate the principle (§ 6.1). Second, I shall defend the principle against putative counter-examples (§ 6.2). For only if the principle is true, at least in some cases, will its deontic explanation provide an argument in favour of the deontic view. Now, in order to account for the principle in detail, it is necessary then to examine which types of representation, in addition to desire, make a similar principle true (§6.3). Finally, the deontic explanation of the principle is presented, which will provide the ground for the argument (§ 6.4).

In a nutshell, the finding of the chapter is that the DODP is true as are similar principles involving conations and even some types of cognitions. The key, as far as desire is concerned, is the incompatibility holding between norms, on the one hand, and the facts that constitute the satisfaction of these norms, on the other. In other words, it is impossible to desire that p and believe that p at the same time *in virtue of* the impossibility of the same state of affairs being actual and required to obtain simultaneously. As in previous chapters, the crux of the argument relies on the symmetry between desires and norms, with the extra assumption that beliefs are to facts what desires are to norms. As we shall see, even if one is

[391] If irrationality is involved in the combination of the belief and desire, it does not consist in the same type of irrational combinations discussed in the previous chapter. See §5.2.1.2. Explanatory Dissonance for Desires for more details.

sceptical about the truth of the DODP in some cases, precisely the same doubts apply to similar situations involving norms and their obtaining. This speaks in favour of the wanted symmetry between desires and beliefs, on the one hand, and norms and facts constituting their satisfaction, on the other. The deontic view, if this is correct, can thus shed light on this often neglected aspect of desire. As we have motivated the thought that standard views of desire cannot easily account for the DODP, this provides the deontic view with a significant advantage.

6.1. Formulating the DODP

The DODP – or at least a similar principle – has an important historical pedigree, as revealed by the following quotations from major figures of Ancient, Medieval and Modern philosophy, from Plato and Aquinas to Descartes, Locke, Hobbes and Sartre.

> " And does he [i.e. Love] long for whatever it is he longs for, and is he in love with it, when he's got it, or when he hasn't?
>
> When he hasn't got it, probably.
>
> Then isn't it probable, said Socrates, or rather isn't it certain that everything longs for what it lacks, and nothing longs for what it doesn't lack? I can't help thinking, Agathon, that that's about as certain as anything could be. Don't you think so?[392]
>
> " And when you say, I desire that which I have and nothing else, is not your meaning that you want in the future what you have at present? He desires that what he has at present may be preserved to him in the future, which is equivalent to saying that he desires something which is non-existent to him, and which as yet he has not got."[393]

> "Pleasurable good is the object of concupiscence, not absolutely, but considered as absent; just as the sensible, considered as past, is the object of memory."[394]

> "It is evident that [desire] ever regards the future (…). (…) we desire to acquire a good which we do not yet have, or avoid an evil which we judge may occur; but also when we only anticipate the conservation of a good or absence of an evil, which is as far as this passion may extend (…)"[395]

> "The uneasiness a man finds in himself upon the *absence* of anything whose present enjoyment carries the idea of delight with it, is that we call desire."[396] (italic mine)

[392] Plato, *Symposium* in Silverman 2000: 173.
[393] Plato, *Idem* in Oddie 2005: 71-72.
[394] Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Ia IIae, 30, 2 ad1.
[395] Descartes, *Passions of the Soul* [57], in Baier 1986: 47.
[396] Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, II, 20, 6 in Silverman 2000: 174.

> "That which men Desire they are also sayd to Love: and to Hate those things for which they have Aversion. So that Desire, and Love, are the same thing; save that by Desire, we always signify the Absence of the Object; by Love, most commonly the Presence of the same. So also by Aversion, we signify the Absence, and by Hate, the Presence of the Object."[397]

> "Desire is doomed to failure" because its satisfaction (pleasure) precipitates its elimination[398].

Despite its historical pedigree, the explanation of the DODP is often neglected by contemporary philosophers, as observed by Kenny:

> "Aquinas pointed out that it is as impossible to want what one already has as to remember what is now happening. ... This obvious condition is something strangely neglected by philosophers."[399]

In order to redress this imbalance, it is necessary to formulate the principle carefully and distinguish it from similar principles.

The DODP indeed is to be distinguished from the principles stated in most of the previous quotations. Indeed, most of them state the impossibility of desires about obtaining states of affairs. Desire, in a sense, is necessarily about absences or non-obtaining states of affairs, which can be formulated as follows:

> *Absence* – A desire for p necessarily ceases to exist if p, i.e. if the desire is satisfied.[400]

This in turn motivates the idea that desires are necessarily directed at the future, as stated in some quotations.[401] One might however resist this restriction of the range of absences to future states of affairs by thinking that past states of affairs also constitute absences.

Formulated as such, "absence" is false. Indeed, it is possible that one goes on desiring something although the desire has been satisfied. For instance, Sam might desire to see the Niagara Falls, while standing in front of them, but falsely believing that he is front of the Victoria Falls. The satisfaction of his desire, i.e. the obtaining of the state of affairs desired,

[397] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* [6], in Silverman 2000: 174.
[398] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 615 in Silverman 2000: 227.
[399] Kenny 1963: 115–116.
[400] See Kenny 1963: 72-74.
[401] See Baier's interpretation of Hobbes in Baier 1986: 46. See Sumner 2000: 13. See Feldman 2004: 62 for an objection to this view.

does not prevent the subject from having the corresponding desire. In other words, a subject who does not believe that p obtains might as well desire that p, despite the state of affairs p being actual.

Moreover, a subject falsely believing that p will cease to desire p, despite the state of affairs p not obtaining. Although this does not constitute a counter-example to "Absence", this case, conjoined with the previous observation, suggests that the belief that p obtains is the key, as opposed to the obtaining of p. The DODP is thus dependent on internal states concerning satisfaction rather than on satisfaction proper. It should thus be formulated as follows:

> *DODP* – A desire for p ceases to exist if *one represents that* p is obtaining, i.e. if *one represents that* the desire is satisfied.[402]

As Oddie puts it:

> "But then, if Plato has shown anything, he has shown only that one cannot have a desire for P and know that P is true. Or perhaps that one cannot have a desire for P and *believe* that P is true. *So one cannot have a desire that one believes to be fulfilled. In that sense I can only desire what is 'nonexistent to me'.*"[403] (italics mine)

Put more formally, our principle so far is:

> $B(p)\ @t \rightarrow \neg(D(p))\ @t$
>
> (To be read as: if a subject believes that p, at t, then it is not the case that she desires that p, at t.)

Let me mention one observation and two amendments of the principle formulated as such.

It is first worth noting that this principle does not imply that desires are necessarily about what one believes to be future or necessarily future-oriented. Some desires – wishes for instance – are about what one believes to be past. Now, the principle is true of those desires as well. For instance, it is odd to think of a subject who wishes she had visited Los Angeles and believing that she has visited Los Angeles. This is as odd as the example involving desire mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. If anything, if one believes that one did visit Los Angeles, one might wish one had not done so. The principle states the incompatibility of

[402] Aquinas ibidem, Kenny 1963:81-84, Armstrong 1968: 155, Boghossian 2003: 42-43, Boghossian 2005: 215, Oddie 2005: 72.
[403] Oddie 2005: 72.

desiring a state of affairs one believes to be obtaining or to have obtained. The obtaining of the state can be believed to take place in the present or to have taken place in the past. So the principle cannot be equated or explained by the thought that desires are future-oriented.

There are two difficulties with this formulation however.

The first concerns another subtlety about time. It is possible to desire that p and believe that p *will* obtain. For instance, one might desire to go to Los Angeles and believe that one will do so. If so, the principle should be amended in such a way that the time of the content of the belief is not future. Since states of affairs that have been realised are states that presently obtain or have obtained, while future states of affairs are still in need of realisation, and given that the principle concerns beliefs about realised states of affairs, this restriction is natural. Let us call "actual" any realisation of a state of affairs, be it in the present or in the past, which contrasts with "actualisable" states. The principle is thus the following:

> B(p *actual*) @t→ ¬(D(p) @t
> (To be read as: if a subject believes that p is actual at t, i.e. is obtaining or has obtained, then the subject does not desire that p at the same time.)

Second, and finally, one amendment about degrees of credence involved is required. Indeed, subjects believing that p at a low degree of credence and who are thus uncertain about the obtaining of p might still go on desiring that p. For instance, at the airport, Sam might slightly believe that Mary's plane has not crashed, while still hoping and desiring that her plane has not crashed. The principle should thus be amended in such a way that the belief that p instantiates a degree of credence that is high enough to exclude serious uncertainty whether p. Our last formulation of the principle for now is the following:

> B(p actual) *with a sufficient degree of credence*, @t → ¬(D(p)) @t
> (To be read as: if a subject believes that p is actual, with a sufficient degree of credence, at t, then she does not desire that p at the same time.)

These two amendments, as well as our first restriction on representations about satisfaction, are captured by Boghossian's formulation of the principle, although in a different context:

> "(…) someone can want p at some time t only if he either believes it to be not p at t, *or if he is unsure whether it is p at t*. You cannot want p at a given time, if at that time you already believe that p has

> occurred. You can be glad at t that p has occurred, if you already believe that p has occurred; but you cannot want it to occur. If I now want it to snow, that can only be because I currently believe it not to be snowing."[404] (italic mine)

Now that we have a better grasp of the DODP, the question becomes whether this principle is true. In other words, are desires such that they cease to exist when the subject represents that their content is actual? I think so. Let me clarify why.

6.2. Defending the DODP

One might doubt the truth of the DODP due to three counter-examples. In this section, I shall argue that these constitute apparent counter-examples and that the DODP is true. However, let me warn the reader that one does not need to agree with this strong claim to adopt the deontic explanation of the DODP. Rather, it is necessary that the deontic explanation accounts for the cases where DODP is true and explains why the DODP is false in other, if one is tempted to think that the DODP is false in some cases. I shall come back to this issue in due course. Let me begin with the most natural objection to the principle that comes to the mind.

6.2.1. Desires about the present

The world sometimes suits us and we sometimes believe that this is so. For this reason, one might think that it is possible to desire states of affairs one believes to be actual. To put it informally, life is not as hard as the DODP claims it is. Heathwood describes Cheapskate, a person who has a desire about what he believes to be actual. He writes:

> Suppose Cheapskate's car is parked outside, and it begins to rain. Worrywart notices, and says to Cheapskate, ''I bet you prefer that your car be in the garage right now.'' But Cheapskate's car is dirty. He thinks letting it sit in the rain is a cheap way to get it clean. So he replies, ''No, I want my car to be right where it is.''
>
> Cheapskate is expressing a desire, and I think what he says is literally true. He really does want his car to be right where it is. The object of Cheapskate's want is that his car be where it is. But, of course, Cheapskate's car is right where it is—the object of his desire is true. So Falsity [what has been called *Absence* earlier] is false. The state of affairs that Cheapskate's car be where it is is also a present state of affairs. Cheapskate wants now that his car be where it is now. So we have also a case of a non-prospective desire—a desire towards a state of affairs not about the future but about the present. This

[404] Boghossian 2005: 215.

> one case refutes both principles [i.e. the principle I called *Absence* and the principle that desires are necessarily about the future].[405]

What are we to say about such a case, since it blatantly denies the intuition driving the DODP?

A natural reply from the defender of the DODP is to conceive of the content of the desire as slightly distinct from the content of the belief. As suggested by Plato in the quotation presented earlier, it is natural indeed to think that Cheapskate wants his car to *stay* where it is or to *let* it sit in the rain (as explicitly said in the quotation), where this state of affairs is not believed to have obtained yet. In other words, the thought is that putative desires about what one believes to be present are in fact desires about the continuation of the present, where this refers to what one represents as a future and thus non-actual state of affairs. Although the car staying where it is *is* the car being where it presently is, the former is the *enduring* of the latter state of affairs and thus a future state of affairs. This does not prevent subjects from having a pro-attitude or evaluation about the present, for instance in being happy that the car is where it is. But those types of pro-attitudes should be distinguished from desires, according to the DODP. After all, this has been motivated by our discussion of evaluations, as the latter do not satisfy the DODP, despite being pro-attitudes as well[406].

So far, I have merely reformulated the case in line with the DODP without offering an argument in favour of this description. Let me mention two considerations speaking in its favour. The first is a grammatical point, while the second is a variation on the case.

Consider that Sam asserts that he desires to be in the café he believes he is in. It is natural to rephrase the content of his desire along the lines suggested above, namely as a desire to *stay* in the café where he is. More generally, using the present tense for the content of one's desire is ungrammatical, which suggests that our description is natural.

More importantly, a variation of the case is useful. Suppose that Cheapskate desires that his car be where it is and that this state obtains as an instantaneous event. Suddenly, the car vanishes, although it was where it was at the moment of Cheapskate's desire. It is natural to think that his desire would be frustrated in such a situation. Cheapskate would probably be

[405] Heathwood 2007: 34. See Schroeder 2004: 137-138 for a similar case.
[406] See §1.3.1. Objection I – The Death of Desire Principle and the Phenomenology of Absence.

very disappointed in this case. This suggests that what Cheapskate after all desired is not merely an instantaneous event, a "now", but a persisting state of affairs or a sequence of "nows". Note that Heathwood's description of the desire can acknowledge the frustration of the desire as well, since the car is not anymore where it was, while he desired the car to be where it is. Still, Cheapskate's disappointment suggests that his desire endures. Now, one might think that this enduring of the desire is equally sufficient to explain the disappointment as the desire that the state of affairs persists. Indeed, both desires after all have the same satisfaction conditions. Moreover, not any enduring desire about a state of affairs is equivalent to a desire about the enduring of the same state of affairs. For instance, one might be surprised and discover that one actually desires the persistence of some state of affairs thanks to the persistence of the desire. For instance, Sally might desire to go for a walk one hour and deny that she wants to walk for more than an hour. But after one hour, she still has the desire to walk. She thus realises that she wanted to walk an entire day. In that case, her first desire is not equivalent to her second, hence the Sally's surprise. Still, it does not seem that Cheapskate's case is like this. Indeed, Cheapskate will not deny or be surprised to learn that he desires the persistence of the actual state of affairs. Something more has to be said to motivate Heathwood's description of the desire.

These observations show that our description is in line with grammatical intuitions and at least equally plausible as the one provided by the objector. They are thus sufficient to shift the burden of proof onto the opponent of the DODP.[407] Let me now move to the second objection, one that naturally comes to mind as well.

6.2.2. Self-reinforcing desires

There are things such that, the more we have them, the more we want them. Presumably, the same things might be such that the more we *believe* we had them, the more we want them. This amendment is necessary for the case to be a counter-example to the DODP, since the principle relies on beliefs about satisfaction. Let us call the desires for such things "self-reinforcing" desires. Desires for crisps, for sex, and addictive desires are cases at hand. Are self-reinforcing desires counter-examples to the DODP? Appearances notwithstanding, I do not think so. Let us consider an example and describe it in detail.

[407] Note that our objector cannot appeal to the thought that Cheapskate's beliefs and desires are about the future, namely about the future location of the car, since this is not in line with the first amendment of the DODP presented earlier.

Offered with salted peanuts, Mary desires to have some salted peanuts. Having had some peanuts and believing that she had some, she goes on desiring to have some. After all, this is how salted peanuts are. Her desire seems thus to persist, despite its being satisfied. But there is more. The more Mary has peanuts (and believes that she has some), the more she craves for them. This is also a common feature of salted peanuts. But if the increasing in degree of one desire implies the persistence of the same desire through time, it follows that one and only one numerical desire is involved. If so, the objector concludes, the DODP is false. In particular, it cannot account for the fact that the satisfaction of a desire (and belief in the satisfaction of a desire) can reinforce the very same desire. For, according to the DODP, belief in satisfaction amounts to killing the desire.

Is there a way out of this fatal counter-example for the defender of the DODP? I think so. Paying attention to three alternative descriptions of the case will help, as these are equally plausible as the one just mentioned and compatible with the DODP.

(i) First-order desires with distinct content.

On the first description, the case is conceived as involving distinct desires that are about distinct content, as follows. At t_1, Mary desires to have *some peanuts,* but short after, at t_{n+1}, she desires to have *some more peanuts*. In that case, the content of the desire differs. If one numerical desire has only one content, this implies that two desires are present. What speaks in favour of this description is, first, the fact that we naturally say that we want more x when we believe we already had some. Second, the fact that the object of the desire is a certain amount of x allows for degrees in the amount of x desired, which naturally espouses the spirit of this description.

On this description, the DODP is still true, because the subject does not believe that her second desire is satisfied when she has it, but merely that the first one is – the one that is non-existing anymore.

(ii) Distinct tokens of the same first-order type-desire.

Alternatively, one might describe the case by thinking that distinct tokens of the very same type of desire succeed each other, forming thus a chain of similar desires. Mary is such that, at t_1, she desires to have some x, and then later, at t_{n+1}, she again desires so, and then again and again. What suggests that this might be the right description is the thought that salted peanuts are the kind of things, such that, as soon as we had some, we want again to have some.

On this description, the DODP is true, as at no moment does Mary represent that her current desire is satisfied, although she believes that her past desires about the same thing have been.

(iii) First-order and second-order desires.

Finally, a more sophisticated description of the case goes as follows. At the beginning, Mary desires to have some peanuts, but at some point she desires something else, namely to reach the amount of satisfaction that will make her cease to crave for peanuts. In other words, she wants to get rid of her desire for peanuts and has a second-order desire that the first desire be extinguished. This description is motivated by the insisting and thus unpleasant character of these desires, precisely because of their persistence.

On this description, it is not surprising that Mary goes on desiring peanuts as long as she does not represent that she had reached the amount of peanuts that extinguishes her desire for them.

It appears that each of these descriptions is compatible with the DODP. Indeed, in each case, the subject does not believe that his current desire towards crisps has been satisfied, although he might believe that this is so for a previous desire of her.

Still, one might wonder why any of these alternative readings should be favoured over the initial description provided by the objector. Now, in order to rebut the objection, something has to be said in favour of the descriptions of the case offered. Let me thus present a *reductio* of the description that motivates the objection.

Assume that the initial reading that sheds doubt on the DODP is correct. If one and only one numerical desire is involved, it follows that its satisfaction conditions are conjunctive. These can be formulated in the following way: (having x at t_1) and (having x at t_{n+1}) and so on. This however is counter-intuitive. The problem is not that some desires have conjunctive satisfaction conditions, as desires about scattered content (e.g. the desire to go swimming from time to time) or desires about general content that thus extends over time (for instance the desire to be happy). The problem is that it is counter-intuitive to think that a desire for salted peanuts has such conjunctive satisfaction conditions, since it is neither about scattered content nor about general content. By contrast, our alternative descriptions do not suffer from this difficulty.

Moreover, even if it assumed that the desire is about a conjunction, the case does not constitute a counter-example to the DODP anymore. Indeed, it is not surprising that the subject goes on desiring the conjunctive state of affairs in virtue of believing that her desire has been merely *partly* satisfied.

So far, we have restricted our attention to the content of the desire. But part of the initial objection against the DODP relied on the desire increasing in degree. It is thus worth making explicit alternative descriptions in this respect as well. There are indeed several ways of making sense of the increasing of the desire that are compatible with the DODP.

First, in case different contents are involved, the increasing in degree might depend on the degree involved in the content, as in our first description.

Second, in case of a chain of desires, as in the second description, one can think of the succeeding desires as being stronger than the previous ones, the satisfaction of the former desire increasing the degree of the latter.

Alternatively, in case there is a second-order desire, as in our third description, one might think of this desire as increasing in degree in virtue of its unpleasant character or because of the representation of partial satisfaction involved.

In addition to these, other descriptions might be provided. In any case, the truth of the DODP does not prevent desires from being reinforced, as the alternative descriptions provided are compatible with the DODP. What is denied by the DODP is merely the possibility that

desires are reinforced *by their own satisfaction.* But the truth of the DODP is compatible with desires being reinforced by their partial satisfaction or the satisfaction of similar though distinct desires, whatever the details of the story.

If this is correct, self-reinforcing desires are merely apparent counter-examples to the DODP. The devastating character of the objection vanishes as soon as we provide careful descriptions of the content of our desires. As we express the content of our desire in ways that are often underspecified, it is not astonishing that this exercise reveals fine-grained distinctions that do not appear at first sight. Let us move finally to the last putative counter-example I shall examine.

6.2.3. Irrational desires

Consider a capricious person. She desires that p and, as p obtains, she believes that p. But, on a whim, she still wants that p. If this case is conceivable, then the DODP is false. Rather, since this case seems to constitute a piece of irrationality, the DODP should be replaced by the following requirement on rationality: it ought to be that subjects cease to desire that p as soon as they believe that p. Put formally:

$$O(B(p)\ @t \rightarrow \neg(D(p))\ @t)$$

In order to determine whether such a rationality requirement exists, let us make a detour by examining the structure of standard rationality requirements concerning the combinations of attitudes. I shall of course not commit myself to any picture of rationality and try to keep my descriptions as neutral as possible. This said, it will appear that there is an important disanalogy between the DODP and the general structure of rationality requirements about combinations of attitudes. If the observations put forward are correct, the rationality requirement formulated does not exist and the objection is misguided. This will require more substantive justification than the previous putative counter-examples examined.

There exist at least two types of rationality requirements concerning combinations of attitudes.

The first type involves the combination of an attitude with a further attitude that constitutes a defeater of the former. For instance, let us assume that all-out evaluative belief about the negative value of a state of affairs defeats the intention to bring about that state. Suppose that Sam believes that he should not smoke, all things considered, but lights a cigarette. This combination is irrational. If so, the following rationality requirement can be formulated:

$$O((\text{Attitude S} \,\&\, \text{Defeater D of S}) \rightarrow (\neg\, (\text{Attitude S} \,\&\, \text{Defeater D})))$$

In other words, one should not combine these attitudes. Rather, rationality requires defeating one attitude.

With this structure of irrationality in mind, let us turn to our case. The combination of the desire that p and the belief that p would be irrational if one or other of the attitudes constituted a defeater of the other. But this is intuitively not so. Indeed, defeaters of beliefs are evidence speaking against the obtaining of the content of the belief, while defeaters of desires intuitively are reasons speaking against the goodness (or rightness) of the content desired. In neither case does one attitude of the combination examined constitute a defeater of the other. This first structure of irrationality does not account for any irrationality in the combination at stake. But, as there are other structures of irrationality involving attitudes, let us present a different kind of irrational combination.

The second type of irrational combinations involves the presence of conflicting reasons speaking in favour of adopting attitudes. For instance, consider a case where a subject is presented with *prima facie* conclusive evidence that speaks in favour of p as well as *prima facie* conclusive evidence that speaks in favour of not p. For instance, imagine that Sam is being told by Mary that Sally will not come to the party, while Cleo tells him that Mary will attend the party, where both Sally and Cleo are usually and equally reliable. Being presented with such contradictory evidence and assuming that each piece of evidence is conclusive from the subject's perspective, Sam should not both believe that p and believe that not p. Rather, rationality requires suspending judgement. As it is possible to both believe that p and believe that not p, namely when one is irrational, the existence of a rationality requirement of the sort makes sense. Put more formally, the requirement is the following:

O((S is presented with a Reason R speaking in favour of x & Reason R* speaking in favour of ¬x, i.e. R is contrary or contradictory to R*) → ¬(Respond to R & Respond to R*))

The conflict lies in the incompatibility between the reasons themselves and more precisely between that in favour of which the reasons speak, their "content" so to speak. The conflict between reasons can concern, as in our example, contradictory reasons. But it can also be a case of contrary reasons. An example at hand would be that of being presented with a reason speaking in favour of the squareness of an object and another reason speaking in favour of its roundness. Since nothing can be both round and square at the same time, while there are things that are neither, the reasons in question are contrary to each other. In that case, the verdict remains: the subject should suspend judgement rather than form the two corresponding beliefs. Again, this is so by assuming that it is possible to believe that p is F and believe that p is G, where F and G are contrary properties.

Turning to our case, the question that remains is that of whether the combination of the belief that p and the desire for p is a response to contradictory or contrary reasons. If so, the case would constitute an instance of irrationality. The answer depends on the picture of the justification of desire one favours.

According to the standard view of the rationality of desire, a desire is rational insofar as the subject is presented with a conclusive reason speaking in favour of the goodness of p.[408] Adopting this picture, it follows that our case involves neither contradictory nor contrary reasons. Reasons that speak in favour of the actuality of p are neither contrary nor contradictory to reasons that speak in favour of the goodness of p. Indeed, a state of affairs can both be actual and be good simultaneously, fortunately. This said, this result might be due to the insufficiency of the axiological picture of the rationality of desire.[409] Let us consider then another view of the rationality conditions of desire, namely the deontic picture favoured by the present thesis.

According to this picture, reasons speaking in favour of desiring p are reasons speaking in favour of the rightness of p or, if preferred, reasons speaking in favour of the fact that p should be. If this is so, we can formulate the following rationality requirement:

[408] See §1.2.1. Implications of Axiological Intentionality.
[409] See §7.1. Deontic Normativity – Structural Argument and more generally chapter 7. Desiderative Normativity – A Deontic Approach.

O((Reason speaking in favour of p & Reason speaking in favour of Op) → ¬(B(p) & D(p)))

This candidate is more promising. Indeed, as it will be defended later, it is plausible to think that p and the fact that it ought to be that p stand in contrary relations, i.e. cannot be true at the same time (while can both be false). For if p *is obtaining*, how could it be that p *ought to obtain*? This will even constitute the crux of the explanation of the DODP defended in this chapter. If so, the requirement seems to correspond to the second type of irrationality, at first sight at least.

This being said, if we look carefully, the contrariety at stake is not exactly similar to that of the second structure of irrationality presented. And the slight distinction will be significant. In the second structure of irrationality, the opposition was about what the reasons speak in favour, their "content", independently of modal issues. For instance, reasons that speak in favour of the obtaining of p are opposite to reasons speaking in favour of the obtaining of not p, where the opposition concerns the content of the reasons or what the reasons speak in favour, *inside the same modality*, namely that of the actual. But in the case at hand, namely the combination of the belief and desire, the contrariety relies on the modalities at stake. Indeed, the opposition lies between the deontic modality ("it ought to be that p") and the modality of the actual ("it is the case that p"), whereas the "content" of each reason is the same, namely p. Now, this distinction is crucial. Indeed, it appears that the combination of mental states motivated by reasons involving contrary modalities is impossible or at least can be impossible, by contrast to combinations of mental states that are responses to reasons whose content is contrary *independently of the modality*.

Consider an example, for instance contrariety in tense. For a punctual event p (e.g. Sam comes to the party), "p is past" and "p is future" are contrary in virtue of the temporal operators involved. For either Sam came to the party or he will, but not both. Now, the contrariety does not concern the content of the tense operator, namely the state of affairs in which Sam comes at the party.[410] Consider now a subject having evidence that speaks in favour of the future of p as well as evidence that speaks in favour of the pastness of the very same p. Is it possible that such a subject respond to both pieces of evidence, namely in believing that p is future as well as believing that p is past? Although the subject should

[410] I restrict myself to punctual events, since one might think that non-punctual events might both exist in the past and in the future. For instance, it was the case that Sam loves Mary and it still will be the case.

suspend judgement, as before, it is counter-intuitive to conceive of a subject both believing that this event occurred in the past as well as believing at the same time that this very same event will occur in the future. This combination seems psychologically impossible. But if so, no rationality requirement to avoid it exists, provided that ought implies can.

Other similar cases suggest themselves. Consider for instance polar opposites, like desiring p and being averse towards p. It is plausible to think that those types of representations are responses to contrary reasons. But is it really possible to be averse to something one simultaneously desires? Is it possible that those states are about the very same thing, under the same aspect, and so on? It does not seem to be so. One virtue of this assumption is that we could then distinguish between three types of opposition: contradictory attitudes (as the belief that p and the absence of the belief that p), contrary attitudes (as the belief that p and the disbelief that p), and irrational combination (as the belief that p and the belief that not p).

If this is correct, and if the combination of the desire that p with the belief that p involves a similar contrariety (i.e. relying on the modality), it follows that the combination is impossible. But if the combination is impossible, it follows that there cannot be rationality requirement to avoid it.

This being said, one might be suspicious about this move relying on the opposition between modes. Indeed, one might think that it limits the boundaries of irrationality at an arbitrary point. If self-deceived people can both believe that p and believe that not p at the same time, why would not they be able to believe that p and disbelieve that p at the same time? Why would there be an asymmetry here? After all, irrationality is strange behaviour and this strangeness can admit of degree, provided that opposite modes constitute an even more strange combination. Besides, as the opposition between modes constitutes my answer to the puzzle of the DODP, it would be better not to presume from its truth at the outset. For these reasons, let us examine the extent to which the case is similar to self-deception.

If the combination of the belief that p and the desire for p is possible, as cases of self-deceptions are, it would be nice to provide a motivation of the persistence of the desire despite the presence of the belief. In the cases of self-deception, it is plausible that the crux of the explanation is the subject's preferences or desires[411]. In other words, the subject believes

[411] See p. 171.

that p because he prefers to believe so or, which is the same here, would prefer that p rather than not p obtains. But, deep inside her, she believes or even knows that not p. Believing the contrary is thus one way of avoiding suffering. Is a similar explanation available for the combination of the belief that p and the desire that p? I think so, which implies that the combination is possible, but surprisingly I do not think that this threatens the truth of the DODP. Here is why.

Let us start with a non-starter. In the case of the combination of the desire that p and the belief that p, the explanation of the persistence of the desire for p cannot be the desire for p. Indeed, if the subject desired p, he would represent all he wanted by believing that p obtains. So this cannot be the explanation. Still, there might be a desire that accounts for the persistence of the desire for p and a likely candidate is the desire for the desire for p, a second-order desire about the desire for p.[412] As suggested by our discussion of Moore's Paradox, we sometimes have desires about desires that are not equivalent to the first-order desire the second-order one is about. Sam might thus desire to desire that p which motivates his desire p. This explains why he goes on desiring that p despite believing that p. Deep inside him, what Sam wanted was not p, but to desire that p. On this description, the combination of the desire for p and the belief that p is possible and presumably irrational. Does this mean that the case is analogous the self-deception and is thus a counter-example to the DODP? The answer, I think, is not straightforwardly affirmative, for the following two reasons.

First, it is not clear that the irrationality comes from the combination itself. The irrationality might indeed lie in the fact that the subject desires to have a particular desire whatever happens. This presumably is an irrational desire, as desires should adjust to what would be good and it is unlikely that having a desire about what obtains constitutes any good. As the intuitive description of the case involves an irrational desire, this is sufficient to explain the irrationality of the behaviour that is based on such an irrational desire. In this respect, the case is not analogous to that of self-deception. Although in both cases desires constitutes wrong reasons to have some attitude (a belief or a desire), the desire that it part of self-deception is

[412] One might think that the evaluation of the desire that p is sufficient to motivate such a desire. Let me note two words of caution on this option. First, it is not clear that a mere evaluation is sufficient, at least if we want this case to be similar to cases of self-deception that have been understood here by appealing to a desire rather than a mere evaluation. If indeed the motivation for such attitudes is to be found in the subject's well-being, then it is natural to think that a desire will be their motivation. Second, independently of what I said, it is not clear that appealing to evaluation helps, as revealed by the first reason provided against the thought that this case undermines the DODP as wanted.

not necessarily irrational, contrary to the one at stake. Despite being irrational in this case, a second-order desire is not a wrong kind of reason to have the desire.

One might think that this does not prevent the combination from being irrational, although derivatively. So far, I agree. Still, it is worth noting that a similar move can be made about combinations that are on the face of it impossible. Imagine for instance that one thinks that it is possible although irrational to both desire that p and not evaluate p positively. After all, this combination is not an open contradiction, just like the case examined. As this seems difficult to conceive, consider Cleo. Cleo is such that she actually desires to desire states of affairs she does not evaluate positively. This would explain why she distorts evidence and responds to reasons inappropriately according to the defender of the possibility of desiring without evaluating. Still, as it is intuitive to think that such a combination is impossible, accounting for it in these terms explains too much. The suspicion I am raising is that this might as well be what happens with the story provided.

Finally, note that for this case to be a counter-example to the DODP, it should consist in the persistence of the desire for p, whatever the reason for this persistence, as well as the representation that this very desire is satisfied. This however is dubious.

Let us assume that Sam represents that his desire is satisfied. As this desire is the desire to have a desire for p, this means that Sam believes that he desires that p. But then the question remains: why does Sam desire to have such a desire provided that he believes that he has this desire? A promising candidate to account for the persistence of the desire is the appeal to a desire for desiring p *in general* or even a desire to *always* desire that p[413]. Now, it is unlikely that Sam represents one of those very desires as being satisfied, given that his belief is about a punctual event while the desire is about a more general state of affairs. The intuitive way to account for the persistence of the desire implies to deny that the subject represents that his desire is satisfied.

A dilemma is being raised: either one denies that the desire persists, contrary to what is required for the case to be a counter-example to the DODP, or one satisfies this requirement on pain of changing the content of the desire, which implies that the subject does not represent that the desire is satisfied. Now, this contravenes the second clause to be met for the case to be a counter-example to the DODP.

[413] See §6.4.3.1. Counterexample I – General facts.

Let me end with a more charitable touch. Although I think that I have raised serious doubts about the alleged irrationality involved in this case, we should keep in mind that a plausible explanation of the DODP does not require it to be true in all situations. All we need for our argument to go through is that it accounts for the DODP when the principle is true and explains why the principle is false in some situations, were this to be so. One might thus refine the principle as follows: desires cease to exist when one represents that their content is obtaining, all things being equal, i.e. one does not have a second-order desire to maintain the desire. Although this clause might be *ad hoc* if the task was to defend the DODP against any counter-example, it is sufficient to have a better grasp on the phenomenon to be explained, as infrequent as the phenomenon is in its purity.

This examination of apparent counter-examples to the DODP is not meant to be exhaustive.[414] Still, it suffices to shift the burden of proof onto the opponent of the DODP. Before turning to the explanation of the DODP, it is worth examining the extension of the DODP. Indeed, in order to provide an explanation of the DODP and similar principles, it is worth having in mind which types of representations do satisfy this principle and congenial ones. This will help to make explicit *desiderata* for a promising interpretation of the principle.

6.3. Extension of the DODP

Are there other types of mental states that, *mutatis mutandis*, satisfy the DODP? The answer to this question is necessary to account for the DODP in detail. Indeed, if a similar principle than the DODP is true of some other type of mental states, it is expected that an elegant and economical explanation of the principle will apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to all these types of mental states as well.[415] Since I think that other types of mental states satisfy a similar principle, this detour will reveal instructive. Let us begin by examining whether some types of cognitive representations satisfy a similar principle.

[414] See §6.4.3.1. Counterexample I – General facts and 6.4.3.2. Counter-example II – Negative Facts for other objections that concern both the argument of this chapter as well as the truth of the DODP. Another relevant objection concerns the desire for activities. For one might desire to play the piano while believing that one is playing the piano. Roughly, I believe that such a case can be handled by paying attention to the fine-grained content of the desire.

[415] Note that I shall restrict myself to mental representations that constitute attitudes or that are reason-sensitive in order not to beg the question against the defender of the explanation relying on rationality.

6.3.1. The DODP and Cognitive Attitudes

One might think that some cognitive attitudes satisfy a similar principle, namely doxastic and affective attitudes that cease to exist when one believes that p. Among them, it is likely that figure the following:

The belief that not p

Disbelieving that p

The absence of the belief that p

Suspending judgement about p

The belief that p will be the case

Suspecting that p

Being afraid about p

Looking forward to p[416]

For instance, one might think that looking forward to p or the suspension of judgement about p ceases to exist when one believes that p, and so on and so forth. This however is merely apparently so for most of the cases mentioned. Indeed, careful examination reveals the existence of three distinctions between a principle involving some of the cases mentioned and the DODP. This failure however is instructive.

DODP vs. Rationality Requirements

Some of the attitudes mentioned do not *necessarily* cease to exist when believing that p. For instance, irrational subjects might go on believing that not p when believing that p, as the case of self-deception suggests. This shows that for some of the candidates mentioned, rationality requires that one not have the attitude and believe that p at the same time. The DODP, however, does not seem to constitute a requirement of rationality, as we just argued in our discussion of the alleged counter-examples in the previous section.

Still, not all cases mentioned involve irrationality. For instance, assuming that it is impossible to both believe that p and disbelieve that p, as suggested earlier, implies that there is no rationality requirement to avoid the combination, on the same grounds as before. Likewise,

[416] I assume here that emotions like being afraid and looking forward are cognitive mental states, i.e. have the world-to-mind direction of fit (see Deonna & Teroni 2012).

there cannot be a rationality requirement to avoid believing that p and being in the emotional attitudes mentioned earlier, namely being afraid that p and looking forward p, provided that these emotions necessarily go with the absence of such a belief.[417] This is plausible, as it does not seem that one can look forward to something one believes is taking place or has taken place already. If this is correct, something more has to be said to exclude such cases or these cases satisfy a principle similar to the DODP, provided that they are possible and not instances of irrationality.

DODP and Representing Satisfaction

As stressed earlier, the DODP cannot be reduced to the fact that desires cease to exist when one believes that p.[418] Indeed, in the case of desire, the belief that p can be equivalent to the belief that the desire *is satisfied*. Our principle can thus be reformulated as follows:

A subject cannot desire that p and believe *that her desire is satisfied* at the same time.

Now this helps to distinguish between the DODP and the combination of the belief that p with the disbelief that p as well as with the emotional attitudes mentioned. Indeed, it is not the case that the disbelief that p ceases to exist when subjects represent that the disbelief is satisfied, as it should for this candidate to lead to a similar principle than the DODP. For the disbelief that p is satisfied when not p – and not when p. Likewise, assuming that looking forward is a cognitive attitude and consists in evaluating a future state as pleasant, the attitude is satisfied when p is pleasant, not only obtaining.[419] It is worth reminding that the refined version is not an *ad hoc* move, since it captures the intuition that the DODP cannot be handled in the same way as other types of impossible combinations.[420]

DODP vs. Open Contradiction

Finally, as noted several times, the combination of the belief that p and the absence of belief that p or the suspension of judgement about p constitutes an open contradiction, unlike the combination discussed in this chapter. This excludes some candidates mentioned in the list.

If this is correct, not all the cognitive attitudes mentioned satisfy the DODP in its relevant subtleties. Two notable exceptions are the case of suspecting p and believing that p will obtain. Let me say a word about them.

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[417] See for instance Gordon 1990.
[418] See p. 79.
[419] See § 4.1.1.2. Fit and Satisfaction.
[420] See §The Death of Desire Principle and the Phenomenology of Absence.

Let us assume that suspecting p is believing that p with high degree of likelihood, despite one's uncertainty about p. The combination of the belief that p and the suspicion that p does not constitute a case of irrationality, since the content of each attitude is the same, namely p, both attitudes are motivated by reasons speaking in favour of p and intuitively none constitutes a defeater of the other. Moreover, believing that p can constitute the representation that the suspicion about p is satisfied, i.e. true. Finally, the combination is not an open contradiction. If so, this case constitutes a cognitive analogue of the DODP. Given what has been said about the degree of credence of the belief that is necessary for desires to cease to exist in their presence, this result is not surprising[421].

Likewise, given what has been said earlier about structural irrationality, the combination of the belief that p with the belief that it will be the case that p is an impossible combination as well and hence not a case of irrationality. Moreover, the combination is not contradictory, as one might neither believe the former nor the latter. Rather, believing that p can constitute the representation that the belief that it will be the case that p is satisfied. It thus also constitutes a cognitive analogue of the DODP.

If this is on the right track, a promising explanation of the DODP should thus encompass these cognitive analogues as well. Before providing an explanation, let me close the examination of the extension of the principle by concentrating on the case of conations or attitudes with the world-to-mind direction of fit, as this will prove useful.

6.3.2. The DODP and Conative Attitudes

It appears that all types of conations, for instance wishes, intentions and tryings, satisfy the DODP. For instance, it is as odd to think that Sam intends to climb the mountain he believes he just climbed as it was to think of him desiring to do so when aware that he just did. Conations thus cease to exist when the subject represents that the conation is satisfied.[422] These types of conations thus satisfy the principle, including its refined version. Moreover, they do neither go with a rationality requirement to avoid the combination nor imply an open contradiction, for the same reasons as the ones put forward in the case of desire. Obviously, if

[421] See p. 223.

[422] One might doubt that intentions are incompatible with the belief that p on the ground that intentions for the present exist (see Bratman 1999). However, I believe that alternative descriptions of the case are more plausible, in particular in describing intentions for the present as intentions about the proximal future. Intentions that literally are about the present indeed preclude the subject to have any temporal space for the realization of her intentions, which is problematic.

one disagreed about what has been said about desire, in which case one will be also inclined to disagree with the similar principle that is about intention. But this does not undermine the general line of argument of this chapter, which relies on the symmetry between the cases of conations in general, on the one hand, and norms, on the other. Whatever one's stance on these issues, our argument merely relies on symmetric stances about the entities mentioned, not more than this.

Is it problematic that all conations satisfy the DODP? I do not think so. Since desiring is a type of conation, it is not surprising that it shares some of its properties with other types of conations. Rather, this suggests that the DODP is not a contingent feature of desire, but has to do with the very nature of conations, namely the type of representations desires belong to. This being said, the way intentions and trying satisfy the DODP involves a slight difference, a difference that echoes other observations of this dissertation.

Since executive states like intentions and tryings are about actions, they will cease to exist when the subject believes that she has performed the action or that the intention has been enacted by her. This is slightly different from what happens in the case of desire, as the DODP states that desires cease to exist when one represents that they have been satisfied, which does not necessarily entail that the subject has been performed any action. Far from problematic, this difference is familiar, as it is in line with the intuitive way of distinguishing desires from executive states like the ones mentioned.

If conations do satisfy the DODP, its explanation should account for this fact as well. Now that we have formulated the principle, motivated its truth, and fixed its extension, we can finally move to the explanation of the DODP. This constitutes the core of this chapter, as this is the basis on which my last argument in favour of the DODP will emerge.

6.4. Explaining the DODP – A Deontic Explanation

Our discussion has made manifest six *desiderata* a promising explanation of the DODP should satisfy. Let us summarise them, as they constitute the criteria on which our proposal will be evaluated.

A. The explanation should not conflate the DODP with any rationality requirement;
B. The explanation should account for the refined version of DODP;

C. The explanation should not imply that the combination is an open contradiction;
D. The explanation should account for the cognitive analogues of the DODP (suspicion and beliefs about the future);
E. The explanation should imply that DODP is satisfied by all conations;
F. The explanation should explain why one might be tempted to think that the DODP is false in some situations.[423]

My explanation – and thus the argument of this chapter – relies on the relationship between norms, on the one hand, and the facts constituting their satisfaction, on the other. The purpose of this chapter thus requires establishing the logical relationship between sentences of the form "it ought to be that p", on the one hand, and "it is the case that p", on the other. As the former sentence involves a deontic operator, while the latter involves the existential one, the question boils down to the relationship between the two operators when they take the same content. Let us present the main idea (§6.4.1), before applying it the case of the combination of desire and belief (§6.4.2) and discussing some objections to it (§6.4.3).

6.4.1. The Deontic vs. Existential Operator

Consider the combination of the existential and ought-to-do operators with the very same content, under the very same aspect and at the very same time. For instance, consider the sentence "Sam ought to answer this question now and Sam has now answered this question". *Prima facie*, this sentence, to say the least, sounds odd. Intuitively, if Sam has answered the question, then it is not the case that he ought to answer it, precisely because he just did. Likewise, if Sam ought to answer this question, then it is not the case that he did, precisely because answering it is what he ought to do. If so, it appears that the deontic operator "ought-to-do" is incompatible with the existential operator.

Now, if the ought-to-be operator behaves like ought-to-do one in this particular respect, and there is *prima facie* no reason to think that a disanalogy holds here, it follows that deontic operators in general are incompatible with the existential operator prefixing the very same content. In other words, norms, whatever their type, are incompatible with the obtaining of their content. As long as a norm is in place, its content does not obtain. As soon as its content

[423] See §6.2. Defending the DODP.

obtains, the norm vanishes. Norms and their realisation cannot coexist. Satisfaction in their case is extermination. Or at least it is intuitive to think so (objections to come in §6.4.3).[424]

Let us formalise this incompatibility between norms and facts constituting their satisfaction, as this, I think, will facilitate the evaluation of our proposal. For any state of affairs p, norm or deontic operator "O", and fact or existential operator "E", the following incompatibilities hold:

i. $Op \rightarrow \neg(Ep)$ [Opposite Operators]
[to be read as: If p ought to be, it is not the case that p.]

ii. $Ep \rightarrow \neg(Op)$ [Opposite Operators]
[to be read as: If p obtains, it is not the case that p ought to be.]

iii. $\neg\Diamond (Op \,\&\, Ep)$ [Mutually Exclusive Operators]
[to be read as: It is not possible that p obtains and ought to be at the same time.]

Let me address three observations that will be relevant later.

In order for the incompatibility in question not to constitute an open contradiction, it should be possible that a state of affairs neither is obtaining nor should obtain. Now, some states qualify as such. For instance, it might be that Sam neither gives a call to Mary nor it is the case that he ought to. This state of affairs is neither obtaining nor required to obtain. This implies that the opposition is not a contradiction. Let us formulate this as follows:

iv. $\Diamond (\neg(Op) \,\&\, \neg(Ep))$ [Non-Contradictory Modes]
[to be read as: It is possible that p neither ought to be nor obtains]

Second, given what has been said, one might be tempted to draw the conclusion that the incompatibility is a case of contrariety. Still, this requires one first establish that the alleged incompatibility is not a case of irrationality. For irrational combinations are *eo ipso* possible. One might indeed think that requiring p when p obtains happens. Although an irrational norm, this still is a live possibility. But what is meant by irrational norm here might as well mean the absence of any norm. For how could this norm be satisfied? The only world where it can be satisfied is a world where its content does not obtain. This contrasts with crazy

[424] See Castaneda 1970.

norms that still can clearly be satisfied. It thus does not seem that the case involves irrationality rather than contrariety.

Finally, as emphasized, the incompatibility between norms and the obtaining of their content amounts to norms being incompatible with their own satisfaction taking place. Indeed, the satisfaction of a norm about p is nothing but the obtaining of p in the norm-independent world.

Scheler already pointed out that norms are incompatible with facts, like representations of norms are with representations of facts. He writes:

> "Every ought is therefore an ought-to-be [Seinsollen] of something. Hence there is no special category of "ought-being" [Soll-Seins] which is such that the essence of values like "good", "beautiful", etc., *plus* the value of the being of such values, as another part of this essence, could replace the being of these values! Thus it becomes clear that whenever we say that something "ought to be", this something is comprehended – in the same act – "as" non-existing (or "as" existing, in the case of an ought-not-to-be). (…) it belongs to the essence of a content which is given as one that positively ought to be, to be given as non-existent at the same time and in the same act"[425]

The originality of our explanation lies in the thought that those incompatibilities can explain away the DODP in virtue of desires being representations of norms.

From these observations, and given the symmetry between desires and norms that is at the core of this dissertation, the following explanation of the DODP and argument in favour of the deontic view can be provided.

6.4.2. The Argument – From the Deontic View to the DODP

Let us assume that the deontic view is right, i.e. to desire that p is to represent p as what ought to be. Let us assume also that conations in general involve some type of deontic mode. For instance, intending to F is representing F as what ought to be done.

[425] Scheler 1973: 207-8.

i. D(p)/Conation(p):$_{def.}$ *O*(p) [426] [Deontic mode of desire and conations]

Let us assume that beliefs involve an existential mode, i.e. to believe that p is to represent p as being the case[427].

ii. B(p):$_{def.}$ *E*(p) [Existential mode of belief]

Let us grant finally that the relations between facts and norms stated earlier hold. This means first that, necessarily, if something ought to be, it is not obtaining at the same time.

iii. □(Op → ¬(Ep)) [Opposite Operators]

This means that the converse holds as well, i.e. necessarily, if a state of affairs obtains, then it is not the case that it ought to obtain.

iv. □(Ep → ¬(Op)) [Opposite Operators]

The conjunction of both premises implies that facts cannot coexist with norms.

C_1: ¬◊(Op & Ep) [iii, iv]

Recall that there are states of affairs that neither obtain nor ought to obtain. Hence, the incompatibility is not a contradiction.

v. ◊(¬(Op) & ¬(Ep)) [Non-Contradictory Opposition]

Let us assume that the incompatibility between norms and their satisfaction does not constitute a case of irrationality or failure to meet a requirement of rationality.

vi. ¬O(¬(Op) & ¬(Ep))

Assuming that our description of the modes of beliefs and desires are correct and that modes inherit the features of the essential property that characterises them can make sense of the DODP.

First, if norms are to desires what facts are to beliefs, it follows that if one desires that p, then one does not believe that p.

C_2: □(D(p) → ¬(B(p))) [i, ii & iii]

[426] The deontic feature that is part of the mode is in italic in order to distinguish it from norms that are not part of modes, as in next premises.
[427] See p. 115.

Likewise, it follows that if one believes that p, then one does not desire that p.

C_3: $\Box(B(p) \rightarrow \neg(D(p)))$ [i, ii & iv]

The conjunction of both conclusions implies that the combination of the desire that p and the belief that p is impossible.

C_4: $\neg\Diamond(D(p) \,\&\, B(p))$ [i, ii, & v]

This said, the absence of contradictory opposition holding between norms and their satisfaction implies that it is possible to neither desire p nor believe p. In other words, the incompatibility is not a contradiction.

C_5: $\Diamond(\neg(D(p)) \,\&\, \neg(B(p)))$ [i, ii, & v]

From the absence of requirement on the combination of norms and facts constituting their satisfaction, it follows that there is no rational requirement to avoid the combination of the belief and the desire with the same content. This follows on the extra assumption that ought implies cannot, i.e. for one to be subject to a norm, it should be possible that one does not meet the norm.

C_6: $\neg\Diamond(D(p) \,\&\, B(p)) \rightarrow \neg(O(\neg(D(p) \,\&\, B(p))))$ [i, ii, vi]

Recall that a desire for p is satisfied if, and only if, p.

vii. $SC(D(p)) \leftrightarrow p$ [Satisfaction Conditions D(p)]

Therefore, believing that p obtains can be the belief that the desire for p is satisfied.

C_7: $\Diamond(B(p) \rightarrow B(D(p) \text{ is satisfied}))$ [C_3, vii]

Since it is not possible to desire that p and believe that p at the same time and since the belief that p can be the belief that the desire for p is satisfied, it follows that it is impossible to desire that p and believe that the desire is satisfied.

C_8: $\neg\Diamond(D(p) \,\&\, B(p)) \rightarrow \neg\Diamond(D(p) \,\&\, B(D(p) \text{ is satisfied}))$ [C_3 & C_6]

This, I contend, can make sense of the DODP, as conclusion four and eight are equivalent to our formulations of the principle. In order to elaborate this argument in more detail, let me clarify how this reasoning satisfies all the *desiderata* for a plausible account of the DODP that have been presented earlier.

First, the *desiderata* A, B and C are satisfied by the conclusions 6, 8, and 5, respectively. Indeed, those conclusions are a mere restatement of the *desiderata* following from our assumptions.

Second, a similar explanation to the one just presented extends to the cognitive analogues of the DODP mentioned earlier, namely the cases of suspicions and beliefs about the future, *mutatis mutandis*. The explanation relies indeed on the contrariety holding between modes. Now, it appears that the obtaining of p stands in the contrary relation to the likelihood of p as well as the fact that p will obtain. In other terms, if p obtains, then it is neither likely that it obtain nor will it obtain in the future. If so, it is not surprising that attitudes bearing essential relations to those "aspects" inherit their contrariety and are thus incompatible with the belief that p. Although in that case, the relevant "aspects" are not features of the mode, but can be part of the content of the attitudes, the incompatibility at stake is of the same type. The explanation accounts thus for *desideratum* D as well.

Likewise, as far as *desideratum* E is concerned, i.e. the extension of the DODP to conations in general, a similar explanation holds, given that conations involve a deontic mode. This might require some adjustments. For instance, as intentions are satisfied by actions, the belief that is part of the principle of the death of intentions is the belief that the action has been performed by the subject.

Finally, the explanation can acknowledge the temptation to resist the truth of the DODP in some cases, i.e. *desideratum* F. Recall that the alleged counter-examples concerned desires about the present, self-reinforcing desires and irrational desires. Now, if one thinks that these constitute counter-examples to the DODP, similar doubts will apply to the incompatibility between norms and facts in the same situations. One might think that Cheapskate's car ought to be where it is, despite its being where it is. Likewise, one might think that there are self-reinforcing norms, i.e. norms the satisfaction of which implies the persistence of the norm. Maybe the norm of being madly in love with someone is a case at hand, since as soon as one

is in love, one should be more in love than one was. Finally, as mentioned earlier, one might be tempted to think that requiring what is obtaining is nothing but a case of an unsound norm, or that second-order norms still exist despite the first-order norm they are about being satisfied (as the norm that one ought to act in such a way that one ought to go to the meeting, a norm which is still in place if one goes to the meeting). These cases are the analogues of the irrationality involved in the combination of the belief and the desire about the same content. It appears thus that our explanation can account for doubts about the truth of the DODP and nicely espouse the boundaries of the DODP.

In addition to the deontic view and a similar view about belief, the explanation crucially depends on the incompatibility between facts and norms. Now that we have understood the significance of this incompatibility for my purpose, it is worth bringing this chapter to a close by discussing it in more detail.

6.4.3. Objections – Facts and norms

One might think that the relations between facts and norms stated are misleading. This would be devastating, as far as this chapter is concerned. Let us examine how far we can go with this picture. I shall begin by considering putative counter-examples to the incompatibility mentioned and then move to structural problems the incompatibility might suffer from.

Two counter-examples suggest themselves. The first concerns general facts, whereas the second concerns negative facts.

6.4.3.1. Counterexample I – General facts

Consider the obligation to respect people. At first sight at least, the principle mentioned earlier implies that, necessarily, if at some time one ought to respect people, then at that time one is not respecting them. Now, this is counter-intuitive, since there *are* people respecting people. The principle at stake thus cannot be right.

One way to handle such cases is to pay attention to the content of the norm, in particular the level of generality of the content of the norm. The content of the norm and thus the norm itself can be more or less general. The content of the norm can be that people, presented with a situation where it is appropriate to respect people, should do so. But the content of the norm can be more particular, in which case people should respect people in more particular

situation, for instance at a particular time or context. Now, by disambiguating the content of the norm, the difficulty vanishes. Let us explore each possibility.

Let us assume that the content of the norm is particular. In that case, it is intuitive to think that if one ought to respect Mary during the party, then one has not yet respected or finished to respect Mary at the party. After all, the party might still be taking place. Conversely, if one has really and fully done so, it is odd to think that one still ought to do it, unless we refer to a different particular situation (for instance, the next party). So, if the norm is particular, it is intuitive to think that it vanishes when it is fully satisfied.

Let us assume that the content of the norm is general, i.e., all things being equal, people ought to respect people at any time. Although one might have complied with the norm in the past, a subject who has complied with it still is subject to it, given that the range of application of the norm is not restricted to past situations. She is still required to respect people in future situations, an obligation that has not yet been made true.

Observe that one need not agree with this reply in order for our argument to go through. Recall that the argument relies on the symmetry between desires and norms. Assuming that the DODP is false in the case of general norms does not threaten the argument, as far as desires about general states of affairs lead to similar doubts. Now, one might think that such desires are compatible with believing that their content obtains. For instance, one might desire to be respectful, still believe that one is respectful, in which case, *prima facie* at least, the DODP appears to be threatened. I believe again that paying attention to the content of attitudes will secure the truth of the DODP.[428] Therefore, either the DODP is true, in which case it is equally plausible to think that norms are incompatible with facts constituting their satisfaction. Or the claim that norms are incompatible with their satisfaction is false as far as general facts are concerned, in which case it is equally plausible that desires about general content do not satisfy the DODP either. Either way, there is symmetry between norms and desires, which dissolves the objection.

6.4.3.2. Counter-example II – Negative Facts

The second counter-example concerns negative facts. Consider that one ought not to smoke now. If norms are incompatible with facts in the sense mentioned earlier, then it follows from

[428] This is motivated by the thought that desires are often underspecified and that more refined specification of the content of desires is often required. See Kenny 1963: 78-81, Humberstone 1990 and Fara 2013.

the fact that one ought not to smoke now that one is smoking now. Since this is absurd, the principle should be false. Or so goes the *reductio*.

As a reply, I believe that this objection relies on a false characterisation of the cases. The key consists again in the specification of the content of the norm, in particular its temporal index. Indeed, the objection assumes that one *now* ought not to smoke *now*. Since one *now* might not be smoking *now*, this characterisation ends up being counter-intuitive. This relies on the following description of the DODP:

$$O(\neg p_{@t})\ @t \rightarrow \neg(\neg p_{@t})\ @t$$

(to be read as: If, at t, it ought to be that not p obtains at t, then it is not the case at t that not p obtains at t.)

Since the negation of not p at t is nothing but the obtaining of p at t, we end up with the aforementioned counter-intuitive result.

By contrast, paying attention to the tense of the content of the norm helps to avoid this counter-intuitive result. Let us assume that the following characterisation of the case is right. Some person is subject now to the norm of not smoking in the proximate future. Now, at the time the person is subject to this norm, it is not the case that the particular future state of affairs in which this person does not smoke obtains. The corresponding formulation of the DODP is the following:

$$O(\neg p_{@tn+1})\ @t \rightarrow \neg(\text{it is the case that } \neg p_{@tn+1})\ @t$$

(to be read as: If it ought to be that not p, where p is a future state of affairs, then this future state of affairs is not obtaining.)

Contrary to the previous formulation and in virtue of the subtlety about tense, the consequent of the conditional does not imply that p obtains at t. What it does imply is merely that the future state of affairs p does not obtain in the present time.

Note that this formulation is in line with our amendment concerning the time-indexing of the belief mentioned earlier, namely the thought that the belief in the DODP should not be about the actuality of a state of affairs in the future. Indeed, in our proposal, the norm is about a *future* state of affairs but the incompatible fact is the *present* fact that this *future* state of

affairs is obtaining. Let us formalise the cases in order to make the contrast more vivid. The exclusion of beliefs about the future can be formulated as follows.

$$D(p)\ @t \rightarrow \Diamond(B(\textit{it will} \text{ be the case that p})\ @t)$$

(to be read as: If a subject desires that p, it is possible that she believes that p will obtain, at the same time.)

According to the symmetry between norms and desires, on the one hand, and facts and beliefs, on the other, this amounts to the following:

$$O(p)\ @t \rightarrow \Diamond(\textit{it will} \text{ be the case that p})\ @t$$

(to be read as: If it ought to be that p, it is possible that p will obtain, at the same time.)

Now, the case examined in this section has been formulated as follows:

$$O(\neg p_{@tn+1})\ @t \rightarrow \neg(\textit{it is} \text{ the case that } \neg p_{@tn+1})\ @t$$

(to be read as: If it ought to be that not p, where p is a future state of affairs, then this future state of affairs is not obtaining.)

Thinking about the content of the norm as being future rather than present avoids the counter-intuitive result mentioned. One might wonder whether stipulating that the content of the norm is future is warranted. On top of being an intuitive description, let us examine the similar scenario in the case of desire, as the symmetry will prove fruitful.

Indeed, desires about negative facts *prima facie* behave in exactly the same way. Consider a similar *reductio*. Imagine that Sam desires *now* not to smoke *now*. If the DODP is true and if this is want Sam really desires, then it follows that he does not believe *now* that he is not smoking *now*. In other words, he believes now that he is smoking. Although this delusion might be one way to realise his desire, it is very odd to think that every desirer about a negative state of affairs is in such a frame of mind. Of course, Sam might desire *now* not to smoke *now* and believe *now* he is not smoking *now*.

Whatever one's stance on those issues, this is sufficient to secure the symmetry between norms and desires that is wanted here. But there is more. Our previous observation suggested the following way out of this difficulty in the case of desire. How Sam actually represents the world is as follows: he wants *now* to smoke *in the proximate future* and believes *now* that this

future state of affairs has not obtained yet. This restriction about future states of affairs is thus very natural in the case of desire. This is precisely what has led some to think that desires necessarily are about the future. Although I do not endorse the view that desires are necessarily future-oriented, I concede that some are and those, I contend, are the ones that are relevant for negative facts.

Let me leave counter-examples aside in order to address structural objections to the claim that norms are incompatible with their satisfaction. The first concerns an alleged implication of the claim, while the second concerns the very move from the claim to the truth of the deontic view.

6.4.3.3. Structural Objection I – Meeting Norms

The first objection concerns the very possibility of meeting norms. Since a state of affairs cannot be such that it obtains and that it ought to obtain at the same time, one might wonder whether it is possible to comply with norms. If the principle implies that it is not, this would be worrisome.

I think that the possibility of things turning out as they ought to be, as far as it is rightly understood, is compatible with the DODP. There are at least three plausible ways of understanding it.

The first concerns norms about entities that take time. Consider processes for instance. As processes have temporal parts, when the result of a process ought to be, there is room for the partial obtaining of the norm. In that sense, states of affairs that are part of the process can have obtained, while the norm about the result of the process still being in place. Temporal extension might capture one sense in which things turn out the way they should.

Now, as not all norms are about entities that take time, other descriptions are required. A second description concerns our way of tensing norms when we think that they have been satisfied. Indeed, as soon as a norm is satisfied, it is natural to think that the norm *was* in place, but is not anymore. This is indicated by the natural adjustment in tense when expressing that people have done the right thing in saying that they have done what they *were* required to do.

Still, in some cases the norm neither is about an entity that takes time nor does it admit of the switch in tense mentioned. This is so for general norms. One might say that one did what one ought to do and mean that one did some particular action that is an instance of the kind of actions one should generally bring about. In that case, one still ought to do this kind of action, so the shift in tense is not natural. However, as the description suggests itself, in the case of general norms, the obtaining of this norm by some particular event constitutes a *partial* satisfaction of the norm, since the norm enjoins subjects to act in the corresponding way in more general situations. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same goes for general events that do not constitute actions. This can thus capture another sense in which things turn out as they ought to.

Any of these descriptions is compatible with the impossibility of norms being about actual states of affairs. But, as before, in case one thinks that these descriptions miss something, it is worth noting that the same objection can be run for desires. Indeed, the DODP precludes the possibility of believing that what one desires obtains, which, for some, might be dubious. For the same reasons as before, I do believe that there is a non-literal sense in which one might believe that the object of one's desire obtains, despite the truth of the DODP. Still the reader does not need to be convinced by my reply, since, as already stressed many times, the symmetry between desires and norms is sufficient.

6.4.3.4. Structural Objection II – Modes of Presentation and Tense

The final objection concerns the move from the incompatibility between operators mentioned to the incompatibility between modes that is part of the explanation. One might think that such a move is a *non sequitur*. Indeed, as mentioned earlier, the mere incompatibility between modes of presentation is sufficient to explain away impossible combinations. Now, as emphasized in a previous chapter, modes of presentation can be part of the content of representations[429]. In that case, the appeal to modes to explain the DODP is unmotivated. One might as well construe desires as being beliefs about deontic states and end up with the same type of incompatibility, given that the deontic mode of presentation is incompatible with the "existential" one. Or so it seems.

The previous point can even be dramatized further. For the incompatibility between existential and deontic modes of presentation might be explained by the incompatibility between the mode of presentation of the present and that of the future. If so, a more

[429] See p. 125.

economical explanation suggests itself: desires, as being necessarily about the future, are incompatible with beliefs about the obtaining of their content, as those modes of presentation are contrary. The gain of our explanation would then be lost.

Let me address each part of the objection in turn.

First, I concede that the incompatibility between operators does not commit one to the incompatibility between modes rather than modes of presentation. I have already conceded that the incompatibility can also hold between modes of presentation of representations, as this was one way to distinguish the DODP from cases of irrational combinations. However, this does not prevent the case of the combination of the deontic beliefs with the belief that p from being structurally different from the DODP. Indeed, as mentioned several times, part of the specificity of the DODP lies in the fact that beliefs about p can be representations of the satisfaction of the desire for p. Now, this is not so for the combination of the belief that p and the belief that p ought to be, since the satisfaction condition of the latter belief is the fact that p ought to be, not the obtaining of p.
This being said, I readily admit that adopting a variant of the deontic view that relies on deontic mode of presentation can avoid this problem. According to this variant, states of affairs are still the content of our desires. But part of their content is representing a state as what ought to be, where this expression captures a mode of presentation of the content. If it is assumed that the satisfaction conditions of this representation still are the obtaining of its content, rather than the fact that p ought to be, which is not obvious, then the problem presented earlier vanishes. Still, this does not constitute an objection to the deontic view or at least to the spirit of the view. Indeed, this puts forward another way of individuating types of mental states. Although the variants differ, it still remains true that the ought-to-be is the key to understanding desire.

As for the second part of the objection, namely the explanation of the incompatibility between modes of presentation by the temporal opposition between the present and the future, I already mentioned that desires about the past are incompatible with the belief that their content has obtained as well.[430] It thus appears that mere contrariety in tense, in particular between future and present, is not sufficient to explain away the DODP. For, in the

[430] See p. 192.

case mentioned, there is no contrariety between present and future and no contrariety in tense at all, since both states are about the past.
For this reason, I believe that there is more to the DODP than the contrariety between present and future modes of presentation.

In conclusion, it appears that the incompatibility holding between norms and facts constituting their realization enlightens the incompatibility between desires and beliefs about the same state of affairs. Norms fade away when they are realised and so do desires when they are represented as having been made true. This is not surprising if desires are essentially deontic attitudes.

As a last word, recall that the DODP goes hand in hand with the *Phenomenology of Absence* involved in desire. If so, and if our explanation of the DODP is on the right track, the deontic view will explain this aspect of the phenomenal character of desire in the same terms. In other words, desiring that p goes with the impression that p is absent *in virtue of* desires being representations of what ought to be and of representations instantiating this mode being incompatible with the feeling that p is present. Or so would our story go.

Since our explanations of the DODP and *Phenomenology of Absence* relied on the assumption that desires involve a deontic mode, I hope to have provided a further reason to adopt the deontic view of desire by redressing the neglect on the DODP at the same time.

Part III | Unfolding the Deontic View:

Desiderative Normativity,

Desiderative Typology

&

Objections

The third part of this thesis is mainly concerned with the issue of the "boundaries" or "joints" admitted by desire. As boundaries are not on a par, at least two concerns should be distinguished. The first puzzle raises the question of how the boundary between accurate and inaccurate desires is to be drawn. Desires can go right or wrong. But what are the conditions in which they are right or wrong? This important question concerns the "*normative* joints" of desire, so to speak. By contrast, the second controversy I shall engage in pertains to the distinctions between types of desire, such as wishes, hopes, urges and any other representations that figure in the typology of desire (provided that these are, in a sense, types of desire). How are we to understand types of desire or, so to speak, to divide the conative and desiderative realm into appropriate categories? *Prima facie*, this is a descriptive rather than normative issue, as it addresses the issue of the "*ontological* joints" of desire.

In contrast to the tone of argumentation of the previous part, this section is not meant to provide detailed arguments in favour of the deontic view. Rather, it has the more modest aim of demonstrating the heuristic value of the deontic view as far as the issues of the boundaries of desire are concerned. To this end, I shall sketch general pictures of the normativity and typology of desire that constitute applications of the deontic approach to these aspects of desire. Therefore, the tone of argumentation is intentionally left more allusive and looser than has hitherto been.

More precisely, chapter seven presents the deontic approach to the normativity of desire, while the next chapter (§8) presents a deontic typology of desire. The upshot of both chapters is that the deontic view offers new and elegant ways of thinking of these boundaries of desire, although the reader should be warned that the pictures to be drawn are unorthodox and sometimes even revisionary.

Finally, as the deontic view comes with its own problems, I shall briefly present and rebut six objections directed at the very core of the view in chapter 9. In this respect, these chapters will hopefully reveal the heuristic value of the deontic view of desire as far as the other *desiderata* of this dissertation and related issues are concerned.

7. Desiderative Normativity – A Deontic Approach

"The neighbouring organ [the spleen] is situated on the left-hand side, and is constructed with a view of keeping the liver [the seat of appetitive desires] bright and pure like a napkin, always ready prepared and at hand to clean the mirror. And hence, when any impurities arise in the region of the liver by reason of disorders of the body, the loose nature of the spleen, which is composed of a hollow and bloodless tissue, receives them all and clears them away, and when filled with the unclean matter, swells and festers, but, again, when the body is purged, settles down into the same place as before, and is humbled."

Plato, *Timaeus*, 72c-d (transl. B. Jowett)

"Il concentrait son attention sur eux quand un autre, plus petit, parut, sordide à voir; il avait des cheveux de varech remplis de sable, deux bulles vertes au-dessous du nez, des lèvres dégoûtantes, entourées de crasse blanche par du fromage à la pie écrasé sur du pain et semé de hachures de ciboule verte. [Il] huma l'air; un pica, une perversion s'empara de lui; cette immonde tartine lui fit venir l'eau à la bouche. Il lui sembla que son estomac, qui se refusait à toute nourriture, digérerait cet affreux mets et que son palais en jouirait comme d'un régal. Il se leva d'un bond, courut à la cuisine, ordonna de chercher dans le village, une miche, du fromage blanc, de la ciboule, prescrivit qu'on lui apprêtât une tartine absolument pareille à celle que rongeait l'enfant, et il retourna s'asseoir sous son arbre."

Huysmans, *A Rebours*, XIII

Sometimes, desires go right. Sometimes, desires go wrong. As described by Huysmans, it is decadent or in any case inappropriate to desire such a disgusting meal. But why exactly is that so? In virtue of what can desires be inappropriate? What are the mistakes of the Liver? The aim of this chapter is to approach the issue of the normativity of desire from the deontic perspective. This issue is important as the breakdowns of desire can be blameworthy. Understanding them is a first step in understanding what responsibility we have for our desires. However, I make this observation only so as to provide some motivation for the current inquiry: at this stage, I shall not directly discuss issues of responsibility. Rather, I shall present and motivate the deontic picture of the normativity of desire.

As already observed, the deontic view is compatible with the existence of correctness conditions for desires. Indeed, the mode of desire, whatever the way in which it is spelled out, implies the existence of conditions in which desires go right or wrong.[431] So far, this tells us nothing of substance. What is special about the deontic approach to the normativity of desire is the particular picture it gives of the correctness conditions of desires. For, on the deontic view, desiring a state of affairs is correct if, and only if, the state of affairs (all things considered) ought to obtain, or is right or required[432]. Conversely, a desire is incorrect when it is not the case that the desired state of affairs ought to obtain. This state of affairs might be wrong. Alternatively, it might be neither wrong, nor right, as some states seem to be. As the

[431] See p. 111.
[432] As mentioned earlier, I use these terms interchangeably.

standard picture of the correctness conditions of desiring is either evaluative or motivational in form, this account of the correctness conditions of desire is revisionary.

For this reason, this chapter provides the reader with some motivations in favour of this unusual view. I shall proceed in three steps. First, I offer a general motivation in favour of the deontic picture of the normativity of desire, relying on its structural advantage over the standard accounts (more on this shortly, §7.1). Two puzzles about the normativity of desire – or two study cases, so to speak – are then presented and considered from the deontic perspective. The first concerns caprice (§7.2), whereas the second is about the impermissibility of aggregating desires in certain situations (§7.3). The claim of the chapter is that the deontic picture of the normativity of desire provides necessary and sufficient conditions for a desire being correct or incorrect (§7.1). By providing such conditions, it offers an elegant solution to the two puzzles, which involve the two types of incorrectness that occur in cases of caprice (§7.2) and in cases where aggregating certain desires is impermissible (§7.3). The thought is that capricious desires and the aggregation of certain desires are wrong in virtue of the fact that the desired states of affairs are not required to obtain. As it will be apparent, I shall concentrate on the issue of the correctness conditions of desire and only address the issue of the rationality conditions in passing. Let me begin by presenting the most general motivation for adopting the deontic picture of the normativity of desires.

7.1. Deontic Normativity – Structural Argument

As mentioned in the introduction, the correctness conditions of desire should state necessary and sufficient conditions for a desire to be correct or incorrect. Moreover, they should be *specific* to desire and therefore not being true of other types of mental representations. Not only is this requirement intuitively plausible, but it is given further support if the correctness conditions of different types of representation are dependent on their modes and modes are *specific* to each type of representation. Now, there are reasons to doubt that the standard accounts of the correctness conditions of desire meet this constraint. Let us examine the axiological picture first.

According to the axiological view, a desire for some state of affairs is correct if, and only if, the state of affairs is good.[433] This, among other things, amounts to the claim that the goodness of some state of affairs is (at least) a sufficient condition for a desire to be correct. But it appears that any essentially evaluative mental states are correct if, and only if, the state of affairs they are about is good. It is plausible that emotions, for instance, are essentially evaluative attitudes. This implies that positive emotions are correct if, and only if their content, is good.[434] For instance, being pleased by p is correct when p is pleasant and thus good in some respect. Given what has been said earlier about the insufficiency of the evaluative account of the intentionality of desire and provided that the correctness conditions depend on its intentionality, this result is not surprising.

In response to this challenge, the friend of the axiological picture of the normativity of desire might claim that the distinction between thin and thick values can rescue it. One might think that the correctness conditions of emotions are that the states of affairs they are about instantiate thick values (for instance the pleasant and the unpleasant), while the instantiation of thin values (i.e. the good and the bad) is constitutive of the correctness conditions of desires. For instance, one might think that thin values are the sum of the instantiated thick values. A good state of affairs would then be nothing but a state of affairs that is, say, not just pleasant, but also beautiful, morally praiseworthy and so on. If so, desires would be correct not in virtue of thick values taken in isolation, but in virtue of a further property, namely the goodness that constitutes the product of thick values. The distinction between thick and thin values notwithstanding, I do not think that this will help.

First, it appears that some desires are correct in virtue of the desired state of affairs instantiating only one type of thick value independently of any product of values. For instance, desiring a pleasant state of affairs is appropriate, all things being equal. More generally, and independently of this issue, the appeal to the distinction between thick and thin values would be promising if states of affairs instantiating thick values were not *eo ipso* instantiating thin values. But it is natural to think that thick values are species of thin values, in which case there are no state of affairs instantiating thick values without instantiating thin values. For instance, instantiating, say, pleasantness is one way of instantiating goodness.

[433] See Anscombe 1963: 76, De Sousa 1974, Hazlett (unpublished). See p. 17.
[434] See Deonna & Teroni 2012.

This would not be problematic if one thought that emotions are types of desires, so that emotions would be to species of goodness what desire is to the good. But given what has been said about the distinction between evaluations and desires, and that emotions can be assumed to be essentially evaluative states, this route seems to be unpromising. Therefore, the distinction between thick and thin values does not help to avoid the difficulty faced by the axiological account of the normativity of desire.

It is clear that the goodness of a state of affairs is not sufficient to capture the correctness conditions of desire. Let us move on, then, to the discussion of the motivational picture of the correctness conditions for desires, since this is the standard alternative.

On this view, a desire for p is correct if, and only if, p ought to be brought about (or at least if the subject ought to be motivated to bring about that p).[435] Does this view escape the objection against the evaluative view of the normativity of desire just presented? On the face of it, it seems that it might, as it is intuitive to think that if a subject ought (to be motivated) to act in favour of p, then the desire for p is correct. In this sense, the picture states a sufficient condition for a desire to be correct.

However, recall that for an account of the correctness conditions of desire to be sound, it should also state a necessary condition for a desire to be correct. In fact, there is more to be said. Even if it one grants that no correct desires are about states of affairs that should not be brought about, this assumption is not sufficient in itself to allow the conclusion that the motivational account of the normativity of desire is right to be drawn, although it does tell somewhat in favour of drawing such a conclusion. What is necessary is to establish that this necessary condition should account for the correctness or incorrectness of desires in a primitive way, i.e. without being explained by another property that would imply it or make it necessary. Another picture of the correctness conditions of desire might indeed imply that any correct desire is about states of affairs that should be brought about by the subject without being reducible to this implication. The necessary condition should thus be the core of the explanation and be indispensable. In this respect, it is not clear that appealing to action or motivation is necessary to make sense of the conditions in which desires are correct. And

[435] See for instance Mulligan 2007. Note that Mulligan distinguishes the correctness conditions of desires and of wishes, the former being the ought-to-do, while the latter is the ought-to-be.

the reason why action and motivations are not necessary for this task is nothing but the deontic view of desire.

Indeed, on the deontic picture that I favour, a desire for p is correct just when p is right. This, *prima facie*, gives us all we need for desires to be correct. Why would desires be correct only if some action ought to be brought about rather than if the obtaining of some state of affairs is right? If desires turn out to be correct when the state of affairs desired is right, the appeal to motivation should then be motivated further in the light of this possibility, given that the fact that a state of affairs is right is distinct from the fact that it ought to obtain.

Moreover, the deontic view of the normativity of desire might capture the grain of truth in the motivational picture, as the fact that an action ought to be done can be explained by the fact that the result of the action, i.e. some state of affairs, ought to obtain. If this is so, one does not need to appeal to the fact that one should act or be motivated to act in favour of p in order for a desire for p to be correct, despite the fact that it is indeed that case that one ought to act in favour of p if the desire for p is correct. Therefore, despite the motivational picture stating necessary and sufficient conditions for a desire to be correct, it is not clear that it does so in a primitive way, i.e. in the right way.

In the light of those worries, the deontic account of the normativity of desire seems to be promising. Indeed, *prima facie* at least, there are no other types of mental states that instantiate the same correctness conditions (in contrast to what is claimed by the axiological account) and no more primitive picture suggests itself (in contrast to what is true of the motivational account)[436]. In this sense, it meets our structural constraints on the correctness conditions of desire.

In order to demonstrate the advantages of this deontic picture *in concreto*, let me examine two puzzles about the normativity of desire that can be solved by appealing to the deontic picture, beginning with the case of capricious desires.

[436] One might doubt the claim that no other types of mental state have the correctness conditions which the deontic picture ascribes to desires, on the ground that deontic beliefs do so. However, the overlap with some beliefs is a problem for any view of the normativity of desire. For instance, evaluative beliefs have the same correctness conditions as the ones implied by the axiological view of the normativity of desire. For this reason, this does not worry me.

7.2. Caprice

Imagine that Sam desires to have pistachio ice-cream every Thursday evening. Not strawberry ice-cream. Not a cheesecake. Not to read a nice book on Thursday evening. What he wants is pistachio ice-cream every Thursday evening, period. What a strange desire. Likewise, imagine that Mary does not need a new car and is aware of this fact. But she cannot help herself badly wanting this new car and would do anything to own it. What a clumsy desire. Finally, consider that Sally is deliberating with friends about dinner options. It is time to decide, as all members of the group are hungry. Someone suggests an Italian restaurant next door and everyone in the group agrees, except Sally. Sally wants to go to a particular Japanese restaurant that is of exactly the same level of quality as the Italian one and believed by all of them, including herself, to be so. People try to convince her to change her mind. But, Sally sticks to her desire: she wants to go to the Japanese restaurant and any other option would leave her cold and unhappy. What a disturbing desire. As emphasized, something is going wrong with these desires. But the final verdict about them is more finely-grained: they are *capricious* desires, desires of a *capricious* mind.

Despite it being intuitively clear what desires are capricious, the question that remains is that of what turns a desire into a caprice and what exactly goes wrong with capricious desires. This is the general question addressed in this section. In order to answer it, I shall assume that capricious desires are essentially and intrinsically inappropriate desires and that at least some of them are *incorrect* (rather than irrational) desires.[437] If this is so, one should expect that the right view of the normativity of desire should have something to say about this kind of mistake or at least give an indication of a promising direction an explanation might go. To anticipate, I think that only the deontic approach to desire can make sense of caprice.

In order to defend this claim, I shall present first some further puzzles surrounding capricious desires (§7.2.1) and motivate the assumption that at least some capricious desires are incorrect desires (7.2.2). I shall then argue that the standard accounts of the normativity of desire have troubles solving the puzzles presented (§7.2.3), whereas the deontic picture of caprice, I think, has the resources to unravel all of them (§7.2.4). Since the purpose of this section is to argue in favour of the deontic account of the normativity of desire, let me warn

[437] This leaves open the possibilities that other types of mental states can be capricious as well (for instance, intentions) and that some instances of capricious desires are inappropriate in the sense of being irrational rather than in the sense of being incorrect desires. See §7.2.2. Capricious Desires and Correctness Conditions.

the reader that I shall restrict the discussion to a general picture of caprice that is sufficient for my purpose, the final and complete picture being presented in the next chapter instead[438].

7.2.1. Capricious Puzzles

Not only are capricious desires intriguing in themselves, but they give rise to at least two further groups of puzzles.

The first concerns the specific features of capricious desires (or capricious subjects) that we find blameworthy. Indeed, not only are capricious desires deemed to be inappropriate, but we are also inclined to think of them as being infantile, superficial, and arbitrary. For instance, desiring to have ice-cream every Thursday evening seems to be arbitrary, desiring to go only to the Japanese restaurant is infantile, while wanting to own a new car one does not need is a superficial desire. This particular constellation of reasons to blame particular capricious desires needs to be explained. Why are capricious desires such that we are inclined to deem them to be infantile, superficial and arbitrary? If paying attention to the normativity of desire constitutes a promising approach to the analysis of capricious desires, it should also shed light on what makes these types of capricious desire differently blameworthy.

The second puzzle concerns the fact that there are certain ways to turn capricious desires into appropriate ones or certain ways to avoid being blameworthy starting with a capricious desire. The first three are ways of changing the capricious desire or in some sense resigning oneself to its frustration. They operate thus at the intrapersonal level, while the last is rather a way of gratifying a capricious desire at the interpersonal level. First, *postponing* the satisfaction of the capricious desire might turn it into an appropriate one. For instance, desiring to go to the Japanese restaurant *at some later point*, say one of these future evenings, is no longer a capricious desire. Second, *generalising* the content of one's desire (until some point) might make the desire correct as well. For instance, desiring to go to *a* restaurant of a particular level of quality, whichever the restaurant might be, is appropriate. Third, *wishing* the content of the capricious desire to obtain is permissible as well. For instance, *wishing* to have pistachio ice-cream every Thursday evening does not seem to be inappropriate. Finally, and this constitutes the inter-personal way of ending with appropriate behaviour starting with caprice, succumbing to someone else's caprice might be correct. For instance, it might be appropriate for Sam to offer Mary the new car she strongly desires given his romantic

[438] See §8.2.3.1. Requirements of Well-Being, Superfluity and Capricious Desires.

feelings for her. After all, this is what love requires. The existence of these recipes, if sound, need to be explained. Why would capricious desires turn into appropriate ones in the circumstances mentioned? The right account of the normativity of desire should elucidate those normative transformations.

These constitute the puzzles of our philosophy of caprice that will guide our investigation.

7.2.2. Capricious Desires and Correctness Conditions

Before exploring different ways of dealing with caprice, it is worth saying a word about the hidden premise of this section. Fir, it has been assumed that accounts of the normativity of desire can shed light on caprice. In particular, I assume that the correct view of the correctness conditions of desire should also be the key to understanding caprice. In order to proceed with sufficient care, this assumption should be clarified. For, even if capricious desires are essentially inappropriate, there still remains the question of whether they are irrational, incorrect, or can be both. It appears that capricious desires can be both irrational and/or incorrect, which will justify our choice to restrict to the correctness conditions of desire in this chapter.

Consider first a case of irrational but nonetheless correct capricious desire. At the airport, Sam desires an ice-cream. But given that he believes that it is time to board, he thinks that having an ice-cream is a bad idea, is not required and would even be unpleasant. Still he cannot help capriciously wanting this ice-cream. Intuitively this desire is irrational, as the further mental states of the subject speak against having such a desire and are rationally formed. Nevertheless, this desire might be correct, since Sam might have rational but false beliefs. For instance, it might be that, unbeknownst to him, his plane has been delayed, in which case having an ice-cream would be a sensible thing to do. If this is correct, capricious desires can be simultaneously irrational and correct.

Consider second a case of incorrect but rational caprice. Mary desires a new fancy car that she does not need. She believes, however, that having this car is good, right, and important. Further, she has formed this belief through reliable means and has never been presented with reasons to the contrary. It seems thus that her desire is rational, as motivated by the following formal account of rationality conditions for desires:

> A desire is rational if, and only if,

(i) the desire is grounded on mental states that have been rationally formed,

(ii) the subject is not presented with any defeater,

(iii) the desire would be correct if the grounding mental states were correct.

That said, although rational, her desire is nonetheless an instance of incorrect capricious desire. After all, Mary does not need this new car and having it is neither right nor good. If this is so, there exist rational although incorrect capricious desires.

As these cases might be combined, it appears finally that a capricious desire can be both incorrect and irrational at the same time.

For the sake of simplicity, I shall appeal to the assumption that rationality conditions depend on correctness conditions[439] in order to focus on *incorrect* capricious desires from now on. How are we to account for the inappropriate character of such desires?

7.2.3. Caprice and the Standard Normativity of Desire

Let us examine how the standard accounts of the normativity of desire, namely the axiological and motivational accounts, will tackle this issue.

7.2.3.1. Caprice and Values

Recall that on the axiological picture of the normativity of desire, a desire for a state of affairs is correct if, and only if, the state of affairs is good. If so, it seems to follow that capricious desires – or at least those capricious desires that are incorrect – are necessarily about bad states of affairs. But is this really so? If one considers the examples mentioned, it appears that the content of capricious desire need not necessarily be bad, even in cases of incorrect capricious desires.

Consider for instance the desire for pistachio ice-cream every Thursday evening. Despite the oddity of such a desire, it is not clear that its content is bad. First of all, having pistachio ice-cream every Thursday evening might be pleasant and does not necessarily lead to displeasure in the future. The state of affairs desired can thus be hedonically good. Second, the satisfaction of the desire might not threaten other goals of the subject, in which case the prudential value is not negative either. Finally, from a moral point of view, it can be assumed

[439] See §0.4.6.

that the state is neutral; and so on and so forth for other ways of assessing the state of affairs as good or bad. If these considerations are correct, it looks like the state is positive in value. Still, in spite of this fact, desiring such a state is capricious.

Likewise, consider Mary's desire for a car which she does not need. Assume that the car in question is a good one. Assume further that it is not expensive, that buying it does not have negative prudential value and that it will lead to Mary's happiness. The state desired seems to be positive in value. But, despite this, the desire remains capricious. Why is that so? This question merits an answer.

Let me examine two possible answers available to the defender of the axiological view.

One might claim that the desired state of affairs is bad because desiring it is capricious. Would that help? I do not think so. Indeed, we wanted to explain capricious desires on the basis of our picture of the normativity of desire independently of the capricious character of the desire itself. But on the answer suggested, the capricious character of the desire is not explained by the negative value of the state of affairs – rather, the explanation goes in the other direction. This route is thus unpromising.

Maybe what the hypothetical defender of the axiological view could have in mind in making the above claim is that the value of the state of affairs is negative in virtue of its not being fitting. Although I agree with the thought that fittingness can be a positive value and have given some motivations that speak in its favour[440], it is not clear that fittingness, as understood in this context, is independent of norms and thus of a deontic description of the state. Indeed, it is plausible that a fitting state, as understood here, is a state that meets some particular norm or standard; *mutatis mutandis* for what is unfitting. But if so, the unfitting character of the state of affairs either amounts to or is explained by the state's lack of rightness, which is the core of the deontic explanation I shall eventually propose.

There remains the question of what it is in virtue of which the states of affairs desired are bad. Not only is the absence of a satisfactory answer to this question problematic in itself, but it impacts some of the further puzzles involving caprice that were presented earlier. For instance, why would postponing the satisfaction of the desire turn the attitude into appropriate behaviour if the state of affairs is already good?

[440] See §4.1.2. The Normativity of Fit.

However, since this observation relies on value *calculus* and as the rules of the *calculus* have remained unarticulated, it is better to discuss the axiological treatment of caprice from another perspective. Attending rather to the related attributions of blame that surround caprice as well as the normative transformations presented earlier will be more fruitful.

Let us assume that the axiological view is correct. How would it account for capricious desires being deemed superficial, if this indeed is the case? The answer depends, of course, on what is meant by "superficial". At least two ways of understanding this term suggest themselves. On the first, "superficial" means superfluous. This however will not help the axiological picture, since what is superfluous might still be good. On the latter interpretation, "superficial" refers to what is not important. For the sake of argument, let us assume that what is important is a subset of the good, although there are reasons to doubt this assumption. However, this will not do when it comes to accounting for capricious desires, since there are unimportant things the desire for which does not constitute a caprice. As an example, consider Sam's desire to offer the fancy car to Mary. This state of affairs is not important, but nonetheless desiring it does not constitute a caprice, as stressed earlier. If so, unimportance is not all there is to caprice.

What about the arbitrariness of capricious desires? Let us assume that a desire for p is arbitrary if, and only if, there is a q which is at least equal in value to p in the relevant respects and which is not desired by the subject desiring that p. Since arbitrariness can be conceived of in axiological terms, one might think that the axiological picture has the resources to explain this cause of blame. Nevertheless, it remains mysterious why an arbitrary desire should be incorrect on this view. For arbitrariness has been defined by the equality of values. If two states of affairs are equally valuable, why would it be inappropriate to desire only one of them? One way to go for the defender of the axiological view is to claim that only the disjunction of those states of affairs is positive in value. Since the subject desires only one of the two states that are the disjuncts of the valuable disjunction, it follows that her desire is inappropriate. However, it is not straightforward that a disjunction can be good independently of the positive value of the disjuncts taken in isolation. Consider two equally good cheesecakes. How could it be good to have one or the other if each were not good already? Although a lot more can be said here, this is sufficient to shift the burden of proof onto the *aficionado* of the axiological approach.

Let us finally examine the axiological picture in the light of the transformations of capricious desires into appropriate ones presented earlier.

First, it is not clear why generalising the content of the desire turns the vicious desire into a virtuous one. For it is possible that both the *genus* and the *species* are good. Why would it be appropriate to desire the former but not the latter? Given that in our cases the latter intuitively is positive in value, without further explanation, this question remains unanswered.

Second, why would it be appropriate to wish the content of a capricious desire to obtain? Intuitively, wishes and desires have the same correctness conditions on the axiological picture, namely the good. One might reply that wishes are about what is *ideally* good, which is to be contrasted with what is good in the *actual* world. But in our examples either the states of affairs are actually good, or they are actually bad – why would they be merely *ideally* good? And if they are *actually* bad, how could they be *ideally* good? That a state of affairs is *ideally* good, while not being possible and thus not actually good, is conceivable. But that *bad* possible states of affairs in the actual world become good in an ideal world is a mysterious thing to think. Again, the burden of proof lies with the defender of the axiological view.

In conclusion, if our piece of value *calculus* is right, the axiological picture of the normativity of desire cannot make sense of caprice. Independently of the value *calculus*, it is not clear that the axiological provides a satisfactory solution to some of the puzzles involving caprice. These results are in line with the thought that the good does not constitute a sufficient condition for a desire to be correct and suggest that we should now examine whether the motivational picture fares any better in this respect.

7.2.3.2. Caprice and Motivation

Let me remind the reader that, on the motivational view of the normativity of desire, a desire for a state of affairs is correct if, and only if, that state of affairs should be brought about by the subject, or at least is such that the subject should be motivated to bring it about. It follows that incorrect capricious desires are about states of affairs that are not such that they should

be brought about by the subject or, at least, are not such that the subject should be motivated to bring about.[441]

Going back to our examples, this condition is satisfied in each case. Indeed, it is not the case that Sam should act in such a way that he has pistachio ice-cream every Thursday evening, neither ought Mary to buy the new car; and nor should Sally go to the Japanese restaurant. In this respect, the motivational approach seems to have an advantage over the axiological one.

Moreover, the view has further structural advantages over the axiological picture. First, it is reasonable to think that some states of affairs are good, despite them not being such that they ought to be brought about by the subject. This is in line with the intuition that the content of capricious desires might still be good, although desiring it is incorrect. Moreover, the view can explain the blameworthiness of the characteristics of superficiality, arbitrariness and infantile character involved in capricious desires by appealing to the thought that the desire is not about something that ought to be done. If bringing about something that is such that it is not the case that it should be brought about counts as superficial (i.e. superfluous), arbitrary and infantile, as it intuitively does, desiring such a state of affairs might inherit these characteristics. Third, and finally, the view can account for the thought that succumbing to someone else's caprice, postponing the satisfaction of the desire and wishing or generalising its content is appropriate. For it is plausible to think that the desired state of affairs should be brought about, respectively, by *someone else*, *later* in time, in an *ideal* world, or that only the *general* state of affairs corresponding to the desired state should be made true by the subject. Consequently, the motivational approach seems to be on the right track.

This being said, there is one worry with the motivational account of caprice. Although it is not the case that subjects should act in favour of the obtaining of the content of their capricious desire, one might wonder whether this constitutes the core of the explanation. Indeed, one might plausibly explain why one should not act on a capricious desire by appealing to the capricious character of the desire or of the action itself. If the motivational account of caprice that has presented were the full story about caprice, one should rather say that something is a caprice *in virtue of* the fact that it is not the case that one should act in favour of p. But the reverse order of explanation is natural. In other words, even if there is a correlation between capricious desires and the absences of requirements to act, it remains to be established that caprices consist in the absence of such a requirement to act. For this

[441] See Pettit & Smith 1993: 74-75.

reason, it is not clear that the motivational picture ends up with the right order of explanation and can give the full story about caprice.

Moreover, as noted earlier, there is reason to suspect that the explanation provided is not primitive, i.e. that the absence of the requirement to act depends on the capricious character of the desire or of the action. Indeed, the assumption that the obtaining of the content of a capricious desire is not right (ought-to-be vs. ought-to-do), as implied by the deontic picture, can explain why it is not the case that subjects should bring about such a state of affairs. If this deontic approach to caprice is right, it appears that the motivational explanation relies on an implication of the nature of caprice rather than pointing to its essence. In this sense, it embraces too much.

This worry then impinges on some *desiderata* and thus on the putative virtues of the motivational account alluded to earlier. For instance, although acting on a capricious desire is superficial, arbitrary and infantile, this might be so in virtue of the fact that the desire instantiates these properties, which fact is in turn explained by the fact that the result of the action is not required.

A similar problem applies, *mutatis mutandis*, to the recipes for transforming capricious desires into appropriate ones. On the motivational approach, the fact that one should, say, postpone the satisfaction of the desire is explained by the fact that the action should be brought about later. But it seems equally plausible that the satisfaction should be postponed in virtue of the state of affairs being right only at a later time, which *implies* that the subject should bring it about later.

The moral to be drawn from this observation is that the motivational account of caprice states a sufficient condition and maybe even a necessary one, but not the one that is essential to caprice[442]. This is in line with the intuition presented earlier in this chapter and invites us to approach capricious desire using a last perspective, namely the deontic one. Hopefully, this will avoid the problems of the competing accounts that have been mentioned so far. This is the object of this last, positive section.

[442] On the thought that essence is to be distinguished from necessity, see Fine 1994.

7.2.4. Caprice and Ought-to-Be

On the deontic picture of the correctness conditions of desire, capricious desires are a type of desire about states of affairs that somehow are not right or not required. This is compatible with capricious desires being about wrong states of affairs, but also with them being about states of affairs that are neither right nor wrong, if such a possibility exists. Some states of affairs are indeed not right in the sense that they *ought not* to obtain or that their obtaining would be *wrong*. But other states of affairs are merely such that it is *neither* the case that they ought to obtain *nor* the case that they ought not to obtain. So to speak, they are not subject to any norm, be it one that makes things right or one that makes them wrong. This conceptual space fits well with that of the superfluous or of what does not make a relevant difference. It is indeed the case that what is superfluous is not required to obtain, but is not forbidden either. This deontic concept, I think, is the key to understanding capricious desires.

Going back to our examples, it appears that the states of affairs the capricious desires are indeed about are not right or required. For there is no sense in which having an ice-cream every Thursday evening, buying a car one does not need or going to this Japanese restaurant now are states that ought to obtain, at least for some good to be instantiated in the actual world. Still, the obtaining of these states of affairs is not wrong or forbidden either. Although capricious desires are mistakes, they are not as strongly mistakes of the same magnitude as desires about states of affairs that are forbidden. It appears thus that the states of affairs desired in our examples are neither right nor wrong: in one word, they are superfluous.

Despite some apparent problems faced by this proposal and although more has to be said to give a full account of caprice[443], let first me explain how the appeal to the superfluous helps to escape the problems encountered by the competing accounts examined so far. Since the task of this chapter is to motivate the deontic account of the normativity of desire, I shall restrict this discussion to the advantages the account has in these respects, and postpone the final story about caprice to the next chapter. Let me begin with the advantages the deontic approach has over the axiological one.

In contrast to the axiological view, the deontic account does not imply that the content of a caprice is necessarily bad. Indeed, as mentioned when examining the motivational view, it is

[443] See p. 272 for some objections and §8.2.3.1. Requirements of Well-Being, Superfluity and Capricious Desires for the final account of caprice.

not the case that all good states of affairs are required to obtain, in the same sense as it is not the case that all good actions are required to be performed. The states of affairs capricious desires are about might well be good, although not right. This provides the deontic view further advantages over the axiological one.

First, the arbitrary character of capricious desire can be explained by the view that merely the disjunction of states of affairs is required, without each state of affairs being required to obtain in isolation. For instance, it might be right to go to *a* good restaurant, whichever it might be. This does not imply that going to one particular restaurant is in itself right. If capricious desires are desires that are intrinsically about one disjunct of a disjunction that might be required, they count as inappropriate and arbitrary desires, while the intrinsic desire for the disjunction (or the mere instrumental desire for one disjunct) will be appropriate. Now, in contrast to what is the case for the axiological view, this explanation can be motivated by the very nature of the deontic, which makes it immune to the charge of being an *ad hoc* move. Indeed, the fact that the *disjunction* is right is motivated by the positive value of the disjunction and of each disjunct in isolation, while the absence of a requirement for any disjunct individually is in line with the intuition that the right depends on the good.

Moreover, the deontic view can account for the superficiality of the state desired by appealing to its superfluous character.

Next, the deontic view can explain the infantile character of capricious desires by appealing to the thought that children typically require things which are superfluous or care about the obtaining of states of affairs which do not make a relevant difference.[444]

And furthermore, the deontic view provides plausible stories about the ways capricious desires can be turned into appropriate ones.

First, generalising the content of the desire might be appropriate if the corresponding *general* state of affairs (for instance, going to a restaurant) is right, while the specific state of affairs is not.

Second, wishing a superfluous state of affairs to obtain can be appropriate in virtue of this state being *ideally* right, i.e. being required to obtain in an ideal world. Since this does not preclude this state from being actually good, as it seems to be, and since there is an intuitive

[444] In the next chapter, I argue that the state of affairs desired in caprice do not make a difference to one's well-being or happiness, see §8.2.3.1. Requirements of Well-Being, Superfluity and Capricious Desires.

distinction between what is actually required and what would be in other circumstances, this explanation is natural as well. Moreover, this move is not *ad hoc*, since to be good seems to be sufficient to be *ideally* right, despite not necessarily being *actually* right. An ideal world might be a world where what is good is *eo ipso* also required to obtain; this possibility would nicely capture the contrast between the perfection of this world and the imperfection of the actual one.

For these reasons, I think that the deontic story is in line with our moral about the axiological view, without suffering from its flaws.

Let us move to the advantages the deontic picture has over the motivational one.

As mentioned, the deontic account shares the advantage of acknowledging the possibility of incorrect desires that still are about good states of affairs.

Moreover, it does not suffer from the problem the motivational account has with regard to the order of explanation. Indeed, on our account, a desire for a state of affairs is capricious *in virtue of* the state of affairs not being required (being superfluous). Now, this precludes the possibility of explaining the fact that p is not right by appealing to the capricious character of the desire for p (a live possibility on the motivational view), provided that explanatory relations are asymmetric. As noted already, the deontic picture still implies that acting on a capricious desire is incorrect and thus explains the absence of further requirements of the sort. This has a further impact on the other puzzles presented as well.

For instance, postponing the satisfaction of a desire might be said to be appropriate in virtue of the fact that the state of affairs can *become* right later in time. For instance, going to the Japanese restaurant at some point in the future might be right, although it is not at the present time. This is compatible with the state being already good and also fits with the spirit of the motivational view as it implies the absence of a present requirement to act.

It appears thus that the deontic picture shares the structural advantages of the motivational account without being subject to its weaknesses.

Finally, the deontic view will explain away the fact that succumbing to someone else's caprice might be appropriate by appealing to some requirement. For instance, Sam's desire to offer Mary the car might be appropriate in virtue of the fact that he loves Mary and that love *requires* pleasing one's beloved. As distinct sources of requirements exist, it is not surprising that this shift of personal perspective makes a difference to the rightness of the state of affairs. This accommodates the thought that it is both the case that succumbing to someone else's caprice can itself be positive in value and that it is right to bring about the content of capricious desire.

Still, for the sake of the argument, let me bring this section to a close by using the account presented to address two objections that focus on the core of proposal, namely the definition of the superfluous as what is neither right nor wrong. I shall use these challenges as an opportunity to clarify the relations between what is right, what is required, what is permissible and what is obligatory (*mutatis mutandis* for what is wrong and what is forbidden), as these play an important role in the dissertation as a whole.

The first objection is a *reductio*. Let us assume that what is superfluous is what is neither right nor wrong. Let us furthermore assume that what permissible is what is right. If the states of affairs that are desired by a caprice are not right, then they are not permissible. But if they are not permissible, they are forbidden, given that what is not permissible is by definition forbidden. This is problematic for two reasons. First, it is odd to think that the states of affairs desired by a caprice are forbidden. For instance, why would it be forbidden to have pistachio ice-cream every Thursday evening? Although it is uncontroversial that it is not required to obtain, it would be too strong to think that this state is forbidden. Moreover, and this constitutes a second worry, the states of affairs desired by a caprice will not only turn out to be forbidden, but also permissible, given that they are not wrong and assuming that what is not wrong is not forbidden and thus permissible. But no state of affairs is both permissible and impermissible at the same time. It seems thus that something must have gone wrong in our picture: either the right is not identical to the permissible or it is not the case that the superfluous states desired by a caprice are neither right nor wrong. As the former possibility may sound too revisionary, the latter follows.

In response to this challenge, I believe that we should deny the claim that what is permissible is identical to what is right. A little detour on the relationship between the right and the permissible will be useful here. It appears that the state of affairs that are right are also permissible. For how could a state of affairs be right but nonetheless forbidden, which it should be if it is not permissible? However, it would be too hasty to infer from this observation that the right and the permissible are the same. For, there seems to be permissible states of affairs or actions that are not right. Consider for instance the act of eating with one's elbow on the table. This is not very elegant and might even be said to be wrong, but it is counter-intuitive to think that this action is forbidden. This is precisely what is captured by the category of the suberogatory to which this type of action seems to belong. If this is correct, it appears that the wrongness of a state of affairs or act does not prevent it from being permissible. Therefore, the right is not identical to the permissible. *Mutatis mutandis*, the absence of rightness of a state of affairs does not prevent it from being permissible either. This accounts for the thought that the states of affairs desired by a caprice are not right, but are nevertheless permissible. It appears thus that the superfluous states of affairs are not both permissible and impermissible, which defuses the paradox.

The second objection questions the definition of what is superfluous as being what is, among other things, not right. One might wonder why the states of affairs desired by a caprice are not right. Assuming that they are right would easily solve the problem just mentioned, for if they are right then they are permissible. And after all, one might suspect that what we have in mind is merely the thought that those states of affairs are not obligatory or not necessary. Indeed, it is not necessary that Sally buy a new car, nor is it necessary to have pistachio ice-cream, and so on and so forth. Why would not be sufficient to restrict ourselves to this claim? Now, this is problematic, given that what is not obligatory or not necessary is not necessarily wrong. Rather, the right itself admits of a distinction between what is obligatory and what is right period, as the cases of supererogation suggest (or of actions that are good and right, but nonetheless not obligatory). Why not think then that the states of affairs desired by a caprice are of this kind? They are not only good, but also right, despite being non-obligatory or optional. If this is correct, not only is our definition of the superfluous wrong, but the main intuition that drives our account of caprice is misleading.

Although intuitive, I think that the alternative picture put forward in the objection is wrong. Indeed, if capricious desires were necessarily about non-obligatory states of affairs, we could not explain why postponing their satisfaction or generalising their content would turn them into appropriate ones. Indeed, it is neither obligatory to go to *a* restaurant or to go to the Japanese restaurant *later*. What is obligatory, if anything is, is to eat. Likewise, the picture cannot explain why satisfying someone else's caprice is right, provided that this is not something we are obliged to do. For this reason, I do not think that appealing to the distinction between what is obligatory and what should be the case *period* is all there is to caprice.

If what has been said is correct, it follows that the deontic account of the normativity of desire has the structural resources to explain caprice. Of course, as noted, the picture should be refined, for other types of desires too are about superfluous states.[445] The account should thus be completed by examining the specific type of superfluity involved in caprice. This should not worry us, however, given that the purpose of this chapter is to show how a deontic approach to capricious desires provides a promising starting point in the understanding of caprice. Since our first study case has been examined, let us move to the second and final one.

7.3. Desiderative Aggregative Impermissibility

Consider a case in which one correctly believes that p and correctly believes that q, for some propositions p and q. Assume further that the conjunction of p and q is conceivable and true. For instance, consider that Sam correctly believes that it is raining, correctly believes that it is Thursday, and can conceive that it is a rainy Thursday. Intuitively, he is permitted to believe that it is raining and Thursday. In other words, it is permissible to believe the conjunction that (p & q), if one correctly believes that p, correctly believes that q and the conjunction is conceivable. The aggregation of beliefs is thus permissible, at least to some extent.[446]

[445] See §8.2.3.1. Requirements of Well-Being, Superfluity and Capricious Desires.
[446] See p. 238 for a slight amendment of this claim. Note that permissibility should be distinguished from obligation ("ought" vs. "must"), as obligations to aggregate depend on the evidence the subject has in favour of the conjunction. I shall ignore this issue here.

Consider now desires. Let us assume that a subject correctly desires that p and correctly desires that q. Let us assume that the conjunction of p and q is good, that p and q are jointly compatible, and that they are jointly conceivable. The question is: is the desire for the conjunction of p and q *necessarily* correct in these circumstances? In this section, I argue that the answer to this question is negative. In other words, it is not necessarily the case that one is permitted to desire that (p & q) when one correctly desires that p, correctly desires that q, even when the conjunction of p and q is good, possible and conceivable. This phenomenon I shall call the principle of the impermissibility of aggregation of desires (for short, the PIAD). If true, the PIAD calls for a substantial explanation. As expected, I think that a similar principle applies to norms in such a way that the deontic explanation of the PIAD is the right one. Let me begin by presenting the principle in more details.

7.3.1. The Principle of the Impermissibility of Aggregation of Desires

It is first worth noting that the truth of the PIAD does not imply that aggregation is never permissible. As a matter of fact, in some cases, it is permissible to aggregate desires. For instance, a subject desiring to go out for a movie tonight and desiring to have a drink tonight is permitted to desire to see the movie and have a drink afterwards, as long as each desire is correct and the conjunction is still good and possible. So far, the case of desire seems to be analogous to the case of beliefs with regard to aggregation. Sometimes, however, the aggregation of desires is impermissible. Consider the two following cases.

7.3.1.1. The Cases

Consider the case of Sam, who wants to read a book, wants to smoke, wants to listen to Debussy, wants a whisky and wants Mary to pay attention to him. Let us assume that each of these desires is correct and that having them at the same time is permissible as well. Now consider that at some point Sam wants to read a book while enjoying a cigarette and a sip of whisky, listening to Debussy's melodies and being watched by Mary at the same time. Although such a state of affairs is possible and positive in value, and despite it being conceivable, desiring such a conjunction seems to be inappropriate. Again, one might think that this constitutes a caprice or at least an exuberant desire. But, as before, some variations of the content of the desire do not sound inappropriate. For instance, desiring the disjuncts in a sequence might be permissible, as the desire to enjoy a whisky and a cigarette with Mary

now and to read at some point in the evening. Still, desiring the state of affairs that realises all the conjuncts at the same time seems to be inappropriate.

As a second case, consider a situation in which one is having an ice-cream on a bright Sunday afternoon and desires to enjoy this experience. Consider then that, while delighted by the ice-cream, one sees a child drowning nearby and desires to help. Having the ice-cream is good and saving the child is also good. The conjunction, namely saving the child's life and eating an ice-cream, seems to be good as well. After all, why would this state be bad? The question is: is it correct to desire the conjunction, at least when each conjunct is satisfied simultaneously, namely saving the child's life *while* eating the ice-cream? Again, although each desire taken in isolation is correct, desiring to save the child and enjoying the ice-cream simultaneously sounds like a caprice or is at least an odd thing to want. Rather, what the virtuous person desires, in such a situation, is just to save the child; he or she temporarily gives up the desire for ice-cream, whatever that means.

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If this is correct, the aggregation of desires is sometimes impermissible, which contrasts with the case of beliefs mentioned earlier. The principle at stake can be formulated as follows.

> *Principle of the Impermissibility of Aggregation of Desires (PIAD)* – For any states of affairs that p and that q, where the combination of the states is good, possible, and conceivable, it is not necessarily the case that subjects correctly desiring that p and correctly desiring that q are permitted to aggregate the desires, i.e. to desire that p and q.

If the principle is true, and if a similar principle does not hold for beliefs, the question is then that of what it is in virtue of which such a principle is true of desire and false of beliefs. This is the issue addressed in this section.

7.3.1.2. The PIAD and other principles

In order to avoid confusion, it is worth making explicit the distinction between the principle of aggregative impermissibility that is the focus of this section and two further types of aggregative impermissibility.

First, the PIAD should be distinguished from the principle of organic unities, according to which the value of a whole might not constitute the sum of the value of each of its parts: for instance, some parts that are positive in isolation might lead to a negative state of affairs when combined[447]. The PIAD, by contrast, relies on the assumption that the value of the conjunction is positive, as is that of each conjunct in isolation and thus does not constitute a case of organic unity. Although the combination of certain states of affairs is impermissible in virtue of the negative value of the conjunction despite the positive value of each conjunct, this should be distinguished from the PIAD as formulated. If one wishes to interpret the PIAD as a case of organic unity, this should be motivated further.[448]

Second, the principle should be distinguished from cases where the aggregative impermissibility relies on the impossibility of the joint obtaining of the states of affairs. In his paper "Ethical Consistency", Bernard Williams discusses contingent conflicts of desires leading to aggregative impermissibility. For instance, he considers the tragic case of Agamemnon who both desires to kill his daughter, because of his duty, and also desires not to kill her, because of his attachment to her. The satisfaction of both desires is impossible, though merely contingently so, argues Williams, and hence precludes the aggregation of the desires.[449] By contrast to such cases, the PIAD by definition does not involve incompatibility between states of affairs, not even contingent incompatibility. Although Williams' explanation of aggregative impermissibility is similar in spirit to the one that will be defended here, as it relies on conflicts of 'ought's and thus appeal to norms[450], the two cases should not be confused.

7.3.1.3. Further Puzzles & Desiderata

Not only is the PIAD puzzling in itself, but the principle gives rise to at least three further puzzles, which will partly set the agenda for a promising explanation of the PIAD.

The first puzzle concerns the extension of the PIAD. As formulated, the principle concerns the aggregation of desires, but other attitudes satisfy an analogous principle as well. This is so for intentions and hopes, among others. For instance, one might correctly intend to F and

[447] About organic unities, see for instance Oddie 1994 and Zimmerman 1999.
[448] See Jackson 1985: 189 for an example of the impermissibility of aggregation of norms that involves the negative value of the aggregation.
[449] Williams 1965.
[450] Idem: 108-109.

rightly intend to G, but it might not be right to intend to (F and G). For instance, it does not seem right to act in such a way that one saves the child and enjoys the ice-cream, for the very same reason as in the case of desire. Given what has been said about the aggregation of beliefs, one might be tempted to draw the conclusion that aggregative impermissibility, as it has been described here, is a feature of conations. However, this would be too quick, for the following two reasons.

First, consider cognitive deontic attitudes, for instance deontic beliefs. Consider that one correctly believes that F ought to be done and that one also correctly believes that G ought to be done. Let us assume that the combination of F and G is good. Although it is correct to believe that F ought to be done and that G ought to be done, it is not necessarily the case that it is right to believe that the combination of F and G ought to be done as well. In other words, the norms that are the contents of the beliefs do not necessarily aggregate. If so, it appears that deontic beliefs satisfy a principle that fits well with the spirit, although not the letter, of the PIAD.

Note that the case of deontic beliefs is a peculiar one, since one might think that the impermissibility of aggregating deontic beliefs is due to the fact that the conjunction is not true (i.e. F and G is not required), in which case the example is not structurally similar to the principle of aggregation of non-deontic beliefs. However, this does not preclude the possibility of deontic beliefs satisfying a principle similar to the PIAD, since the PIAD is conditioned on the goodness of the conjunction and not on its truth. This said, the principle concerning deontic beliefs does not fit with the letter of the PIAD as the impermissibility of aggregation concerns the content of the norms the beliefs are about rather than the content of the beliefs proper, unlike in the case of desire. Still, the absence of certain aggregations still holds in the case of deontic beliefs and it is likely that a similar explanation will apply to this case as well.[451]

If the PIAD or similar principles extend to intentions, hopes and deontic beliefs, a promising explanation should apply to those analogues as well.

[451] Note that it might be that the case of deontic beliefs extends to any attitude that can be correct and can take norms as its content. If so, my point is all the stronger. I shall ignore this complication here, however.

There is a second reason to doubt that the extension of principles analogous to the PIAD matches that of conations. As in the case of caprice, wishes differ from desires with respect to the PIAD. For wishes admit aggregation in a way the other conations mentioned do not. Indeed, going back to our examples, there is intuitively nothing wrong in wishing that one be reading a book with whisky and ice-cream, while listening to Debussy and being observed by Mary. Likewise, it seems permissible to wish to save the child while enjoying the ice-cream at the same time. If this is correct, this adds a further difficulty. Why would aggregation be permissible in the case of wishes but not in those of desire and other types of conations? A plausible account of the PIAD should have a say on this issue.

Finally, and this constitutes the last puzzle, part of the intuition surrounding the PIAD relies on the fact that "instantaneous aggregation" or desiring the conjunction of some states of affairs simultaneously is impermissible. By contrast, temporarily giving up one's desire, say in postponing its satisfaction (for instance in desiring to have ice-cream later), can be absolutely appropriate. "Sequential aggregation" is thus fine. Now, this calls for an explanation. Why would "instantaneous aggregation" be incorrect while "sequential aggregation" accurate?

Now that the PIAD has been presented and some *desiderata* for how it is to be explained made explicit, let us examine the extent to which the standard pictures of the normativity of desire account for the PIAD, as they should be able to do so successfully if they are correct.

7.3.2. Standard Accounts of Desiderative Normativity and the PIAD

As in the previous section, I shall examine the PIAD first from the axiological perspective (§7.3.2.1) before next moving on to the motivational approach (§7.3.2.2). I shall warn the reader that, as this is a second study-case, the types of arguments I shall present are similar to the ones already presented. This should be expected, since our two study cases are both meant to illustrate the same general problems put forward earlier. For this reason, I shall discuss this case more briefly.

7.3.2.1. The PIAD from the Axiological Perspective

Given the way the PIAD has been formulated, it seems that the axiological picture of the normativity of desire cannot account for the phenomenon in question. Indeed, part of the

puzzle relies on the fact that the conjunction of the positive states of affairs desired is positive in value. If the axiological picture is true, the desire for the conjunction should be correct. But since it intuitively is not correct, the axiological picture hardly can account for the PIAD.

This objection depends, of course, on the assumption that the conjunction of states of affairs in question is good. In order to avoid begging the question against the axiological picture, it is necessary to motivate this thought further.

Consider the first example, namely the desire for this aesthetically-complete evening. Value *calculus* suggests that the conjunction is good. Indeed, it is possible that the conjunction is pleasant and does not have long-term unpleasant effects (so that it is hedonically good), does not conflict with subjects' plans or values (so that it is prudentially good) and does not involve negative value from a moral perspective (morally neutral). Moreover, there is no reason to assume that these positive values are defeated by some negative ones. For what would those negative values be? Again, if one thinks that the value of the conjunction of the state is negative in virtue of its unfitting character, it is not clear that the spirit of the axiological explanation has been respected.[452] The question remains: why would the conjunction be negative in value?

Consider the second case, namely the desire to save the child while enjoying ice-cream. Although the overall value of the conjunction is intuitively good and even better than the value of each conjunct, one might think that the value of one state of affairs (i.e. saving the child) defeats the value of the other (i.e. enjoying ice-cream). Indeed, moral considerations generally defeat hedonic ones.

Let us assume that this is so. Still, for the conjunction to be negative or neutral in value, the defeating relation should be such that the value of the conjunction vanishes. But the moral value can defeat the hedonic one and yet the conjunction still remains positive in value in virtue of the positive moral value of one of the conjuncts. In order for the defeating relation to nullify the value of the conjunction, it should be assumed that the value of the conjunct instantiating hedonic value is negative in proportion to the positive value of the other conjunct, namely the one instantiating moral value. But in our case, this is intuitively not so. Why would having an ice-cream become suddenly as bad as saving the child is good, just in virtue of being combined with the former state? One might reply that the conjunct

[452] See p. 238.

instantiating hedonic value comes with some negative prudential and moral value, insofar as it involves a risk of not achieving the moral action. This would explain why it should suffice to nullify the value of the conjunction. But why would this imply that the value of the conjunction is negative rather than merely lower than the value of the required conjunct, i.e. saving the child? Furthermore, the case remains puzzling, i.e. an instance of caprice, even if it is assumed that no risk at all is involved. If so, the existence of defeating relations of the sort mentioned does not easily explain why the conjunction would be negative in value.

Now, if the value of the conjunction is positive, this affects the further puzzles surrounding aggregative impermissibility. For, if the conjunction is already positive in value, why would postponing the content of one's desire be appropriate? Why would a wish for the conjunction be appropriate? On the face of it, these questions remain unanswered.[453] But as value *calculus* does not come without problems, let us assume, for the sake of the argument, that the value of the conjunction is negative. If so, it is not surprising that one should not aggregate the desires. But this comes with three further problems.

First, recall that wishing the conjunction to obtain is appropriate. Why, then, would then a state of affairs that is bad or neutral in the *actual* world be the object of a wish that is right? This switch in value from the actual to the ideal world is plausible for states instantiating positive values that are impossible in the actual world. For instance, the state of affairs in which humans fly like birds might have positive value in an ideal world, but has no such value in the actual world, given the physical impossibility of this state of affairs in the actual world. Wishing to fly like birds might thus be appropriate, in contrast with the desire to do so. But why would the cases mentioned be similar? After all, there is no impossibility involved. As the conjunction seems already to be good in the *actual* world, this restriction to ideal goods seems unmotivated.

The second problem is an implication of the assumption. Assuming that the value of the conjunction is negative turns the cases of aggregative impermissibility into cases of organic unities. In other words, what is special about the problem of aggregative impermissibility vanishes. If so, this constitutes more a dissolution of the problem than a genuine explanation. Moreover, thinking of the PIAD in terms of organic unities would be surprising, given that it is not clear that the aggregation of the content of the desire is bad, unlike in the standard

[453] Since the value of the conjunction intuitively is actually good appealing to the distinctions between actual and ideal value or that between present and future value will not help.

cases of organic unity, where it is intuitively compelling to think of some combinations as being bad. This explanation would thus require further motivation.

Finally, in the absence of positive motivations speaking in favour of the assumption that the conjunction is negative and that involve *axiological* rather than deontic components, it is reasonable to suspect that assuming that the conjunction is negative is *ad hoc*.

To summarise, either the value of the conjunction is positive or it is not. If it is positive, then the PIAD is false according to the axiological account. As the PIAD does not seem to be false, this is not an option that does not involve paying a price. If the value of the conjunction is negative, then the defender of the axiological picture should explain why the conjunction is so, given that its conjuncts are good and provided that we are inclined to think of the conjunction as being good. Either way, the burden of proof lies on the defender of the axiological picture.

7.3.2.2. The PIAD from the Motivational Perspective

How can the motivational account of the normativity of desire deal with the PIAD? At first sight, the motivational picture seems closer to the truth than the axiological one, as in the previous study case. Indeed, in the examples mentioned, it is intuitively not the case that subjects should act in such a way that the conjunction be made true. In other words, the impermissibility of the aggregation of desires comes with the impermissibility of aggregating norms about actions or practical norms (ought-to-do). As already observed, if Sam ought to F and ought to G, it is not necessarily the case that he ought to (F and G). Again, this does not mean that practical norms never aggregate.[454] Now, given the nature of the ought-to-do, absence of aggregation does not entail that the conjunction is not positive in value, since not all goods are such that they ought to be done by subjects. Therefore, these are important advantages the motivational picture has over the axiological view.

Moreover, the picture seems to help with regard to the further puzzles involving the PIAD.

First, it can account for the cognitive extension of the PIAD: beliefs about what ought to be done should not necessarily be aggregated, given that in some cases practical norms should not be aggregated.

[454] For the opposite claim that "it ought to be that A and it ought to be that B" is equivalent to "it ought to be that A & B", see von Wright 1951: 13, Castaneda 1970: 463.

Second, it can account for the fact that wishes about the conjunction are correct by appealing to the thought that the conjunction should ideally be brought about by the subject. Now, this does not entail that in the actual world it is the case that the subject should bring about the conjunction. Capricious desirers are thus motivated to bring about states they should not bring about in the actual world. They should wish those states to obtain rather than desiring them.

Third, the motivational picture can explain why postponing the satisfaction of one desire might be appropriate by assuming that the conjunction should be brought about later in time; and this is a reasonable assumption.

This being said, as before, it is not clear that appealing to the ought-to-*do* is necessary and can serve as the core explanation of the PIAD. Indeed, it is plausible to think that subjects should not be motivated to act in favour of the conjunction *because* the state of affairs consisting in the conjunction instantiates some property which is such that acting in favour of it – and being motivated to act in favour of it – is inappropriate. In the next section, I present a likely candidate for such a property, namely the absence of rightness. The thought is that the obtaining of the conjunction is not required, which *explains* why desiring it and acting in its favour are not required either. If this is so, the deontic account of the normativity of desire, relying on the ought-to-*be* rather than ought-to-*do*, is sufficient to explain away the puzzle by fitting the spirit of the motivational picture, namely by the impermissibility of aggregating norms. This, as before, has an impact on the putative advantages of the motivational view presented. Let me finally present the deontic explanation of the PIAD that I favour.

7.3.3. A Deontic Account of the PIAD

Like the motivational view, the deontic account of the PIAD relies on the thought that norms do not necessarily aggregate. The difference between the deontic and the motivational accounts consists in the type of norm involved, the norm being that of the ought-to-be in the case of the former, while it is that of the ought-to-do in that of the latter.[455] More precisely, the crux of the explanation relies on the intuition that some states of affairs ought to obtain in isolation but not in conjunction with each other. Some of these cases involve organic unities or are such that the conjunction is impossible to be realised; but there are also other possibilities. Indeed, sometimes, although the conjunction is good and possible, what is

[455] See §3.4.1.1. Ought-to-Do and Ought-to-Be.

required is rather the disjunction of the states of affairs. In some cases, the disjunction should obtain *tout court*. In other cases, both states can obtain but only one after the other, i.e. what is right is a particular temporal ordering of the states of affairs. This being said, the possibility remains open that in some cases what ought to be does aggregate; and this is line with what has been said about desires.

It seems that the deontic account shares the advantages the motivational view has over the axiological one, since it does not imply that the conjunction is negative in value. Moreover, the deontic account does not suffer from the problem encountered by the motivational one. For, the fact that the conjunction is not right explains the impermissibility of desiring it as well as that of acting in favour of it or being motivated to do so. If it was intuitive to explain the absence of requirement to act in favour of the conjunction on the basis of the absence of rightness of the conjunction itself, it is odd to explain further the absence of the rightness of the conjunction in terms of the absence of a practical norm to bring it about. Moreover, it does not seem likely that a more primitive explanation of the absence of the rightness of the state of affairs is available.

Finally, the deontic account provides a natural explanation of the puzzles involving the PIAD. As mentioned, it can account for the fact that "sequential aggregation" is permissible. It can also explain why wishing the conjunction to obtain is appropriate. For wishes might be conceived of as being attitudes about what is *ideally* right, and there is a sense in which the conjunction precisely is *ideally* right[456]. Finally, it can easily account for the extension of the PIAD. For it is plausible to understand the correctness conditions of conations and deontic beliefs in deontic terms.

For these reasons, the deontic account of correctness conditions, although revisionary, does provide an intuitive answer to the puzzle raised by the PIAD and shed light on an often neglected aspect of the normativity of desire.

I shall ignore other study cases that can be treated by the deontic account of the normativity of desire[457] and conclude by summarising our investigation.

[456] See p. 261.

[457] Let me mention three other relevant study cases. The first concerns the description of deliberation about what to desire. If this mental process depends on the norms for correct desires, competing views will end up making

In this chapter, I have tried to motivate the deontic approach to the normativity of desire by raising structural objections to competing accounts, objections that, I think, do not apply to the deontic account. This result has then been used to unravel two study cases, namely those of caprice and of the impermissibility of aggregating desires. It appears that there is a structural match between two distinctions. The first is the boundary between states that ought to be and states that are not such that they ought to be (states that ought not to be or that neither ought to nor ought not to be). The second is the contrast between correct and incorrect desires. *Correct* desires, I have claimed, are to states that ought to be what *incorrect* desires are to states that are *not* such that they ought to be. If the deontic account of the correctness conditions of desire is on the right track, and if rationality conditions derive from correctness conditions, the present picture invites us to adopt the following picture of the rationality conditions of desire.

> A subject's desire for p is rational if, and only if, he or she is presented with conclusive reasons that speak in favour of the rightness of p, absent defeaters.

This, I hope, can help us to understand better the way desires might misfire or succeed.

Let us now move to another type of categorisation admitted by desire, and address the question of what types of desire do exist.

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the process yield different results. Moreover, if these types of norm can provide an account of self-knowledge of one's desire, as some have thought, they will have an impact on this important epistemological issue (see p. 303). The final case concerns the issue of perverse desires, such as those belonging to sexual perversion (see p. 305).

8. Desiderative Typology – A Deontic Approach

That I were in some forest's green retreat,
Beneath a towering arch of proud old elms,
Where a clear streamlet gurgled at my feet,
Its wavelets glittering in their tiny helms!
Thick, clustering vines, in many a rich festoon,
From the high, rustling branches should depend,
Weaving a net through which the sultry noon
Might stoop in vain its fiery darts to send.
There, prostrate on some rock's gray sloping side,
Upon whose tinted moss the dew yet lay,
Would I catch glimpses of the clouds that ride
Athwart the sky, and dream the hours away;
While, through the alleys of the sunless wood,
The fanning breeze might steal, with wild flowers' breath imbued

Epes Sargent, *A Wish*

"Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping—rapping at my chamber door.
"'Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door—
Only this and nothing more."

Ah, distinctly I remember, it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Nameless here for evermore.
(...)
Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore!"
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore!"—
Merely this and nothing more.
(...)
"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us—by that God we both adore—
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a saintly maiden whom the angels name Lenore—
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore."
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."'

Edgar Allan Poe, *The Raven*

There is a great variety of desires. Poets are aware of this fact, as suggested by the subtle difference between the way wishes are expressed in the first two quotations and the expression of hope that infuses the last poem or at least until hope vanishes. This chapter aims to offer a typology of desire with the help of the deontic view. The purpose however is

not to provide an exhaustive study of the nature of types of desires, as this would go far beyond the aim of this thesis. Still, the exploration of the deontic view of desire would be seriously incomplete in the absence of an attempt to understand the types of desires that do exist. The main claim of this chapter is thus that an adequate typology of desire will be informed by the kind of deontic intentionality I have claimed desires possess. In order to justify this thought, it is fitting to formulate the *desiderata* of a typology of desire in more detail (§8.1) before proposing the typology the deontic view suggests (§8.2).

The result of this exploration is that the deontic view can account for types of desire in all their variety by appealing to the types of norms that exist. Not only are there norms of the ought-to-do and ought-to-be type, but there are also norms about what is necessary for one's well-being or survival. Moreover, among the ought-to-be, norms can be grounded on distinct types of possibility, come from distinct sources, instantiate distinct types of defeating relations and have opposite polarity. Those distinctions, I contend, can help to capture the main types of desires that there are and the structure of the conative landscape. But let me begin by presenting the main distinctions to be discussed more generally.

8.1. Formal Boundaries – Types of Types of Desire

Not only are there types of desires, but distinct types of types of desires exist. Let me mention what I deem to be the main boundaries of the conative landscape that shall be described in more detail by a plausible typology of desire. Since those considerations are supposed to be neutral with regard to any view of the intentionality of desire, the distinctions to be presented are called "formal", while the next part will consist in approaching them from a material, i.e. more substantial, perspective. In what follows, four formal divisions will be presented.

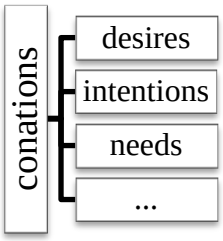
8.1.1. Formal Boundaries I – Super-types of Desire

On a very broad sense of the term, desire is sometimes understood as the umbrella term for all types of conations or mental states that have the world-to-mind direction of fit.[458] Since this sense is much broader than the one I relied on so far, I shall speak of super-types of desire. Amongst conations, *general* types can be distinguished. Intuitively, there are at least three of them: desiring, intending and needing[459]. The *rationale* for considering those states as conations lies in their characteristic direction of fit. Indeed, like desires, intentions and

[458] See Schroeder 2004: 4-5.
[459] I assume here that needs are a type of mental state. If so, then they seem to be a type of conation.

needs can be satisfied, i.e. performed or fulfilled, without *eo ipso* being correct. Moreover, it is plausible that intentions, needs and desires are distinct types of conations in the sense of not being reducible to one another. As already emphasised, the types of satisfaction conditions of desires and intentions differ: the former is best conceived in terms of fulfilment, while the latter is best conceived in terms of performance. This, I believe, is a sufficient reason to regard these representations as being irreducible to one another. On the other hand, there is an intuitive sense in which needs differ from both desires and intentions. One might indeed desire something, without needing it: wanting a holiday and needing one is not the same thing[460]. This of course should – and will – be motivated further, but at first sight at least, the idea that desires are irreducible to needs is plausible. Moreover, it is plausible to explain desires by needs, even when those representations have the same content. Explaining the desire to drink by appealing to one's need to drink seems indeed to be a perfectly reasonable explanation. If this is correct, and if those types of explanations are irreflexive, this suggests that needs are irreducible to desires[461].

One might think that, in addition to the ones I have mentioned, other types of conations exist, hopes and wishes, for instance. Although I shall assume that hopes and wishes are types of desire in the restricted sense of the term and thus are not a type of conation that is not a desire, nothing important relies on this way of cutting the conative cake. Whatever they are, a promising typology should provide room for super-types of desires and contribute to drawing the wanted distinctions in more detail. This is an important task in understanding the specificity of desire. Our first formal division can be represented as follows.



8.1.2. Types of Desire

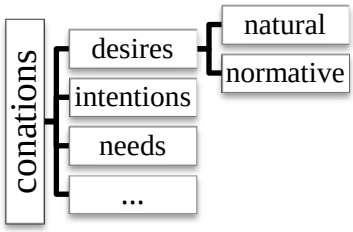
Focusing on desires in the restricted sense, desires *themselves* appear to admit of a variety, which captures the distinct types of desires proper. In this respect, at least three kinds of types of desire can be distinguished.

[460] See p. 254 on more details on this.
[461] I shall assume that this is so, since nothing important relies on this.

8.1.2.1. Formal Boundaries II – Normative vs. Natural Types

Intuitively, some types of desires are essentially inappropriate, while others are not. For instance, capricious desires, temptations, and addictive desires seem to be essentially inappropriate desires. This is clearly so for capricious and addictive desires, since thinking of an appropriate caprice or an appropriate addiction looks like a contradiction in terms, at least when the appropriate character refers either to the justification or the correctness of such desires (or both)[462]. Intuitions are fuzzier concerning temptations, provided that some temptations may be deemed appropriate. But when we are in their grip, we think of temptations or at least of most of them as being actually or potentially inappropriate. Whatever one's intuitions on temptation, there is room for types of desires that are essentially inappropriate. Now, these differ from types of desires which can be appropriate. For instance, desiring can be appropriate or not, and the same holds for wishes, hopes and other. In order to facilitate the exposition, types of desires that are not essentially inappropriate shall be called "natural types of desires" and contrast therefore with the "normative types of desires" that are essentially inappropriate[463].

If this distinction is on the right track, an illuminating typology of desire should help to better understand it. Why would some types of desire be essentially normative? What common feature makes them different from natural types of desires? We thus end up with the following divisions.



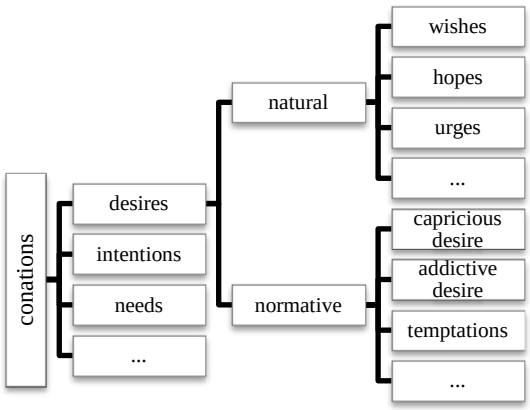
8.1.2.2. Formal Boundary III – Types of Normative/Natural Desires

The natural next ramification consists in exploring the distinctions among each set of desire, namely amongst normative and natural desires. Although caprice, addiction, maybe

[462] See §0.4.6.

[463] Talk of normativity here should not be conflated with the fact that desires have correctness conditions, as it is plausible that all desires have correctness conditions.

temptation, and others share the feature of being essentially inappropriate, how are we to distinguish between them? What criteria will help us distinguish hopes, wishes, urges, and maybe others, despite them constituting natural types of desires? This third categorisation constitutes an important step in the task of providing an informative typology of desire.



8.1.2.3. Formal Boundary IV – Polarity

There is at least one last relevant distinction among desires. Desires admit of polarity in the sense that each desire is either positive or negative. For the very same state of affairs, one might desire it or, conversely, have a negative desire towards it, so to speak "dis-want" it. For ease of exposition, let us call positive desires "desires" and negative desires "aversions".[464] But how are we to understand the polarity of desire in a more substantial way? This constitutes the last line of delineation of our typology.

Two observations should be made about this distinction. Firstly, it appears that the polarity of desire does not consist in the polarity of its content, since the content can be positive (p) or negative (¬p) in the cases of desire and aversion. Rather, the polarity in question, as for other types of states, concerns the attitude.[465] Secondly, this distinction is orthogonal to the one between the types of normative and natural desires mentioned earlier, since one might think of capricious aversions and maybe other polar opposites to the attitude mentioned earlier.[466]

[464] See for instance Mulligan 1998: and Schroeder 2004: 26-27.
[465] See Mulligan 1998 for this picture and Schroeder 2004: 26 for the objection that polarity concerns content (without mentioning modes).
[466] Not any subtype of desire, in particular the normative ones, admit of a negative counter-part. For instance, it is odd to think of negative temptations or negative addictions. This implies that the existence of some subtypes (for instance, some normative subtypes) constraints the existence of other (positive vs. negative desire), which does not prevent the distinctions from being orthogonal.

Despite the importance of the distinctions reviewed so far, the list is not yet exhaustive. Indeed, at least three further lines of demarcation amongst desires should be mentioned.

Firstly, one might wish to classify desires by means of their typical objects. Some types of desires are essentially about knowledge (e.g. curiosity, provided that this constitutes a type of desire), other types are about sex (e.g. sexual desire), and so on.

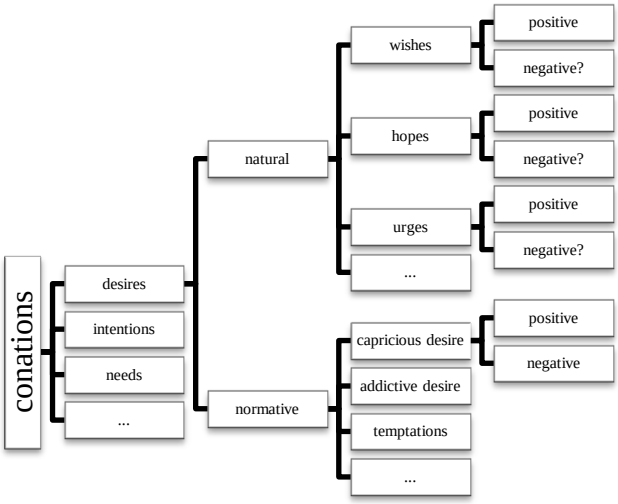
Secondly, one might wish to contrast final desires from instrumental ones. Roughly, the former are desires about a state for its own sake, while the latter are desires about means to realise some end that is the object of a final desire.

Thirdly, it is common to distinguish motivated desires from unmotivated ones.[467] The former are desires motivated by further mental states or processes of the subject, for instance evaluative beliefs or deliberation. By contrast, unmotivated desires, if there are any, are desires that are had without any further psychological motivation.[468] For instance, some urges, the ones overwhelming the subject out of the blue, would be cases at hand.[469]

Given the importance of the three distinctions mentioned, one might wonder why they are not part of the present *desiderata* on the typology of desire. The answer to this question rests on the reasonable assumption that the distinctions mentioned depend either on the content of the desire (as the first cases), or on the presence or absence of some particular relationship between desires (as the final vs. instrumental distinction suggests) or, finally, on the presence or absence of a psychological ground for the desire (as in the last cases mentioned). Now, those features seem to be available to any view of the intentionality of desire, be it axiological, motivational or otherwise. Although the details of the accounts provided will differ, no substantial disagreement is to be expected between tenants of distinct views of the intentionality of desire. This is to be contrasted with the divisions mentioned in our typology. For instance, the distinction between wishes and hopes intuitively revolves around features of the mode and thus leads to controversial issues associated with one's view of desire, as it will become clear later. For this reason, the three types of partition just mentioned, namely the ones touching on the type of content, the presence or absence of another desire or of any psychological ground that motivates the desire, will be ignored in our typology.

[467] See Schueler 1995 for a discussion of the distinction between motivated and unmotivated desires.
[468] Since the distinction between motivated and unmotivated desires is object to debate, I shall leave this issue untouched here. On another sense of unmotivated desires than the one put forward here, i.e. desires that are not the result of deliberation, there will be more unmotivated desires than on the sense favoured above.
[469] This leaves open the possibility of urges that are motivated by psychological states of the subject.

Let us summarise the four divisions presented with the following table.



In order to show how the deontic view can deliver a promising typology of desires, it should not merely provide room and account for the distinctions that have been mentioned, it should avoid doing so in an *ad hoc* way. Since the core of the deontic view lies on the relationship that desires bear to norms of the ought-to-be, this implies that features of the ought-to-be supply us with the relevant criteria for dividing the conative landscape. There is a variety of different sorts of norms, and this variety provides us with all we need to flesh out the distinctions. Let us address each one in turn.

8.2. Material Boundaries – The Deontic Typology

As desires, norms admit of distinct types. Various distinctions between types of norms provide us with the resources that we need to explain distinctions between types of desires. The divisions among norms that are relevant are the following. Firstly, there are various sorts of deontic features. We can distinguish between the ought-to-do, the ought-to-be, and deontic necessity (must be). Secondly, since ought implies can (as the famous *dictum* says), norms can be distinguished by appealing to the kind of possibility on which they depend: epistemic, metaphysical or physical possibility. Thirdly, norms admit of distinct types of defeating relations. I shall review and explain some distinct ways in which states that ought to be can be defeated that are relevant for drawing a typology of desire. Fourthly, norms of the ought-to-be type can be either positive (ought-to-be) or negative (ought-not-to-be). Finally, norms

come from distinct sources, which allows for a last distinction between types of norms[470]. With these distinctions in mind, I shall argue that we have the resources to account for the variety of types of desires. Since those properties are paradigmatic features of norms, it appears that the typology on offer is not *ad hoc*.

8.2.1. Material Boundaries I – Types of Deontic Operators and Types of Conations

As mentioned, deontic operators admit of different types, the three following ones being relevant with respect to the most general junctures of our typology: the ought-to-be, the ought-to-do and deontic necessity (or must-be). I shall first motivate the distinctions between these deontic features starting with deontic necessity, and I next use these distinctions to shed light on our typology.

Deontic Necessity and Ought-to-be

Among states of affairs that should be, some must obtain or should necessarily obtain, while others need not.[471] Some states of affairs, although required, are optional in the way others are not. Consider an example. It might be right to have a break now, but not *strictly speaking* necessary to do so. Of course, on a loose sense of deontic necessity, what is required might be conceived as being necessary in some way. This loose sense of deontic necessity however can be distinguished from a more restricted and substantial one. In English, this distinction is captured by the contrast in force between ought-statements and must-statements, the obligation stated by the latter being more stringent than the requirement stated in the former. This suggests that the difference between the two types of deontic features lies in the force of the requirement. To put things metaphorically, the type of requirement constituted by what is necessary, as compared to what merely ought to be, is stronger. One way to account for the force of deontic necessity consists in the non-optionality of some means, or their uniqueness, with regard to some end or the obtaining of some good.

Given the plurality of ends and goods, it is plausible to assume that distinct sources of deontic necessity exist, each source being constituted by one end. One relevant source of deontic necessity for a typology of desire is the well-being, flourishing or happiness of creatures. Some states of affairs are indeed required for creatures faring well. For instance, taking a

[470] See von Wright 1998: 5 and Broome 2007 for sources of requirements.
[471] It goes without saying that the type of necessity alluded to here is *deontic* rather than *alethic* necessity.

break in the afternoon might be required for one's well-being. But some states of affairs are necessary for creatures' faring well, i.e. they are non-optional as far as the well-being of the creature is concerned. For instance, a certain amount of sleep, of food, maybe of social proximity is required and necessary for a creature faring well. To say that some states of affairs are necessary for some creatures' well-being is equivalent to saying that the non-obtaining of the states in question constitutes, or at least leads to, *serious* harm for these creatures. By contrast, the fact that some states are required for one's well-being does not imply that *serious* harm will ensue. Turning to our example, one might still lead a happy life even in the absence of this particular break this afternoon. But there is no way one could fare well without a certain amount of sleep, food and contact with other creatures. In other words, a state of affairs being merely required for one's well-being is compatible with the subject being happy in the absence the state obtaining, while this possibility is precisely what is precluded in case the state of affairs is necessary for one's well-being.[472]

If this is so, it appears that there is a distinction between the ought-to-be and the must-be concerning the well-being of creatures. Moreover, if our analysis of the necessity involved in this kind of deontic necessity is right, this distinction is not clearly a matter of degree. Indeed, if this distinction speaks to the possibility of well-being by contrast with its impossibility, and if the distinction between modalities of these kinds is categorical, the idea of a threshold demarcating states of affairs that should obtain *tout court* from states of affairs that must obtain makes good sense. If the presence or absence of possibilities of this kind speaks in favour of a distinction in kind rather than in degree, the ought-to-be and the must-be are different kinds of norms. This being said, our typology should be compatible with a mere distinction in degree, as these are controversial issues.[473] Although some vagueness here is difficult to avoid, the considerations just adduced suffice for my purposes.

Deontic Necessity and Needs

The proposal of this section is that the distinction between the ought-to-be *tout court* and the deontic necessity can help to draw the line between desires, on the one hand, and needs, on

[472] This distinction is compatible with accounts of well-being in terms of satisfaction of desires (see for instance Heathwood 2006). Indeed, my observation relies on the fact that the frustration of needs precludes the possibility of well-being, in contrast to frustrated desires. This is compatible with well-being being constituted by the satisfaction of desires, since the frustration of desire does not prevent the possibility of happiness and since the distinction stresses a contrast in terms of the *possibility* of happiness without being committed to any view of well-being.

[473] See p. 296 for the relevance of this observation.

the other. In a nutshell, desires are to the ought-to-be what needs are to deontic necessity. In both cases, the relation concerns the intentionality proper to those kinds of desires[474].

Before doing so, two observations are required. For the sake of simplicity, I shall assume that needs can be a type of mental state, more precisely a type of conation, and can thus have a specific intentionality. Moreover, I shall restrict myself to canonical examples of needs, namely biological and at most psychological needs (like, respectively, thirst and Sam's need to see Mary again). I thus restrict my claim to needs that concern the survival or well-being of organisms.[475] Those observations are motivated by the general task of this chapter, namely approaching types of conations by the help of one's view of the intentionality of desire without entering into the subtleties that concern each type of desire.

The intentionality proper to needs, I contend, can be understood as follows: in needing that p, one represents p as *necessary for one's well-being* or as *must-be for one's well-being*. Again, the deontic necessity is part of the mode of the mental state, as the bare deontic feature was part of the mode of desiring[476]. In needing to drink, one represents the state of affairs in which one drinks as necessary or non-optional for one's faring well. Likewise, if Sam needs to see Mary, he represents seeing Mary as a necessary component of his happiness.

Given the way I have defined this prudential necessity earlier, representing p as necessary for one's well-being is equivalent to represent that a serious harm will ensue as long as p does not obtain. As stressed before, the kind of harm in question might actually go with the impossibility of one's faring well.[477] Representing p as literally necessary for one's well-being is thus incompatible with believing simultaneously that one can be happy if not p, at least for rational subjects. For instance, in needing a drink, one represents the state in which one has a drink as necessary, in the sense that one's well-being literally depends on its obtaining. One cannot represent that one can still fare well in the absence of the obtaining of this state, or at least one cannot do so and be rational at the same time. This contrasts with desires, for instance a desire for a drink. According to the proposal, in so desiring, having a drink is not conceived as necessitated, i.e. as what one's well-being strictly speaking depends

[474] For the sake of simplicity, I shall assume that needs, as psychological states, are intentional states.
[475] Consequently, I ignore other senses of needs, as when it is said that one needs a square to draw the line, as it remains unclear whether this state is a need in the proper or metaphorical sense of the term.
[476] As for desires, the presence of the deontic feature in the mode helps distinguishing needs from other states that are about necessity, as beliefs about deontic necessity for instance.
[477] See other pictures of needs, for instance Thomson 2005 argues that needs involve a kind of inescapability in the sense that the absence of satisfaction of a need constitutes a serious harm. Stampe 1988 argues that if one needs p, then either p obtains or damage ensues. The idea has been already put forward by Wiggins 1987.

on. One can thus still represent one's being potentially happy even in the absence of what is wanted and even rationally do so, although it is likely to believe that one will be temporarily unhappy of not getting what one wants. Still the possibility of being happy is still represented as live (more on this shortly).

If this is correct, it appears that desires and needs, like the ought-to-be and the deontic necessity, differ with regard to the force of the requirement they involve.[478] The emerging picture, then, does justice to the thought that needs constitute a type of conation, in virtue of the direction of fit of deontic necessity, while also shedding light on the intuitive distinction between desires and needs.

Moreover, if what has been said about the distinction between the two deontic features at stake is right, the proposal secures the categorical distinction between needs and desires, including strong desires. Strong desires, on this picture, are strong requests. Yet, they do not involve believing that serious harm, i.e. the impossibility of one's being happy, follows from the frustration of the desire. Although they might come with the representation that sadness will ensue from the frustration of the desire, this is importantly different from the belief about the impossibility of welfare. As this is a contentious issue, let me elaborate this thought with an observation about what happens psychologically when one is resigning oneself to something. This will serve to motivate the categorical distinction between needs and desires that is part of the picture sketched.

Let assume that resigning oneself is giving up on the seriousness of some desire, for instance by letting oneself slide into wishing rather than desiring.[479] In other words, in resigning oneself, one accepts that the state of affairs desired be false in the actual world. This can amount to wish the state of affairs to obtain, as the modality of wishes is different.[480] Now, it appears that resigning one's desire goes with other representations about the possibility of one's well-being than resigning one's needs. Even if one strongly desires that p, one can envisage the prospect of resigning oneself while believing that one can still be happy after having resigned, although one will temporarily suffer. This is why prudence might require resigning one's desires sometimes, even if the desire is epistemically correct. By contrast, it

[478] This force of the requirement does not amount to say that needs cannot be defeated, since they surely can be. Likewise, it does not boil down to urgency, understood as a requirement on the obtaining of a state of affairs in the proximate future, since one can have needs about the distant future. The force of the requirement then just has to do with the non-negotiability of the obtaining of the state of affairs for one's well-being.
[479] On resignation, see Roberts 2007: 148-149.
[480] See p. 303.

is difficult to imagine a subject thinking of giving up a need and still representing the situation as one in which she can be happy. Is it not paradoxical to assert "I need to see her and I can be happy if I do not see her" in a way it is not paradoxical to assert "I desire strongly to see her but I can be happy without seeing her"? It seems that giving up on the fulfilment of one's needs goes with believing that one cannot be happy any longer and that the possibility of one's being happy is gone. It is not astonishing that prudence does not require giving up the satisfaction of one's needs, at least that of correct needs, unlike in the case of desire. If this is correct, even strong desires can be distinguished from needs with the help of the distinction between ought-to-be and must-be and of what types of possibilities preclude by the must-be.

Of course, some people, for instance capricious or dramatic people, tend to need what one should merely strongly desire. This however does not threaten the picture. On the contrary, one of its virtues is that it provides an explanation of the kind of misrepresentations typical of such people.

This being said, one need not adopt the strong claim that must-be and ought-to-be are different in nature rather than in degree in order for the account proposed to make sense of needs. Indeed, even if one thinks that the must-be captures the maximal strength of the ought-to-be, it still remains that representing a state of affairs as *what must-be for one's well-being* differs from representing it as *what ought-to-be for one's well-being* (*tout court*). One might think that this distinction in degree is problematic as far as our task is concerned, for it prevents one from explaining desires by needs. For instance, the fact that one loves Mary very much is not explainable by the fact that one loves her. In the same vein, the fact that Cleo's painting is very beautiful is not to be explained by the fact that it is beautiful. This invites one to conclude that *relata* that merely differ in degree are not suitable for sound explanatory relations. This invitation, however, should be declined. Recall that the core of our proposal hangs on the symmetry between desires and norms. Now, considering norms and the various strengths they instantiate helps avoiding the difficulty just mentioned. Indeed, it is perfectly reasonable to explain why one should go to a particular meeting by appealing to the fact that one is obliged to or must go to this meeting (as opposed to the fact that one would be pleased – intrinsically pleased – to do so). Despite the *relata* of the explanation differing only in strength, the explanation is informative, contrary to the ones involving degrees of values that have been mentioned earlier. This, I contend, is due to the fact that the strength of desire is importantly different from that of values and is of the same kind as that

of norms.[481] It therefore appears that our proposal is compatible with the assumption that the distinction between the ought-to-be and the must-be is a matter of degree.

It goes without saying that a full theory of needs should go far beyond the few remarks I am offering. But, as noted earlier, the purpose of this chapter is merely to provide a starting point for a typology of desire by using the tool box provided by norms. In this respect, I think that these tentative considerations are sufficient.

Ought-to-do and Intentions

As noted previously, what ought to be is to be distinguished from what ought to be done.[482] And as stressed already, the natural way of establishing the distinction consists in pointing to the fact that the operator corresponding to the ought-to-do takes actions under its scope, while the one corresponding to the ought-to-be can prefix states of affairs and not necessarily actions.[483] This does not prevent the existence of intimate relations between the two features. For instance, it is intuitive to think that to each action that ought to be done corresponds a state of affairs that ought to be, namely the result of the action. Nevertheless, this is compatible with the existence of some distinction between them.[484]

This distinction, I think, can be exploited in the task of providing a typology of desire. Indeed, it is plausible to think that some conations bear an essential relation to what ought to be done, namely executive states like intentions, decisions, tryings and maybe others. I shall restrict the discussion to the case of intentions. The proposal is to think of intending to F as representing F *as what ought to be done*, in the same way as desiring that p is representing p *as what ought to be*. If intentions necessarily are about actions, this nicely mirrors the standard way of distinguishing between the ought-to-do and the ought-to-be.

This being said, there is one difficulty with the proposal so far, a difficulty that we actually have already encountered before. The problem arises from the fact that desires might be about actions as well. On the deontic view, desiring to F (say, to swim) is representing F as what ought to be. But since F is an action, one might think that this amounts to representing p as what ought to be done. Indeed, at first glance, the fact that an action ought to be is nothing but the fact that the action ought to be done. Therefore, either the deontic view hardly

[481] See 9.2. Desiderative Strength for a defence of this claim.
[482] See §3.4.1.1. Ought-to-Do and Ought-to-Be.
[483] See for instance Von Wright 1998.
[484] For a defence of the distinction, see §5.1.1.1.2. Ought-to-Be and Ought-to-Do.

distinguishes intentions from desires about actions, or, alternatively, the standard way of distinguishing between the ought-to-be and the ought-to-do is insufficient to differentiate between the corresponding modes. Or so the objection goes.

As a reply, I think that the latter option is the right one, i.e. the ought-to-do mode is distinct in nature from the ought-to-be mode, the difference not merely lying in the content of the representations. This is in line with the observations presented earlier concerning the irreducibility of the norms of the ought-to-do type to the norms of the ought-to-be type taking actions under their scope.[485] Before saying more about what the difference between the two modes amounts to, it is worth mentioning that the insufficiency of the distinction in terms of content is in line with the purpose of this section. Indeed, we wish to establish a clear-cut contrast between desires and intentions. Now, a difference in content seems too weak to do so. In this respect, the purpose of this chapter invites us to refine the standard distinction between the mode of the ought-to-be and the mode of the ought-to-do.

One way to grasp the distinction between the two modes is to conceive of representations involving the ought-to-do mode as being commitments to act, while this is not so for representations involving the ought-to-be mode. This is a natural way of understanding the intimate relation to action that is part of the ought-to-do mode and it nicely fits standard accounts of intention[486]. Since one might represent an action as what ought to be, i.e. require the action, without being committed to perform it, there is room for distinguishing desires for actions from intentions. Intending to swim seems to differ from desiring to swim precisely with respect to the presence or absence of commitment to act in favour of the obtaining of the state of affairs. The motivation behind this picture of intentions lies in the intuition that representations instantiating the ought-to-do mode involve something more than those involving the ought-to-be one. This extra component consists in the typical "active" component of intentions that is absent or at any rate not as strong in the case of mere desires. If this is right, desires for actions and intentions, despite involving both a deontic type of mode, are still kept apart on the deontic typology, as they should be, in virtue of the distinction between their constitutive modes.

Motivations for the Deontic Typology

So far, the presentation of the first branch of our typology has been descriptive. It is worth pinpointing some possible advantages of the deontic typology sketched so far with respect to

[485] See §5.1.1.1.2. Ought-to-Be and Ought-to-Do.
[486] See for instance Bratman 1999.

alternative typologies, in particular the ones the defenders of the axiological and motivational view will be inclined to adopt.

One advantage of the deontic typology consists in the unifying picture of conations provided: despite their differences, deontic features are deontic in nature, which accounts for the resemblance between the corresponding types of conations.

Now, it is not straightforward that an axiological typology has the resources to provide such a unified picture. The natural way to go for the defender of an axiological typology of desire is to appeal to types of evaluations and the corresponding evaluative properties. Presumably, the relevant properties, as far as needs, intentions and desires are concerned, will be, respectively, the goodness of some states for one's well-being, the goodness of actions and goodness *tout court*. This at first glance has the merit of making sense of the resemblance relations among conations by appealing to the core of the view, namely goodness.

However, one might wonder whether the appeal to the features mentioned is not *ad hoc*. Indeed, what are the motivations to distinguish between the evaluative features mentioned except accounting for the distinctions among conations? On the face of it, this proposal seems to constitute an addition of the ingredients that need to be explained further more than a solution. Since the deontic realm naturally divides into the deontic categories mentioned, the deontic view seems to have an advantage over the axiological.

Moreover, as desires can be about actions and since the reason for desires can be one's well-being, it is not clear that this proposal ends up with a clear-cut distinction between desires and needs.

In a similar vein, it is not clear that the motivational typology can secure unification in a satisfactory way. On a typology of conations along motivational lines, it is natural to think of desires as being dispositions to act and intentions as being more than dispositions to act, namely commitments to act. For the sake of the argument, let us assume that this picture is correct. So far, there would be no advantage of adopting the deontic typology. But how are we to understand needs on the motivational typology? At least two proposals come to mind.

The first is to conceive of needs as dispositions to act that are somehow motivated by one's well-being. This seems to secure the specificity of needs alluded to earlier. However, it is not

clear that this account of needs is sufficient. As mentioned, desires can be motivated by one's well-being, in which case both desires and needs would be dispositions to act motivated by well-being, according to the view examined.

One way out of this difficulty for the defender of the motivational typology is to conceive of needs as representations about what is necessary to be done for one's well-being. Again, this seems to share the advantage of the deontic proposal formulated earlier.

Things are not that simple however. It still remains to know why one should appeal to action in order to understand needs. Appealing to states of affairs that are necessary for one's well-being seems to provide us all we need. If this is correct, the appeal to action, i.e. the very core of the motivational typology, should still be motivated. The burden of proof lies thus on the defender of the motivational typology.

For these reasons, the deontic typology, insofar as it appeals to intuitive deontic features as well as to fine-grained distinctions among them, seems to be a promising starting point. Now that the boundary of desire with respect to other conations has been drawn, let us move on to types of desire proper, starting with natural types of desire.

8.2.2. Material Boundaries III: Natural Types of Desire, Types of Possibility and Types of Priority

In this section, I shall concentrate on three types of so-called natural desires: wishes, hopes, and urges. The proposal of this section is two-fold. Firstly, I suggest paying attention to types of possibilities that ground norms in order to shed light on the nature of wishes and hopes (§8.2.2.1). Secondly, I contend that a particular type of defeating relation holding between norms is the key to understanding the specificity of urges (§8.2.2.2).

8.2.2.1. Types of Possibility – Wishes, Hopes, and Urges

Let us assume that ought implies can, as the *dictum* says[487]. This formula usually refers to the ought-to-do, the intuition being that one cannot be required to do something that one is not able to do. For instance, it is odd to think that Anthony ought to act in such a way that he never dies, precisely because this action does not lie in his power. The type of possibility at stake in this *dictum* is the possibility concerning actions of the subjects, namely what I shall

[487] See for instance Brown *forthcoming*.

call “physical possibility”. Although controversial, I shall assume that there is a grain of truth in some version of this principle[488].

Now, despite the differences between the ought-to-do and the ought-to-be, it is plausible that a principle similar to the “ought implies can” *dictum* is true of the ought-to-be as well. For instance, the obtaining of the conjunctive state of affairs p and not p is not required, even in assuming that such a conjunction could be good, in virtue of the impossibility of this state being true. Since the ought-to-be does not necessarily take actions under its scope, the type of possibility at stake cannot be restricted to the physical one, but is a more general one. In order to capture this full generality, let us assume that if a state of affairs ought-to-be, then it is somehow possible. In other words, the initial formula can be slightly modified as “ought-to-be implies possible”. The possibility of a state of affairs constitutes a necessary condition for the state of affairs being required. In this sense, it constitutes what I shall call the modal ground of the norm.

Turning to the task of this chapter, I think that the modality of norms can lead to distinctions between norms. Indeed, distinct types of possibilities exist, notably epistemic, metaphysical and physical possibility. If this is correct, it is reasonable to assume that what ought to be can be grounded on different modalities. Let us consider some examples.

Consider first the assertion “Sam ought to eat” and let us assume that Sam has the ability to eat. Consider now the sentence “It ought to rain”. Contrary to the previous example, presumably no human being has the ability to act in such a way that it rains, although it is possible that it rain soon according to the laws of nature in the actual world. To signify the difference, let us call “physical” the modality at stake in the sentence, namely “Sam ought to eat”, in order to refer to actual abilities of subjects. By contrast, the modality that grounds the norm that it ought to rain is not physical and shall be called “metaphysical” or “nomological”, where this expression refers to what is possible in the actual world according to the laws of nature. A first distinction between two types of possibilities that ground norms has been drawn.[489] But there is at least one type of possibility that, in a sense, extends further than physical and metaphysical possibility.

[488] Idem.
[489] I must confess that my usage might be confusing, as some people call physical possibility what I call metaphysical possibility. This usage is motivated by my purpose in the present chapter, as it allows more intuitive descriptions of the types of desire that correspond to each kind of possibility. Still, an intuitive distinction remains, however one calls it.

Consider the sentence "Death should not exist." Since people do not have the ability to act in such a way that death ceases to exist, the possibility at stake is not the physical one. But since the world in which creatures do not die is a world in which the laws of nature differ from the actual one, the possibility is not metaphysical either. Contrast with the example about rain mentioned before. Although people cannot make it happen that it rain, the possibility that it rains is in line with the actual laws of nature. Indeed, were the conditions that are required for rain to happen, then it would rain according to the laws of nature in the actual world. By contrast, the possibility that creatures do not die requires a change in the laws of nature of the actual world in addition to the obtaining of the conditions in which the possibility becomes actual. In this sense, it constitutes a possibility that stands beyond physical and metaphysical possibility. I shall call this kind of possibility, the kind that implies a change in the laws of nature, "epistemic possibility".[490]

Although a lot more can be said about the kinds of possibilities at stake, I shall restrict myself to these observations, since they suffice to witness the thought that requirements seem to be grounded on distinct types of possibilities. If this is so, one way the deontic typology can account for types of desire is by appealing to the distinctions put forward. Let us begin with the type of desire that, according to our picture, has the widest modal profile, namely wishing.

Wishes and Epistemic Possibility

Let us consider some examples of wishes first. Sam might wish to remove the past, wish he were someone else, wish Mary were close to him or wish death did not exist. In the light of the previous section, one relevant question concerns the modal representations that come with wishes. As suggested by the examples, it appears that one might wish for states of affairs that one believes or even knows to be impossible in the actual world (given what one believes to be the laws of nature regulating our world). In other words, wishes admit of content which is believed to be merely *epistemically* possible. This constitutes a feature of wishes that is commonly mentioned to capture their specificity, although rarely expressed in these terms.[491]

[490] The assumption is that some types of possibility exclude others. This however does not prevent some states of affairs from being possible under distinct modalities. For instance, what is physically possible is *eo ipso* metaphysically possible.

[491] See Heil 1979: 32 for the claim that wishes are not about what one believes to be attainable, where this either refers to the subject's power or to the expectations of the subject. In our terminology, this boils down to say that

The combination of this observation with the core of the deontic view of desire suggests the following account of wishes. Wishing for a state of affairs is representing it as what should be *in an ideal world*, a world that can be believed to be merely epistemically possible. Or, to put it metaphorically, wishes are ideal requests.[492]

Deontic View of Wishes: S wishes p if S represents p as what ought to be and believes that p is merely *epistemically* possible

Observe that this picture does not imply that one cannot wish for a state of affairs one thinks is metaphysically or physically possible. Surely, Sam can wish to have a dinner with Obama or that Mary be now close to him rather than far away from him, despite not representing these state of affairs as merely epistemically possible and rightly do so. The possibility of such wishes is left open on our account, provided that what is physically and metaphysically possible is *eo ipso* epistemically possible as well, although the reverse does not hold (for instance, there are states of affairs that are merely epistemically possible). This should not worry us, as the account provided restricts to a sufficient condition for wishing, not a necessary one. Rather, this invites one to supplement this proposal. In this respect, as it will become apparent later for the case of hopes, considering degrees of certainty about the obtaining of the state of affairs ones wishes for is fruitful. It appears indeed that wishes are accompanied with the belief that there is no chance at all that the state of affairs one wishes for obtains. As certainty about the non-obtaining of states of affairs can extend over distinct types of possibilities, this accommodates the cases of wishes just mentioned. But this is also a way of outlining that wishes can be for states that one believes to be merely epistemically possible, as believing so implies that one is certain that such states of affairs will not obtain in the actual world. Moreover, this is compatible with the view that wishes are ideal requests, as ideal states of affairs can be defined as states of affairs that cannot obtain in the actual world – but only in the ideal world.

This view of wishes, in particular through the emphasis put on their alleged modality, can be motivated further by two standard properties of wishes.

Firstly, the ground of wishes is often purely imaginative in kind. We indeed often wish things to happen on the basis of imagining possible worlds, in particular worlds that are far from

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wishes are not about what is physically or metaphysically possible. In the same vein, see Velleman 2000: 116-7 and Searle 1983:29.

[492] See Scheler 1973: 40 for the relation between wishes and the ideal ought to be.

what is believed to be possible and *a fortiori* likely in the actual world. Assuming that imaginings are about possible worlds and can be about what is believed to be merely epistemically possible fits nicely the thought that there is a close relationship between wishes and epistemic possibility.

Secondly, wishes are sometimes said to typically involve a negative phenomenal character. In other words, wishing often feels bad. If it is assumed that this is so, the present proposal can account for this feature. The explanation would be that the phenomenal character of desire partly depends on the belief about the likelihood of satisfaction of the desire in the actual world. Since wishes can be for states that are believed to be merely epistemically possible, the subject is inclined to believe that the chances of the satisfaction of the wish in the actual world are non-existent. This would then account for the negative feeling involved in wishes about what one thinks is merely epistemically possible, or at least some of them. *A fortiori*, if wishes involve the certainty that the state of affairs wished for will not obtain, the possibility of wishes involving a negative phenomenal tone is vindicated. Wishes, however, might as well feel good. Now, this positive feeling can be captured by the pleasurable imaginative fantasy wishes typically go with. As the phenomenal character of desire might also depend on the tone of the ground of desire, this explanation is natural[493].

In order to understand how the present picture can help to distinguish wishes from other types of desire, it is worth comparing wishes to hopes with respect to the modality they involve.[494] Although it is quite common to wish to remove the past or to be someone else, it sounds odd to think of someone hoping that such states of affairs obtain. One plausible reason why this is so is that hopes are not grounded on the same type of modal beliefs as the ones grounding wishes. This is not to say that there might not be circumstances where subjects hope such states: as soon as the subject believes that such states of affairs are not merely epistemically possible, she might hope for their realisation. But in the absence of such a belief, it is difficult to conceive of a subject being in such attitudes. In order to clarify the contrast, let us move thus to the case of hope by questioning the modal profile they involve.

Hopes and Metaphysical Possibility

The intuition to be presented in this section is that hopes are about what is believed to be *at least* metaphysically possible.[495] By this expression, I mean that the state of affairs is either

[493] See p. 346 for more details on the factors on which the phenomenal character of desire depends.
[494] See Anscombe 1963: 67 for a similar view of the distinction between hopes and wishes.
[495] See Searle 1983: 32, Friedrich 2008: 17 (note 22), Pettit 2001: 153.

believed to be metaphysically possible or it is believed to be physically possible, but it is not believed to be *merely* epistemically possible. As noted before, "metaphysical possibility" refers to nomological possibility or possibility according to the laws of nature in the actual world, while "physical possibility" refers to the subject's abilities. Let us consider an example in order to grasp more intuitively the modality involved in hopes.

Assume that Sam is hoping that the airplane he is taking will not crash. An important aspect of his attitude precisely lies in the awareness that there is nothing he can do to bring about the state of affairs hoped. The state of affairs hoped is thus not necessarily believed to be physically possible, like in the case of wishes. However, in contrast to the case of wishes, Sam believes that there are chances that the state of affairs obtains in the actual world, although he believes that there are also chances that the state does not obtain. Otherwise, were he believing that the obtaining of the state of affairs is absolutely impossible, he would be despaired.[496] In other words, the state of affairs hoped is believed to be metaphysically possible rather than merely epistemically possible.

With this observation in mind, the following deontic picture of hopes suggests itself: hoping is representing a state of affairs as what ought to be, where the state is believed to be at least metaphysically possible. This, I think, captures at least a necessary condition for hopes.

Deontic View of Hope: S hopes p only if S represents p as what ought to be and believes that p is at least metaphysically possible

Although more should be said to capture the essence of hopes, this modal profile constitutes a promising starting point in distinguishing hopes from wishes. Indeed, two intuitive properties of hopes that do not pertain to wishes nicely fit this picture.

Firstly, independently of the truth of the deontic picture of hope, it is plausible to conceive of hopes as being grounded on beliefs about the likelihood of the obtaining their content. Subjects indeed regulate their hope partly through their beliefs about what is likely to obtain, in contrast to what happens to wishes. Were one to believe that a state of affairs one was hoping is metaphysically possible but unlikely to obtain, one would cease to hope it. Since what is likely to obtain necessarily is metaphysically possible, this feature nicely fits the picture provided.

[496] See Roberts 2007: 148-149 on the relation between hope, despair and resignation.

Secondly, in contrast to wishes, it is not clear that hopes typically involve a negative phenomenal feel. Hopes, some are inclined to think, are sometimes the manifestation of optimism.[497] However, it would be too hasty to conclude that hopes involve a positive phenomenal character only. Despite some optimism, the phenomenal character of hopes might also involve negative aspects. In particular, hopes seem to go with an agitation affecting one's attention about the actual world, in contrast to typical cases of wishes where the attention is directed inwards so to speak and devoted to fantasy. The agitation described might contribute to the negative character of hope. If this is correct, hopes can involve mixed feelings. Now, this is exactly what is to be expected from the picture of hope sketched. Indeed, the presence of a positive tone is accountable by the beliefs about the metaphysical possibility of the obtaining of the state, in contrast to wishes. But, as this belief comes with the belief about the possible *non*-obtaining of the state of affairs, hopes might involve some negative character as well. Depending on the degree of likelihood the state of affairs is believed to instantiate, the phenomenal character will be more or less positive. This again would be so if the valence involved in the phenomenology of desire depends on the subject's evaluation of the likelihood that the desire gets gratified.[498] Finally, as hopes seem to be regulated by the beliefs about the likelihood of the obtaining of some state of affairs, they might as well involve some agitation. Indeed, in the grip of hope, one might be on the lookout for evidence that speaks in favour of the increased likelihood of the obtaining of the state of affairs. This might account for the mental agitation directed outwards that is typical of hoping. Observe that this contrasts with the negative character of wishes, since even overwhelming wishes do not admit of the search for evidence about the likelihood of the obtaining of the state of affairs wished for as easily as hopes do.

So far, I have focused on one feature of hopes that help to distinguish them from other conations, in particular wishes, namely their relation to metaphysical possibility. This however is not to say that any conation about what one believes to be metaphysically possible constitutes an instance of hope. This clearly is not so. For instance, one might want Mary to come to the party, when believing that this state is metaphysically possible, while not hoping so. This in itself is not a problem to our proposal. Although necessary, the appeal to types of possibility is not sufficient to understand the full specificity of hopes, as it was not in the case

[497] On hope and optimism, see for instance Pettit 2001.
[498] See p. 346.

of wishes either. Again, one important feature in this respect concerns the representation of the likelihood of the obtaining of the state of affairs hoped, as suggested in our example. It is plausible that hopes are desires about states of affairs whose likelihood that they obtain is represented as uncertain.[499] Put differently, in hoping that p, the subject not only represents p as being metaphysically possible, but is uncertain whether p will obtain or not. This combination of desire and uncertainty actually might constitute the key to understanding hope and its distinction with wishes, as it has been claimed that wishes do not admit this type of uncertainty characteristic of hope. This uncertainty in turn can account for desires about states that are believed to be metaphysically possible in the absence of hoping, since these desires might not be accompanied by the relevant uncertainty. Now, this refined picture is compatible with the proposal of this section. Indeed, being uncertain about the future obtaining of a state of affairs in the actual world requires believing that the state is at least metaphysically possible. For, the range of likely states of affairs is restricted by the range of states that are at least metaphysically possible.

Finally, it is worth emphasizing that the proposal does not preclude the existence of hopes about what is believed to be physically possible, as the proposal restricts to what is *at least* metaphysically possible, which encompasses physical possibility. This constitutes a virtue of the proposal. Indeed, although we do not hope states of affairs that are believed to be *fully* in our power, there is room for uncertainty with regard to physical possibility. The uncertainty might pertain to whether one does possess the relevant ability or to whether the conditions for the manifestation of the ability will be met, and maybe to other features as well. For instance, it is odd to say that Sam hopes that he will move his arm when he is sure that it is physically possible for him to do so in the present circumstances. But it makes perfect sense for him to hope this state of affairs if he believes that there might be a chance that his arm will not move (as this, he believed, happened in the past). Likewise, Mary might hope to climb some mountain, while believing that she is able to do so, but doubting whether she will have the opportunity to do so.

If this is correct, the boundaries of hopes extend to physical and metaphysical possibility, but not beyond. The natural question is to know whether some types of desire are restricted to physical possibility. Wishes extend to each type of possibility, hopes extend to physical and metaphysical possibility, and some desires have been said to be about what is metaphysically

[499] See Pettit 2001: 153-154, Searle 1983:32, Friedrich's manuscript: 17 (note 22).

possible but not probable. But is there a type of desire that is restricted to physical possibility? I think that this is precisely what the modality of urges and impulses consists in.

Urges and Physical Possibility

Consider some examples of urges and impulses[500]. Intuitively, it sounds odd to say that one has an urge about removing the past or about the airplane not crashing. Rather, urges typically are about smoking cigarettes, kissing Mary, seeing Anthony again, exercising, and so on. Why not think that urges are necessarily about what is believed to be physically possible by the subject? Urges would then be restricted to one's representations of one's own powers or abilities, be they bodily or mental.

Deontic View of Urge: S feels an urge about p only if S represents p as what ought to be and is believed to be physically possible

Things are of course more complicated. Given what has been said about hopes, not any desire about what is believed to be physically possible constitutes an urge. But the picture so far is meant to point to a necessary feature of urges, not a sufficient one.[501] Although a lot more can be said, it is plausible to say that urges are necessarily about what is believed to be in one's power and in this respect contrast with hopes and wishes which have a wider modal profile. The purpose of a next section is precisely to say more about the specificity of urges, provided that I have acknowledged the insufficiency of this observation so far.

Advantages of the Deontic Typology

Let me pinpoint to some advantages of the deontic typology provided, when compared with alternative ways of cutting the desiderative cake.

Those advantages depend on the close relationship between norms and possibilities, as captured by the "ought implies can" *dictum*. Indeed, it is reasonable to think that this implication is not an accidental feature of norms or that it at least depends on the essence of norms. If so, the appeal to types of possibilities constitutes a natural way to go to capture types of norms and, *mutatis mutandis*, types of desire. By contrast, it is not clear that standard

[500] I shall assume that urges and impulses are identical. Nothing relies on this assumption.
[501] See §p. 265 for a more detailed account of urges.

alternative typologies, in particular axiological and motivational, can capture the modality of types of desire in such an elegant way.

Consider axiological typologies first. The natural way to go for the friend of the axiological view is to distinguish between types of evaluations by appealing to distinct types of modal representations grounding the evaluation. For instance, hopes can be conceived as evaluations of states of affairs that are represented as being metaphysically possible, while wishes would be similar representations except that they are grounded on representations about the epistemic possibility of the state of affairs they are directed at. So far, the axiological typology seems to be on a par with the deontic typology sketched, since it relies on the same intuition.

This being said, contrary to norms, it is not clear that goodness implies any type of possibility. Even if one assumes that the goodness of a state requires the state of affairs to be possible, this will hold for any other properties. For it is implausible that impossible states of affairs instantiate any property. If so, types of goodness do not seem to restrict types of possibilities in the same way as norms do, as the absence of a "good implies can" slogan suggests. In the absence of further motivation for such a principle and for the claim that a similar principle for goodness captures an essential feature of values, the suspicion that the axiological typology is *ad hoc* still holds.

Moreover, leaving aside the worry just mentioned, it is not clear that it provides a satisfactory account of wishes. As our discussion of capricious desires has revealed, some states of affairs desired by a caprice are appropriate content of wishes.[502] Now, the axiological picture of wishes cannot accommodate all such cases. Let us assume that wishes are desires for states of affairs the obtaining of which is believed to instantiate a zero probability (or close to zero). On the axiological view, it follows that wishes are appropriate if the state of affairs one wishes for is good and the chances that it obtains are zero (or close to zero). But it is unlikely that in all cases of capricious desires mentioned, the chances of the obtaining of the state of affairs desired are zero or close to zero. For instance, given his habit, the chance that Sam has pistachio ice-cream next Thursday evening is close to one. If this is correct, it remains mysterious why wishing for such states of affairs is appropriate. One way out of this difficulty for the defender of the axiological view is to think of the states of affairs one wishes for as being merely *ideally* good and not actually. Although there is a chance that the

[502] See §7.2.1. Capricious Puzzles.

state of affairs obtains, it remains that the state of affairs is not good in the actual but only in an ideal world. This would share much of the spirit of our proposal. Still, as mentioned in the previous chapter, there is an intuitive sense in which such states of affairs are good in the actual world, although desiring them is inappropriate. By contrast, the deontic account of desire can accommodate the possibility of good and probably states of affairs that still should not be desired in virtue of the states not being actually right, but being merely ideally so.

Given that the general advantage of our picture of types of desire consists in the close relationship norms bear to possibilities, one might think that the motivational typology fares equally well as the deontic one. This at least is so for a motivational typology that appeals to the ought-to-do and links it to various types of possibilities. Wishes, for instance, might be conceived as dispositions to act one should have in a remote possible world and, in this way, essentially relate to what *ideally* ought to be done. *Mutatis mutandis*, similar considerations will hold for the case of hoping.

Although I concede that this motivational picture shares much of the spirit of the deontic typology proposed, things are not that simple. Indeed, it is not clear that the motivational typology achieves the right kind of symmetry that is part of the initial *dictum* driving the picture. What I mean by symmetry here is the identity between the content of each member of the implication stated by the *dictum*, as follows. In the "ought implies can" *dictum*, what ought to be are actions and what can be are actions as well. Actions are thus the content of each member of the slogan. A general worry with the motivational typology sketched is that the types of norms it rests on are about actions, since this constitutes the crux of the view. But types of possibilities concern states of affairs, not necessarily actions. This distinction is problematic, as the case of hopes reveals. As noted, a promising account of hopes should acknowledge the relationship hopes bear with representations about the likelihood of the obtaining of the state of affairs that is the object of hope. The motivational picture of hoping that suggests itself is to conceive of this type of desire as involving a disposition to act in favour of the obtaining of a state of affairs that is represented as likely to obtain in the actual world. This type of desire is thus correct if the state ought to be done in a metaphysically possible world. Now, this contrasts with the structure of the initial *dictum*, since the norm concerns actions, but the possibility concerns the obtaining of a state of affairs that is not an action.

There are two ways out of this difficulty. Either the content of the norm should be changed so that it fits the one of the possibility, or the content of the possibility should be modified in such a way that it fits that of the norm. Both ways, the symmetry between the members of the motivational slogan will be secured. Each option, however, is problematic.

By replacing the content of the norm by a state of affairs, just like the content of the possibility is a state of affairs, we end up with the following *dictum*: "if p ought (metaphysically) to be, then p is (metaphysically) possible". But this collapses into the deontic picture. Indeed, norms about states of affairs are of the ought-to-be type.

On the other hand, changing the content of the possibility so that it concerns the subject's ability amounts to the slogan "if p ought to be (metaphysically) done, p is (metaphysically) possible". Athough it guarantees the spirit of the view and secures the wanted symmetry between norms and possibilities, this is implausible. Indeed, in many cases of hopes, it is unlikely that the subject represents the state of affairs as being metaphysically under his power, for instance when one hopes that it rain. On the account suggested, the relevant modal representation of this instance of hope is the belief that it is metaphysically possible for one to bring about that it rain. But this is unlikely, given that this would not be in line with the laws of nature of the actual world, in contrast to other changes in one's physical powers. Rather, it is likely that the relevant modal belief attendant to this hope is the belief that it is merely *epistemically* possible for one to bring about that it rain. But as this belief can only be the ground of wishes, also on the motivational view, this amounts to collapsing hopes into wishes, which is unfortunate.

Either way, the proposal does not seem to have the resources to account for hopes by acknowledging both the very spirit of the view and the symmetry that is part of the *dictum*. By contrast, the deontic typology sketched can encompass both the intuition that norms are about the possible and guarantee the wanted symmetry. For this reason, although more promising, the motivational typology, at least the one just sketched, slightly misses the target, or so I think.

Let us close this exploration of the modalities of desire and move now to a different type of distinction among norms that will help, I think, delineate another type of natural desire.

8.2.2.2. Priority – Urges and Impulses

Modality is not all there is to typing natural desires, as our observation about the modality of urges suggested. This section brings the discussion of natural types of desire to a close by making use of a last crucial feature of norms, namely the possibility that one norm be overridden by another or, for short, the existence of defeating relations between norms. More precisely, the relevant type of defeating relation concerns time. We can use it to explain the case of urges and impulses in more detail.

Urgent Requirements

Consider Anthony. Close to the deadline for submitting an article, Anthony ought to write this article. But suddenly he learns that one of his close friends had a serious accident and is now in the hospital. What Anthony should do is intuitive enough: he should temporarily put aside the writing of his article and run to the hospital to try to help his friend. That, after all, is what friendship requires. In other words, the first norm (Anthony ought to write his article) has been defeated by another (Anthony ought to help his friend). However, this type of defeating relation is peculiar. Indeed, sometimes, norms defeat others in the sense that the norm defeated is not in place anymore, i.e. they undercut the norm altogether. For instance, consider that Cleo is ordered to act in a way that someone suffers unnecessary pain. If she is aware of this and can easily fail to comply with the order, then morality requires of her not to obey this order. In this case, the moral requirement undercuts the obligation created by the order: Cleo is not required to act in this way at all. The presence of some defeating relation between two requirements notwithstanding, Anthony's case is importantly different. For, even in this critical situation, it remains true of Anthony that he ought to write this article, although this is not what he should do *at the moment*. The fact that he ought to help his friend does not make his other obligation vanish. This suggests that the defeating relation at stake, unlike the example of Cleo, amounts to a relation of priority in time holding between two norms that still apply to the subject at a same time.

But there is more. Observe that temporal priority is not all there is in Antony's example. Indeed, distinct types of temporal priority exist. Consider for instance a recipe. Let us assume that, in a recipe, some things should be done before others in order for some end to be attained. Anthony's case seems to involve something different than a mere norm on temporal ordering. The priority at stake in Anthony's case is such that one action should be done prior to another, which is temporal priority. But, on top of this, it is clear that the first action should

be done as soon as possible. In other words, the action to be done is *urgent* or, which amounts to the same, the situation in question constitutes a case of emergency. The emergency of the situation explains why Anthony should postpone the satisfaction of the requirement to write his article. I contend that this captures a *sui generis* type of defeating relation holding between norms and, as the next section will suggest, that this constitutes the key to understanding urges and impulses.

Urgent Requirements and Urges

Whatever else they are, urges are sudden desires. People suddenly are subject to urges, sometimes out of the blue, unlike other types of desire which might appear increasingly. This being said, it is not sufficient that a desire be sudden to constitute an urge. One might for instance realise that voting for Obama is the right thing to do and suddenly desire to do so, without feeling an urge about doing so. Urges thus are not merely sudden desires. One way to supplement this picture is to appeal to the observations about urgency mentioned earlier. Urges, on this view, would be desires about what one thinks is urgent. This, combined with the deontic picture of desire, suggests that urges represent their content as what ought to be *now* (or quickly or as soon as possible).

Deontic View of Urges: A subject feels an urge about p if, and only if, the subject represents p as what $\text{ought}_{\text{urgently/soon/quickly}}$ to obtain.

This implies that the subject overwhelmed by some urge represents the obtaining of other states of affairs she deems ought to be as being required later in time. In a sense, urges put other desires under bracket as urgent norms postpone the satisfaction of other norms to a later point in time. This can account for the overwhelming character of urges, as representing a state as described might capture the full attention of the subject. In the same vein, this explains the force urges have on short-term practical deliberation. Although subjects might not act in order to satisfy their urges, for instance if they think that the urge should be defeated by other considerations, urges inevitably dispose subjects to act in certain ways in the close future, all things being equal.

Let me remind the reader that the present picture is not meant to be a full analysis of urges. The point I wish to underline merely is that urges can be approached, at least partly, by appealing to this particular type of defeating relation norms can instantiate when they require

to bring about urgent states of affairs. As cases of emergency exist, these norms seem to exist as well. Given their importance, there is no wonder that some type of desire aims at representing them.

Advantages of the Deontic Account of Urges

Let me conclude this section by pointing to the advantages of the deontic picture of urges just sketched over alternative typologies.

The advantage of the deontic picture of urges lies on its understanding of urgent states of affairs as being states that ought to be quickly. In other terms, the notion of urgency itself seems to be deontic in nature. This of course is a contentious issue. The friend of the evaluative picture is inclined to disagree and think of urgent states of affairs as states the obtaining of which would be good *now* (or in the proximate future) but not later. This picture however does not seem to be right. Consider the good moment or what the Ancient called the *kairos*. One might think of an action as being good right now, without the urge to do it being required. When on their wedding Sam kisses Mary, he might desire to do so precisely when he should, just before kissing her. In that case, he desires a state of affairs that should obtain in the very proximate future, without being inappropriate not to feel a sudden overwhelming urge to kiss her. They key to understanding urges does not seem to lie in what is merely good in the proximate future. What is intuitively missing in this case is the fact that urgent situations involve states of affairs that somehow *should* obtain in the proximate future and not only are states the obtaining of which would be good. In other terms, what is missing is the deontic component.

But if so, as usual in this dissertation, one might think that the motivational picture of urgency has the resources to capture this feature. After all, urgent states might be nothing but states that should be brought about quickly. Although this certainly captures some urgent states of affairs, it still remains to know why urgency should be restricted to actions rather than more generally the obtaining of states. Indeed, *prima facie*, some states might be urgent to obtain period, as when one says that it is urgent that Sam's hearth beat again. This might motivate subjects to undergo some actions in order for the urgent state of affairs to obtain, but *prima facie* there is no reason to restrict the range of urgent states to that of urgent actions. The burden of proof lies thus on the defender of the motivational picture of urgency and of urges that follows.

If the pictures of wishes, hopes and urges sketched in this section are promising starting points, it appears that natural types of desire can be delineated by appealing to different kinds of possibility and a particular kind of defeating relation. As these are crucial features of norms, appealing to norms in order to draw the boundaries of natural types of desire is legitimate. It remains now to explore whether other distinctions between norms are useful to approach normative types of desire and the polarity of desire. To this task I now turn.

8.2.3. Material Boundaries III: Sources of Requirements and Normative Types of Desire

Norms come from distinct sources, which allows for distinct types of norms.[503] For instance, moral, prudential and legal norms are distinct in type, as they stem from distinct sources: respectively, morality, prudence and law. If desires are requirements, types of desire can be distinguished with respect to sources of requirements. Still, so far, this cuts no ice as far as the task of this chapter is concerned, since any view of desire can provide room for the types of desire corresponding to types of requirements mentioned. Indeed, the distinctions mentioned concerns distinct families that are part of the normative realm and can be expressed, for instance, by appealing to types of values or norms for actions.

But there is more to the use of sources of requirements than the appeal to types of normative properties. Recall that some types of desire are essentially inappropriate. One promising way to approach them consists in outlining particular failures to meet requirements of some sort. The hypothesis of this section is that capricious desires, addictive desires and temptations can be understood by paying attention to requirements of prudence as they constitute distinct ways of not meeting these requirements. Let us go back to the case of caprice, again.

8.2.3.1. Requirements of Well-Being, Superfluity and Capricious Desires

Although capricious desires do not necessarily constitute serious failures, they still count as inappropriate. But what exactly goes wrong with them? And why is this not a serious matter?

In my presentation of the deontic view of the normativity of desire, I already provided a provisional answer to these questions. The account of caprice so far is the following.

[503] See p. 253.

Deontic View of Caprice I – A desire for p is a caprice, more precisely a case of an *incorrect* caprice, if, and only if, the state of affairs desired neither is required nor forbidden, i.e. is superfluous.[504]

Although I have argued that this account does provide room for the inappropriateness of capricious desire, in contrast to competing ones, I emphasised that it is not sufficient to account for the specificity of caprice. Some states of affairs might indeed be superfluous but desiring them does not constitute an instance of caprice. Consider for instance the desire to offer a present to someone when this is not required by morality and when this is motivated by the thought that will please the person one offers the present. The state desired is superfluous, as it is not required at all in the actual world, but it is not capricious to desire and do so, on the contrary. The important question this case raises concerns the type of requirement and thus the type of superfluity at stake in caprice, if any. Indeed, things might be superfluous for one type of good, but not for other types of goods, and *mutatis mutandis* for sources of requirement. In order to proceed with care and isolate the relevant type of superfluity, let us consider first an importance source of requirement: morality.

Imagine that some action is neutral from the moral point of view, i.e. it is neither morally right nor morally wrong. For instance, consider the action of reading a book, which, all things being equal, is morally neutral. Suppose then that Sam desires to read a book for moral reasons (he believes that reading a book is moral). Leaving aside the rationality of the desire, it appears that the desire is neither morally appropriate nor inappropriate, since it is about a state of affairs that neither is morally required to obtain nor forbidden. Since the state desired is morally neutral, it is plausible to think that it is morally superfluous. However, it is counter-intuitive to consider such a desire as a case of caprice. This is motivated further by the thought that this desire is unlikely to be deemed infantile, superficial, or arbitrary, unlike capricious desires[505]. This suggests that the source of requirement that is relevant for understanding the superfluity involved in caprice is not morality.

A second case, which is a variation of the first one, might be useful to clarify what I think is the source of requirement relevant in caprice. Consider that Cleo desires to read a book just like Sam did, but does not desire to do so for moral reasons, only for hedonic ones. Pleasure is her only reason to read a book. Now, let us assume that her well-being does not depend on

[504] See §7.2.4. Caprice and Ought-to-Be.
[505] See §7.2.1. Capricious Puzzles.

this particular action. The action is superfluous for her welfare, i.e. not reading the book will neither impact her happiness nor her long-term goals negatively. Although pleasant, the pleasure resulting from the action does not make a significant difference to Cleo being happy. Moreover, let us assume that the action is not required from any source of requirement. In that case, we are inclined to deem the desire for such actions as being a capricious one. Why does Cleo care so much about reading this book provided that it will make no relevant difference to her being happy, despite providing her with some bits of insignificant pleasure? If this is right, this suggests that well-being constitutes the relevant source of requirement for understanding caprice[506]. In a sense, well-being or prudence is a source of requirements, provided that some states of affairs are required for one being happy, while others are forbidden and some are neither required nor forbidden. The latter are superfluous for one's leading a good life and, I contend, are the object of (incorrect) caprice. The picture of caprice we end up so far is the following:

> *Deontic View of Caprice II* – A desire for p is a caprice, and more precisely a case of *incorrect* caprice, if, and only if, p is neither right nor wrong (i.e. it is superfluous) *from the perspective of the requirement of well-being and p is not required by another source of requirement (for instance, morality)*.

This picture helps to exclude the case of Sam from the realm of caprice. But it still needs to be refined, as suggested by the two following cases. Consider first ambitious desires. Part of being ambitious, or at least appropriately ambitious, lies in desiring what is part of the best life one could lead. In desiring to be a famous pianist for instance, one might desire something that is superfluous for one's being happy. Still, it is counter-intuitive to think of this desire as being inappropriate, let alone capricious. In a similar vein, consider perfectionism. It is plausible to think that being perfectionist partly is to desire to do things that are superfluous for one's end and thus for one's well-being, a desire that is motivated by an attachment to perfection. But again desires for perfection intuitively do not constitute cases of caprice, despite their being about states that are superfluous for one's leading a good life. Likewise, the example of desiring to offer a gift when this is not required and only because one would be happy to do so hardly constitutes a caprice, but rather a saint or at least one of the nicest things one could do.

[506] Well-being is understood here both in prudential and hedonic terms, as it is reasonable to think that meeting one's goals and pleasure constitute integral parts of a good life.

Far from being objections to the previous picture, I believe that such cases help to refine the source of requirement at stake in taking literally the claim that the superfluity concerns the *good* life in contrast to the *best* life. There is indeed an intuitive difference between states of affairs that are required for some *good* to obtain, on the one hand, and states that are required for some *excellence* or for the *best* to obtain, on the other. Capricious desires, it has been suggested, are desires about states that are superfluous for the *good* life and that are not required by any other source of requirement. This leaves open the possibility of desires for states of affairs that are required for the *best* life and that therefore do not constitute caprice. If this is correct, the final account of caprice suggested is as follows.

> *Deontic View of Caprice III* – A desire for p is a caprice, and more precisely a case of *incorrect* caprice, if, and only if, p is neither right nor wrong (i.e. it is superfluous) *from the perspective of the requirement of well-being and p is not required by another source of requirement (for instance, what is required for leading the best life)*.

If this picture is correct, or at least if it does constitute an intuitive starting point, it appears that paying attention to the source of requirements at stake can help to understand caprice, in contrast to alternative views of capricious desires. Although alternative views might account for the relation between caprice and well-being, they do not deliver the right verdict about the inappropriate character of caprice, as noted in the previous chapter[507]. Let us turn now to the case of addiction, since it is importantly similar and dissimilar to the one just examined.

8.2.3.2. Requirements of Well-Being, Wrongness and Addiction

The following observations are far from meant to provide a full account of addiction. Rather, my purpose is to demonstrate the potential of the appeal to sources of requirements as far as addictive desires are concerned. I contend that the specificity of addictive desires, like caprice, can be fleshed out with the help of a last way desires fail to meet requirements of well-being.

Indeed, one way of failing to meet requirements of well-being, maybe the most straightforward one, is the obtaining of a state of affairs that is forbidden by the requirement. In other terms, some states of affairs are such that, were they to obtain, a significant threat to the well-being of the person would ensue. For instance, eating a poison or being deprived of any social relationships presumably impair one's well-being in a significant manner.

[507] See §7.2.3. Caprice and the Standard Normativity of Desire.

Although such states might threaten one's well-being in different ways, the existence of states of this sort is uncontroversial. It also appears that this general way of not meeting requirements of well-being is more serious than the way that caprice fails to meet requirements of well-being.

If there is a *sui generis* way of not meeting requirements of well-being, and if desires can be motivated by one's well-being, which sound like reasonable assumptions, a deontic picture of some normative type of desire suggests itself: there might be desires such that, were the state of affairs they are about to obtain, some significant threat to one's well-being would ensue. If such desires exist, they would be essentially inappropriate, i.e. a normative type of desire.

Now, whatever the precise nature of addictive desires, it appears that the states of affairs desired out of addiction precisely correspond to the kind of threat mentioned. For instance, being addicted to nicotine is such that, were the desires that are part of the addiction to be satisfied, some damage to one's health, some loss of control or, more generally, some unnecessary suffering would ensue. This suggests the following provisional account of addiction: addictive desires are desires about states of affairs that are wrong for one's well-being[508]. This seems to constitute a necessary condition for desires being addictive.

Deontic view of addictive desire: A subject has an addictive desire about a state of affairs only if the state of affairs is forbidden given the requirements of well-being.

One advantage of this picture is that it nicely captures the thought that addictive desires *prima facie* constitute more serious threats than capricious desires.[509] It is also compatible with standard accounts of addiction: for instance, the one relying on the thought that addicted subjects do not sufficiently value their future self or the view that addicts suffer from preference reversals which both ways lead to long-term irrationality[510].

Formulated as such, this condition is insufficient to account for addictive desire. For instance, one might have an inappropriate desire about a state that will damage one's health, but only on one occasion, which does not have the temporal persistence of addictive desires. Moreover, even desires that are about is actually wrong for one's well-being and that do persist over time are not necessarily addictions, as the case of perversions suggests (for instance, eating saucers of mud). Maybe an important feature of addictive desires has to do

[508] I shall ignore temporal considerations here. One might as well restrict the picture to long-term well-being.
[509] Against the view that addictions are bad, see Oddie 1993.
[510] See Hanson 2009: 7-10 for a discussion of those two accounts of addiction.

with the (potential) loss of control and autonomy in the long-term or with the disvalue of one's future self, as already mentioned, which is one way to threaten one's well-being. This might be sufficient to distinguish them from perverse desires that are not addictive[511]. Be that as it may, those difficulties are still compatible with the account so far. Indeed, they invite one to specify types of prudential wrongness involved in addiction, which will do justice to subtle distinctions in ways desires go wrong. As it is plausible to supplement the picture sketched by paying attention to various ways of impairing the satisfaction of prudential requirement, this difficulty speaks in favour of the strategy that is the core of this section. As my aim is not to provide the reader with a full picture of addiction, but to restrict to features of types of desire that are implied by one's stance on what desire is, these tentative remarks are sufficient to reveal how the deontic typology provides promising starting points.

Let me close this discussion by pointing to the advantage of this superficial sketch of addiction. One might think that any view of desire can share the grain of truth present in this account, in which case there is no reason to favour the deontic approach. Some might want to appeal to what is bad for one's well-being or to what should not be done as far as one's happiness is concerned. I concede that alternative views can share the spirit of the account sketched. Still, two observations reveal the virtues of the deontic picture.

First, as noted in our discussion of caprice, it is not clear that alternative views can account for other types of normative desires. If so, even if it is assumed that the deontic picture of addiction is on a par with alternative ones, the general account of normative types of desire will be more elegant by adopting a unified treatment of these desires. Since I think that alternative views fail to explain caprice, this invites one to adopt a deontic account of addiction as well in order to secure unification.

Moreover, although the alternative views might have the resources to account for the inappropriate character of addictive desires, it is not clear that they deliver the right account of the death of an addiction.

Consider the axiological picture first. On the axiological picture, addictive desires presumably are positive evaluations about states of affairs that are actually bad for one's

[511] Or, alternatively, perverse desires should be understood as desires about states of affairs that are wrong in being not the kind of object that can instantiate rightness. They might involve a kind of category mistake that would constitute their hallmark (see p. 305).

well-being. Although this captures the inappropriate character of addiction, this implies that subjects that are not addicted anymore do not represent the state of affairs they were addicted to as being good. This however is puzzling. It is conceivable, and seems actually the case, that ex-addicts still represent the state they were addicted to as being good. Although they might believe that the state of affairs is bad, it might still appear good to them or they might still take it as being good. Still, this does not prevent them from being cured from their addiction, as they are ex-addicts by definition. It might be that being *completely* cured from one's addiction implies that the subject does not see any good anymore in the state desired. But this might as well be a difference in degree rather than capture the threshold above which addiction ceases to exist. By contrast, on the deontic view, a subject that is still struck by the goodness of some state of affairs that was the object of her addiction, while not requiring it anymore, is considered as not being addicted anymore. This, I think, is an intuitive verdict.

One might agree with this observation by insisting on the fact that what is missing from the case precisely is the disposition to act in such a way that the state desired obtains. If so, our previous observation is compatible with the motivational account of addiction and not only the deontic one. I concede that addictive desires are typically accompanied by dispositions to act and that the manifestation of this disposition contributes to reinforce the desire, which is an important feature of addiction. But why would an addict person be cured only when she ceases to be disposed to satisfy her addiction? For the sake of the argument, imagine a subject that is not disposed to act in favour of it still cannot help representing that this state of affairs is required for her well-being. This subject will not succumb to temptation and knows that, which implies that she is not disposed to satisfy her addictive desire anymore. On the motivational view, this subject will be considered as cured from her addiction. But is that intuitively so? Why would not a subject requiring a state of affairs that matches the content of her addiction count as addicted even in the absence of the disposition to bring it about? In order to answer this question, consider the three following assertions.

(i) I am still continually very struck by some goodness in smoking, but I am not addicted to it anymore.

(ii) I still continually and strongly require smoking/represent smoking as what should be for my well-being, but I am not addicted to it anymore.

(iii) I am still continually much disposed to smoke, but I am not addicted to it anymore.

The first observation was that the first sentence makes sense. The defenders of the motivational and deontic views agree that the third sentence does not make sense at all. But why would not that be so for the second sentence as well? Why would such a subject count as not being addicted anymore? Is not the cure against addiction concerned with the requirements of the subjects or how the subject represents what should be? I think that it is not far-fetched to think so. This suffices to shift the burden of proof onto the defender of the motivational account of addiction.

8.2.3.3. Requirements of Practical Rationality and Temptations

So far, we have restricted our attention to requirements of well-being. However, another source of requirement is relevant to understand normative types of desire, namely requirements of practical rationality.

Some states of affairs indeed should obtain only in virtue of some end or value held by people. A canonical example concerns the rationality of actions: if a subject rationally values a state of affairs or aims at its realisation, then it is wrong for her to act in such a way that the chances for the obtaining of the state of affairs decrease[512]. This should be distinguished from states of affairs that should not obtain in virtue of their non-relational wrongness, i.e. because they are wrong independently of the subject's evaluations or ends. The rationality of action I alluded to is importantly different since the rightness of the state of affairs depends on the mental states of the subject. A same state of affairs might thus be non-relationally wrong, but still required because of some mental states of the subject.

The proposal of this section is that temptations, insofar as they constitute types of desire and at least some of them, can be approached with the help of this particular way of not meeting requirements of practical rationality. Indeed, the content of temptations might be right, while the attitude itself – being tempted – is not. For instance, one might be tempted to cease to work one one's paper and this might actually be the right thing to do. Still, in being tempted to do so, one might impair one's goal for being satisfied, namely one's intention to finish this paper soon. This is so whether or not this intention is appropriate. If so, there still is something wrong with the desire constituting the temptation given the other attitudes of the subject.

[512] I leave aside here considerations of scope that are relevant to formulate such principles adequately.

The deontic picture of temptations explains this feature as follows. Desires that constitute temptations are desires that fail to comply with norms of practical rationality that apply to the subject and that are had despite the subject realising the threat of one of her goals she values. Those norms of prudence can be expressed with a wide-scope, where the antecedent refers to some goal or value of the subject (say, desiring p), and the consequent to some desire (say, desiring q, where q increases the chances of not p). Put differently, in being subject to temptations, subjects are in the grip of a desire about a state of affairs which in some way threatens the realisation of one's long-term goals or values. Despite being aware of this, subjects still desire the state of affairs threatening some of their cherished goal and might thus succumb to the temptation. If they still think that the goal threatened is valuable and that the satisfaction of the temptation actually had a negative impact on the realisation of this goal, and if they are rational, they will regret having succumbed to the temptation. For instance, in being tempted to go out for a drink with friends, Sam desires a state that he is well aware might threaten his professional goals he cares so much about. Having succumbed to the temptation and realising that gratifying this desire prevented him from finishing his paper in time, it is likely that he will alas regret this nice evening with friends. But he might as well realise that there was no threat or that his long-standing goal was actually mistaken, in which case no regret ensues. Leaving some details aside, the crux of the account can be summarised as follows.

Deontic View of Temptation: S is tempted to p if, and only if, S desires that p despite being aware that the desire might decrease the chances of realising the subject's goals or values she cherishes (independently of the correctness of those goals or values)

Again, this might not be the whole story about temptations, but provides a plausible starting point. So far however, this is not sufficient to secure any advantage to the deontic view, since the existence of the requirement driving the view is independent of any view about desire. Whatever one's view on desire, it remains true that one should not decrease the chances that the values and goals one cherishes be realised. Something more has to be said.

The originality and, I presume, advantage of the deontic view is the explanation of why such a requirement holds. Consider the example of desires for a state (q) whose satisfaction threatens the realisation of other desires the subject cares about (desire for p). According to the deontic view, one ought not to desire that q, if one desires that p in virtue of a general norm of the type: it ought to be that (if p, then not q). Desiring that q then is inappropriate in

virtue of this norm about the conditional. Now, alternative accounts of desire do not account for the norm of practical rationality at stake in such a straightforward way.

On the one hand, the axiological view is committed to explain the norm as follows: it ought to be that if p is good, then not q is good. This however is dubious as an explanation. For, one might wonder why appealing to a norm here, since it is true that if p is good, then not q is as well. By contrast, the appeal to a norm constitutes the crux around which the deontic picture revolves.

On the other hand, the motivational view provides the following *explanans*: it ought to be that, if p ought to be done, then not q ought to be done. But, again, one might wonder why appealing to the inappropriateness of actions rather than to that of the mere obtaining of some states of affairs. What would be lost by appealing to the mere inappropriateness of the obtaining of some states of affairs, as this seems to provide a sufficient explanation of the inappropriate character of temptation?

If this is right, paying attention to a rationality requirement and accounting by norms about facts provides an insight into temptation and presumably its distinction with other types of inappropriate desires.

8.2.4. Material Boundaries IV: The Polarity of Norms and Desiderative Polarity

Finally, let us approach briefly the issue of the polarity of desire from the perspective of the deontic view. This requires motivating the thought that norms admit of a polarity that is relevant for understanding the polarity of desire and aversion.

There are indeed positive but also negative norms. Indeed, some states of affairs ought to obtain, while others do not. At least two ways of formulating this opposition exist. On the first, the polarity lies in the content of the norm. Positive norms are norms of the type: "it ought to be that p". Negative norms, by contrast, are of the form: "it ought to be that not p". In addition to this formulation, one might even think that norms admit of polarity in the deontic operator itself. On this option, positive norms remain the same than the one mentioned earlier, namely "it ought to be that p". But "it ought not to be that p" captures the polar opposite of the norm just mentioned.[513] On this second option, both positive and negative norms can take negative content under their scope, as "it ought to be that not p" and

[513] See Meinong 1917: 103.

"it ought not to be that not p". However one understands the polarity of norms, each type of norm mentioned should be contrasted with the absence of any norm, as "it is not the case that it ought (no) to be that (not) p".[514] As the proposal of this dissertation is to understand the mode of desire by features of the deontic operator, I shall make use of the second formulation, as it nicely invites to account for the polarity of desire in terms of mode rather than content. Still, if one thinks that positive norms about negative content ("it ought to be that not p") are identical to negative norms about positive content ("it ought not to be that p"), this does not affect my observations.

Applying the second way of understanding the distinction between positive and negative norms to the case of desire invites one to distinguish between positive and negative desires as follows. According to the deontic picture, positive desires are to positive norms what aversions are to negative norms. Positive desires are representations of states of affairs as what should be, while aversions are representations of states of affairs as what should not be. Both can take negative content (be about not p) and both should be distinguished from indifference, which corresponds to the absence of any deontic attitude. Put metaphorically, positive desires are requests, while aversions can be understood as rejections. The key does not merely appeal to the polarity of norms, but lies also in conceiving of the polarity of desire as consisting in the polarity of opposite modes.[515]

As well as positive desire should be distinguished from positive evaluations (approval), aversion should be distinguished from negative ones (disapproval). For instance, one might disapprove something (say, war in Iraq), without *eo ipso* having an aversion towards it. Rather, one might as well be indifferent whether p obtains. This might be irrational, but seems to be possible. By contrast, it is difficult to conceive a similar case with rejection, i.e. rejecting p or representing p as what should not be, while being indifferent whether p obtains at the same time.[516] If this is so, this provides an intuitive advantage of the deontic picture over the axiological one.

On the other hand, given that the deontic account sketched seems to be sufficient to capture our intuitions about polarity and can provide the ground for understanding the polarity of

[514] I shall ignore here the issue of the relation between positive norms with negative content, on the one hand, and negative norms with positive content, on the other. It is sufficient to note that a same issue concerns the relation between desires about not p and aversions about p. Since my claim relies on symmetry, I shall remain neutral and leave those issues untouched.
[515] See Mulligan 1998 for a similar view of polarity of attitudes.
[516] See §283 for more details on this issue.

motivations, the defender of the motivational picture of the polarity of desire should again provide us with a reason to equate the polarity of desire with particular action tendencies.

Finally, a virtue of our proposal is that it does not conflate desires about the non-obtaining of a state of affairs with aversions about its obtaining. *Mutatis mutandis*, the same applies to desires about a state of affairs and aversions about its non-obtaining. Indeed, the mode of the pair of attitudes mentioned is not the same, as it is positive in one case and negative in the other, in addition to the opposition between their content. This is a virtue, I think, as it is psychologically plausible to attribute desires about negative states of affairs in the absence of the aversion to the positive state of affairs (*mutatis mutandis* for the other pair of attitudes mentioned). One might as well have an aversion to a state of affairs without desiring that the state of affairs does not obtain, actually without any attitude about the non-obtaining of the state of affairs. If this is a possibility one wishes to endorse, the present proposal can accommodate it.

Although this account of the polarity of desire has been stated without having been defended in detail, it shows how the deontic view provides some direction for future research as far as this last relevant line of our typology is concerned.

In conclusion, as tentative as the aforementioned considerations are, I hope that they are sufficient to show that the deontic view has several resources that can be used to draw up an elegant typology of desire. The correlations between types of norms and types of desire could be a mere coincidence. But if the deontic view is right, this correspondence is not a fortuitous echo and turns out to be important.

9. Doubting the Deontic View – Six Objections

Although some objections have been mentioned along our journey, these concerned the particular pictures or arguments provided by the deontic view. But nothing so far has been said about the general problems faced by it. The aim of this final chapter is to fill this gap by addressing six challenges against the deontic view. Those are meant to constitute *general* objections directed at the core of the view and do not pertain to the arguments presented earlier. With the help of the last two chapters, this chapter aims at demonstrating the heuristic value of the deontic view defended. In order to do so, I shall try to rebut these objections by restricting myself as much as possible to the very features of the view that I have presented and by often elaborating on what has been said already, although some extra assumptions will be provided when necessary. The aim of this chapter explains why I shall not enter into details here either, as this would require addressing too many distinct issues.

Six lines of objections will be addressed. First, one might object that the deontic view hardly distinguishes desires from deontic beliefs or does so in an *ad hoc* way. Second, provided that norms intuitively do not admit of degrees, one might complain that the deontic view does not have the resources to account for the strength of desires. Third, one might worry that desires turns out to be a too sophisticated mental state on the deontic view, for instance necessarily having a propositional content. This format can be thought to be implausible for some types of desire. Fourth, one might doubt that the deontic view does justice to the standard function of desire, namely motivation, and is thus too revisionary to be true. Fifth, one might think that the deontic view suffers from the very same problem as the one that has been faced by the standard views, namely that desires can be explained by deontic attitudes. In that case, no progress will have been made. Sixth, and finally, one might be sceptical about the dependence of norms on values, which constitutes the general motivation for the deontic view. If any of these objections is right, the deontic view presented cannot be true. The question of course is to establish whether these objections stand. As expected, I think that they are either misguided or do not undermine the truth of the deontic view. Let us substantiate this claim by considering each of these objections.

9.1. Deontic beliefs

According to the deontic view, to desire a state of affairs is to represent this state as what ought to be. Now, in believing or judging that a state of affairs ought to obtain (for short, in deontic belief), one also represents it as what ought to be. If this is correct, the deontic view cannot, it seems, acknowledge the distinction between desires, on the one hand, and deontic beliefs, on the other.

Now, this is problematic, as there are good reasons to think that desires are not identical with deontic beliefs. For instance, one might desire a state of affairs *because* one believes that it ought to be. Moreover, the equation of desire with deontic beliefs impacts crucial arguments provided in this dissertation. Let us mention only two.

First, equating desires with deontic beliefs implies that the deontic view cannot make sense of the direction of fit of desires. Indeed, deontic belief, as being a type of belief, presumably has a direction of fit different from that of desire.[517]

Second, it appears that deontic beliefs also fit the explanatory profile of desires. For, on the one hand, one might explain one's belief that p ought to obtain by one's positive evaluation of p; on the other hand, one might explain one's motivation to act in favour of p by one's belief that p ought to be. One might think that this is what we expect from a plausible view of desire. But the problem is that this suggests that we do not need the deontic view of desire to be true in order to account for the explanatory relations wanted. Rather, any deontic attitude, for instance deontic beliefs, will do. If so, the move from the explanatory profile of desires to the truth of the deontic view was too quick. This undermines some of the main motivations for the deontic view that have been provided. As far as the present dialectic of the dissertation is concerned, this objection, if sound, is thus devastating. But is it a sound objection? In other words, can the deontic view distinguish between desires and deontic beliefs? I think that it can and does so in a non *ad hoc* way.

First, despite the fact that deontic beliefs also represent their content as what ought to obtain, it does not follow that the deontic view cannot distinguish desires from deontic beliefs. The reason is that there are at least two ways of representing content as what ought to be, depending on whether the deontic property features in the mode or in the content of the

[517] See however Gregory *forthcoming* for the claim that beliefs about reasons to act have the same direction of fit of desire, as they are desires.

representation. According to the deontic view, desiring that p is representing p as what ought to obtain, where the deontic property features in the *mode* of the attitude, the content of the attitude being the state of affairs p. By contrast, according to the analogous picture of belief that has been sketched, the deontic feature involved in the belief that p ought to obtain figures in the *content* as opposed to the mode of the attitude[518]. For believing that p ought to obtain is representing as actual that p ought to obtain. This contrast can be expressed by the following formulations, where (i) stands for desiring, (ii) for deontic beliefs, the parentheses for the content and the braces for the mode:

(i) D(p): {as what *ought* to be} (p)

(ii) B(p ought to be): {as being the case} (p *ought* to be)

Not only is this distinction implied by the very formulation of the deontic view of desire and the corresponding picture of belief, but it can further be motivated by paying attention to the satisfaction conditions of these attitudes. According to our proposal, the deontic belief is satisfied, i.e. true, when p ought to obtain. By contrast, a desire for p is satisfied if, and only if, p – not if p ought to be. It is true that the correctness conditions of both attitudes are captured by the same fact, namely the fact that p ought to be. This however is not problematic, since tokens of distinct types of mental states might have the same correctness conditions, despite the existence of differences in the general correctness conditions of the types of mental states. For instance, the belief that p is good might have the same correctness conditions as the liking that p, despite the correctness conditions of the general types of attitudes, namely belief and pleasure, being distinct. Since the view implies that desires and deontic beliefs do not share their satisfaction conditions and assuming that the satisfaction conditions depend on modes, the existence of a distinction in their modes is vindicated[519].

If this is correct, the distinction in satisfaction conditions sheds light on the contrast between desires and normative beliefs with respect to direction of fit, provided that directions of fit are directions of satisfaction, which is relevant for part of this objection.

This being said, one might think that this move is a mere technical *ad hoc* device and does not correspond to any real mental phenomenon. After all, why would the location of the

[518] See p. 115.
[519] See §4.1.1.2. Fit and Satisfaction.

deontic feature make such a difference in turning a type of belief into a desire and change the satisfaction conditions of the mental state in the way described? One way to answer this question is to appeal to the normative character of the deontic feature. The thought is that representations instantiating the deontic feature in the mode are essentially *normative* attitudes, namely, as mentioned, attitudes that are incompatible with indifference with regard to the obtaining of their content.[520] It is impossible indeed that one desires that p and does not care whether p. This, on the deontic view, is accounted for by the presence of the deontic feature in the mode. By contrast, the presence of the deontic feature in the content of deontic beliefs does not imply that the attitude is essentially normative. For this reason, beliefs, even deontic beliefs, are compatible with indifference about the obtaining of the content of the deontic operator that figures in them. For instance, it makes sense to say that one believes that p ought to happen, although one does not care whether p, as when giving a piece of advice to someone. This asymmetry reveals that the presence or absence of the deontic feature in the mode, far from being stipulated, amounts to a real difference. If so, the devastating implications deriving from the equation of the two attitudes do not follow.

This however does not undermine all the parts of the objection mentioned. For even if a distinction between desires and deontic beliefs is secured, one might still think that any deontic representation can account for the explanatory role of desire. If so, there would no gain to prefer one over the other and the equation of desires with deontic attitudes has been unmotivated.

Let us assume that deontic beliefs and desires share the same explanatory profile. From this fact, it does not follow that the deontic view cannot account for the explanation of desire. Indeed, the *desideratum* on the explanation required to provide room for the explanatory role of desire and to explain this peculiar role. In no way did it require that *only* desires play such a role. Moreover, the fact that not any type of belief, but only *deontic* ones fulfil the same role as desire suggests that appealing to deontic features is the key to enlightening the explanatory role examined. Finally, given what has been said on the distinction between deontic beliefs and desires and in particular the explanation of desires by deontic beliefs, the explanatory role of desire itself invites one to equate desires with deontic representations of a certain type, namely the deontic attitudes I contend desires constitute. If this is correct, the

[520] See §3.4.3. Reformulating the Deontic Mode View.

case of deontic beliefs, far from being a problem for the deontic view, suggests that the view is on the right track.

9.2. Desiderative Strength

Recall that one of the *desiderata* presented concerned the strength of desire[521]. So far, nothing has been said about the way the deontic view will account for it. Now, it is tempting to think that the deontic view is in trouble with respect to the gradability of desire, since it appeals to norms and as norms do not admit of degrees. Intuitively, either a state of affairs ought to be or it is not the case that it ought to be, but it might seem odd to think that a state of affairs ought *more* to be than another.[522] By contrast, it is common to think of a state of affairs as instantiating more positive values than another. If values range on a *continuum* along one dimension going from the worse to the best, norms do not admit such strengthening or weakening along a *continuum* and are an all or nothing matter. If so, the objection is not that the deontic view provides us with the wrong view of the gradability of desire, as it has been claimed alternative views of desire do. Rather, and this is worse, the deontic view cannot provide room for the gradability of desire. It should therefore deny that desires admit of degrees. But this amounts to denying what is obviously true. Or so the objection goes.

In response to this challenge, I believe that the objection relies on a false premise, namely that norms do not admit of any kind of gradability. Although this is a controversial issue, I shall argue that there is a sense in which norms admit of gradability (i) and that this kind of gradability is the one involved in desire (ii).

9.2.1. Norms and Priority Relations

Contrary to the spirit of the objection just formulated, it is not straightforward that norms do not admit of degrees. Isn't it common to say that some actions ought more to be done than others or have precedence over others, at least in some situations? Even if we answer to this question positively, this observation is, I think, compatible with the distinction between the gradability of norms and that of values, among other properties. Let me characterize first the sense in which norms admit of degrees before addressing the issue of the distinction with evaluative gradability.

[521] See §0.4.5.
[522] See Mulligan 1998, Ogien & Tappolet 2009.

Although it might sound odd to say that an action ought more to be done than another, it is natural to say that bringing about some action is more important or stringent than bringing about another. As Hansson puts it, it appears that requirements differ in stringency.[523] Consider the example of the drowning child again.[524] Despite the fact that Sam was enjoying ice-cream, morality requires that he tries to save the child when seeing that a child is drowning in front of him. But, as noticed, enjoying ice-cream remains right from the perspective of Sam's well-being, and thus ought to obtain as well. Despite this, it is intuitive to think that one "should *more*" save the child" than enjoy one's ice-cream. What is meant is that the moral requirement is prior to or more important than the prudential one. This constitutes a standard way of expressing priority relations and in some sense captures the gradability or, at any rate, the strength of norms, although priority or hierarchy might be better notions to describe the phenomenon at stake. Although vague, this observation motivates the existence of a sense in which norms admit of degrees.

However, so far, nothing in our example suggests that the kind of gradability described differs from that of value, since one might think that helping the child has more value than enjoying ice-cream and, therefore, has priority over the latter. It remains to be established that this sense of gradability is distinct from the gradability instantiated by values. In this respect, previous observations might help us do justice to the thought that the sense in which norms admit of degrees, if anything, is different from the way in which values do. Recall that our discussion of the aggregation of norms suggested that deontic gradability is not reducible to evaluative gradability.[525] Consider the value of the aggregative state in which one saves the child while enjoying ice-cream, say one saves the child by enjoying one's ice-cream at the same time. Since this state of affairs is composed partly of a positive moral value and a positive hedonic one, we are inclined to think of this state of affairs as being better than the state of affairs, say, in which one merely saves the child. But if the gradability of norms was reducible to evaluative gradability, then it would follow that one should *more* ‹ save the child and enjoy the ice-cream › than just save the child. This however is counter-intuitive, as this norm seems extravagant. Although aggregation is permissible in some cases, we are reluctant

[523] Hansson 2001: 132-133.
[524] See §7.3.1.1. The Cases.
[525] See §7.3. Desiderative Aggregative Impermissibility.

to think that this is what the subject should do in this case. If this is correct, features of norms suggest that their gradability is not reducible to that of values.

There is a way out for the defender of the reduction of deontic strength to evaluative strength which is worth discussing briefly. This reply appeals to types of values or families of values. In the case mentioned, one could reply that moral values are more important than hedonic values in such a way that they silence hedonic values. If so, the hedonic value of a state of affairs should not be taken into consideration at all in one's value *calculus* as far as moral value is at stake. One might motivate this picture by thinking of moral requirements as norms that hold whatever the pleasure or displeasure resulting from meeting the norm. This will then account for the absence of the extravagant norm mentioned.

Let us assume that this picture of morality is correct, as it captures the privileged character of moral requirements and values. Appealing to families of normative entities would help the defender of the objector as far as cases of aggregative impermissibility concerned merely conflicts between types of values, like in the example mentioned. But aggregative impermissibility can apply to states of affairs instantiating the same type of value, as our hedonic examples of caprice revealed. It might be right to have (and desire to have) one ice-cream cone, but not right to have three of them as well as a piece of cake, although the latter state is intuitively hedonically better than the former (all other things being equal). If so, the appeal to types of value cannot be all there is to account for the absence of some norms and thus cannot help to rescue the axiological view of the strength of desire (via the corresponding view of the correctness conditions of desire). Indeed, if the degree of norms were reducible to that of values, the latter state should have priority over the former and should thus be desired more than the former. But this is precisely not so, despite the states compared belonging to the same family of values.

It appears that our account of the strength of norms acknowledges both the existence of gradability of norms and the distinction between the gradability of some entities that extends along a *continuum* and a distinct kind of gradability. Still, in order for it to constitute a promising answer to the objection, the kind of strength instantiated by desires should precisely be of the same type as the one I have claimed norms instantiate. To this issue I briefly now turn.

9.2.2. Desires and Priority Relations

It appears that priority relations constitute a promising way of describing the gradability involved in desire. Consider urges. As noted in the previous chapter, it is plausible that in feeling an urge, subjects represent a state as what urgently ought to be. Now, this constitutes a priority relation as well, one that is closely tied to a temporal ordering.[526] In a similar vein, turning to our example, it is natural to understand the fact that subjects should desire more to save the child than desire to enjoy ice-cream by appealing to priority relation holding between the two states of affairs desired and required to obtain. This does not prevent one from representing enjoying one's ice-cream as being right, although it is appropriate that one does not represent this state as having priority over the other. Again, this ranking is not reducible to representations of states of affairs as being more valuable. For one might as well represent that the aggregative state has more value, and rightly do so, and still not desire the aggregative state more than the relevant conjunct and rightly do so. This suggests that there is a symmetry between the strength of norms and that of desire. If this is the case, the deontic view not only provides an account of the gradability of desire, but also *prima facie* captures the specificity admitted by the strength of desire and maybe other conations. Although a lot more can be said in this respect, it appears that aspects of the deontic view can help us to motivate the account of the strength of desire the view invites us to adopt.[527]

9.3. Propositional Content

Another objection that comes to mind concerns the extent to which desires end up being, on the deontic view, overly sophisticated representations. At first glance, one might think that representing content as what ought to be is quite a complex phenomenon that requires certain conceptual capacities. But the problem is that creatures like cats, dogs and babies presumably do have desires, while intuitively lacking the mastering of concepts. If this is the case, the deontic picture is far too demanding: on this view, an important part of our attributions of desire turns out to be false in virtue of desires being conceptual representations.

Let us dramatize things further and elaborate on this objection with the following observation. One might emphasize that deontic operators necessarily take states of affairs under their scope. Indeed, what ought to be is necessarily the obtaining of a state of affairs –

[526] See p. 307.
[527] It is worth noting that Meinong's account of the strength of desires (Meinong 1917: 100-102) is similar in spirit to the one that is defended here.

neither objects nor properties, unless they are "parts" or constituents of a state of affairs. Now, by assuming that the mental format suiting states of affairs is propositional in form, and by assuming that propositional content involves conceptual content, it follows that the deontic view implies that desires necessarily are propositional attitudes involving conceptual content. Now this propositional format does not suit all the creatures that presumably have desires, which is unfortunate.

How are we to reply to this conundrum? For the sake of the argument, let us assume that the propositional format of desires does constitute a problem, i.e. that desires do not necessarily take propositional content, and that competing accounts of desire do not suffer from this problem[528]. Let me point out in passing that these assumptions are questionable. With these assumptions in mind, let us discuss each part of the objection.

As such, the first part of the objection needs to be motivated further. Indeed, why should representing content as what should obtain be more cognitively demanding than representing values or representing goals? One grain of truth behind the objection is that representing content as what ought to be might require the ability to master concepts, as in the case of deontic beliefs. If the deontic view equated desires with deontic beliefs, and if beliefs involve conceptual content, the objection would be warranted. But, as noted earlier, the deontic view does not conflate desires with such beliefs.[529]

Moreover, one of our formulations of the deontic view can be useful here as well[530]. Indeed, conceiving of desire as the attitude of requiring sounds less cognitively demanding than the previous formulation. It is plausible indeed to think that cats, dogs and babies require certain things to be the case. A similar observation applies to the description of desiring as "caring whether" some states of affairs obtain. If so, the objection relies on an unfortunate connotation of the initial formulation that has been avowed but which can be avoided.

These considerations are too quick to rebut the objection, however, since the second part of the objection precisely provides an answer to the challenge just raised. The crux of the

[528] Against the assumption that desires can have non-conceptual content, see Searle 1983: 30.
[529] See §9.1. Deontic beliefs.
[530] See §3.4.3. Reformulating the Deontic Mode View.

objection relies on the equation of representing states of affairs, on the hand, with the representation involving conceptual content, on the other, via propositional content. Now, although one might think that states of affairs, conceptual content and propositions go hand in hand, it is not clear that moving from representations of states of affairs to propositional and conceptual content is warranted.

Consider for instance the perceptual experience as of a cat being on a mat. A cat being on a mat is a state of affairs. Now, it is not clear that the perceptual experience of this state of affairs is necessarily conceptual. There is no reason why one could not simply see a cat being on a mat, i.e. have a perceptual experience as of a cat on a mat that is non-conceptual. One might for instance see a cat being on a mat without recognising it as a cat and thus not see *that* there is a cat on the mat. Still, one sees a cat, which besides happens to be on a mat. If this is correct, desires might still be about states of affairs, where this does not imply that they are conceptual attitudes, as non-conceptual attitudes can be about states of affairs.

One might however be sceptical about the analogy just drawn. For in perceiving cats, one might as well represent an object rather than a state. Nothing in the mode of perceiving requires the content of the representation to be a state of affairs. But the case of desire is distinct, since the deontic operator necessarily takes propositions under its scope. In reply to this objection, another analogy can help.

It is plausible to assume that memories have a particular mode and that this mode is a mode of pastness. In remembering something, one represents this thing *as past*. Consider now the past operator "it was the case that". This operator necessarily takes states of affairs expressible by propositions under its scope. For what was the case necessarily are states of affairs – neither objects nor properties, unless they are "parts" or constituents of a state of affairs. Still, this does not entail that memories are necessarily propositional, as it is plausible to think that episodic memories are non-propositional in format, contrary to propositional memories. Why should episodic memory not be about things despite instantiating the mode of pastness that is better expressible by an operator taking propositions as its content? And, to return to the previous observation, why should episodic memory prevent one from representing a *state of affairs*, like having been to Los Angeles, although in a non-conceptual way? If so, the fact that a feature is expressible by an operator that necessarily takes propositions under its scope does not imply that the attitude bearing an essential relation to this feature is propositional, even if it is assumed that it can be about states of affairs. If this is

right, although deontic operators are about propositions, it does not follow that the deontic view precludes the existence of desires with non-conceptual content in the same way that the propositional nature of the past operator does not prevent the existence of non-propositional memory.

One might reply that the analogy between memories and desires does not hold. Indeed, episodic memories are better understood as being non-propositional but also as not being states of affairs but rather objects or experiences. Now, as objects and experiences can be past (dinosaurs and visiting San Francisco in the Summer of 2013 are examples at hand), there might be a mode of pastness that turns the representation into a non-propositional one and which is restricted to objects and experiences. If what ought to be is restricted to states of affairs, the analogy presented does not hold.

The question is why such a restriction holds. Indeed, as soon as it has been assumed that, say, objects can be past and not the states of affairs of which the objects are constituents or "part", why we could not assume a similar thing for the ought-to-be? After all, some things might be said to be right or required in the same way as some things might be said to be present or past. This observation is not meant to support the view that objects can be right or required. It only points to the similarity between this possibility and the one according to which objects can be past. If so, the objection would be rebutted by denying one if its premises, namely the claim that the mode of rightness is necessarily to be understood with the help of the deontic operator taking states of affairs under its scope.

The appeal to observations about modes of intentionality can thus help us to acknowledge the thought that cats, dogs and babies might have desires as we do, as they might perceive and remember states of affairs like we do.

9.4. Functional Role

As stressed many times, the deontic view is revisionary and perhaps too revisionary to be true. One way to refine this complaint is to wonder whether the view acknowledges the standard functional role of desire, namely motivation.[531] The objection can be presented with the help of the following dilemma. Either the deontic view does not do justice to the functional role of desire or, if it does, it is uneconomical, given that the motivational view can

[531] See p. 59.

account for it in a more straightforward way. Either way, the deontic view suffers from a weakness. Is there a way out of this dilemma for the defender of the deontic view of desire? I think so.

Let us assume that the functional role of desire consists in motivation. Nothing prevents the deontic view from acknowledging such a role. Indeed, it is plausible that the representation of norms has the function of motivating subjects, since norms precisely do have a directive function. Moreover, since our picture implies that desires do motivate only if subjects are rational, there is no need to tie the very nature of desire to motivation in order for them to have the function of motivating subjects. Instead, it is plausible to assume that functions are determined by the way *rational* agents would behave. For instance, irrational subjects might fail to believe the truth, which does not prevent beliefs from having the function of tracking truths, as suggested by the behaviour of rational subjects.

Still, one might wonder what the advantage of the deontic view is over the motivational one in this respect, as suggested by the second branch of the dilemma. One might even suspect that, after all, the deontic view is nothing but another formulation of the motivational view.

In reply, I think that the following observation reveals a potential advantage of the deontic view over the motivational one – or at least the equal plausibility of both views – with respect to the motivational function of desire. This will motivate further the distinction between the two views.

Although the motivational view fits well the function of desire, it seems that it ties the nature of desire too closely with their function. Indeed, if the function of desire is to motivate subjects and if desires necessarily are motivating, the view implies that all desires are well-functioning. But this is counter-intuitive. Since the deontic view provides room for the motivational function of desire without relating the essence of desire to motivation, it provides room as well for malfunctioning desires, namely the ones had by irrational subjects, which is a virtue.

As a way out of this difficulty, the *aficionado* of the motivational approach might reply that the function of desire is to motivate to bring about right actions or actions leading to good states of affairs. As some desiring subjects are motivated to bring about what happens to be bad or wrong, their desires count as malfunctioning. Both views end up being on a par.

In reply to this picture, it appears that the deontic view might capture its grain of truth, if this picture indeed is true. A quick detour to the putative function of desire on the deontic view and on the standard way of determining the function of a representation will reveal why I think so.

Although this is speculative and at odds with the empirical way of determining the function of a type of representation, the deontic view invites us to think of the intrinsic function of desires as the representation of rightness. Now, given that desiring is a deontic attitude, this representation might as well have been selected in virtue of the fact that rational agents bring about what they represent as right and, if they are right, gain some benefit from this. After all, functions are standardly determined by the positive effects they bring about. If deontic attitudes are the basis of motivation, then they inherit its positive effects, i.e. its properly motivational function. In other words, it is not clear that the deontic view cannot make sense of the motivational function of desire as bringing about what is actually right for creatures, although it invites one to supplement this function by the function of representing rightness. Since several representations might lead to the same benefit, desires and motivations might partly share the same function, without one being conflated with the other.

To summarise, either the function of desire is to motivate *period* or, alternatively, it is to motivate to do the right or good things. If the former is true, the motivational view of desire faces a problem. If the latter is right, there is no advantage in adopting the motivational view of desire as opposed to the deontic one. Either the deontic view has an advantage over the motivational one or they are on a par. Either way, the deontic view is compatible with the motivational function of desire, however it is understood. One might be disappointed with the fact that the deontic view does not have an advantage over the motivational one on some interpretations of the function of desire. But this might be due to the fact that the function depends on the benefits that result from representations and that both motivations, deontic representations and presumably intentions might lead to the same benefits, namely doing the right thing. The motivational function of desire is thus secured by the very spirit of the view and the possibility that the view does so without a clear advantage over the motivational alternative has been explained with the help of an extra assumption that, I think, is reasonable.

I have now presented four objections that constitute worries that may come to mind when being presented with the deontic view independently of the very dialectic of the present dissertation. But the argumentation is questionable as well and in at least two respects. The first concerns the assumption that the deontic view fits the explanatory role of desire and the second is the leading intuition that norms are grounded in values. As these are important steps in drawing the wanted conclusion, let me therefore conclude this chapter by saying a word about each.

9.5. Desiderative Explanation

The deontic view has been partly motivated by the thought that standard views of desire cannot account for the explanatory relations instantiated by desire. But what if this objection backfires? One might think that at least one of the following sentences makes sense:

> S desires that p *because* S requires that p/S represent p as what ought to be/S cares whether p obtains.
>
> S requires that p/S represents p as what ought to be/S cares whether p obtain *because* S desires that p.

As our objections on explanation relied on our intuitions that some sentences seem felicitous and informative, one might as well have the intuition that the previous sentences are on a par. But if desires can be explained by deontic attitudes (or the other way around), then no progress will have been made with regard to the *desideratum* on explanation. And as the *desideratum* on explanation played a crucial role in the dialectic of this dissertation, one of the major lines of argument would be undermined. Is there a satisfactory answer to this challenge?

Observe first that, on the deontic view, the sentences mentioned constitute pseudo-explanations, provided that explanatory relations are irreflexive. And it is worth noting that, to my ears at least, these sentences do not sound as felicitous as the sentences mentioned in earlier objections and that motivated the objections on explanation. But this might just be a clash of intuitions.

In order to avoid a sterile battle of this kind, recall that our objections on explanation have been motivated further and did not rely exclusively on my intuitions. Indeed, I previously put forward some motivations in favour of similar explanatory relations holding between values,

norms and motives that did provide some support in favour of our initial intuition.[532] In order for the same objection against the deontic view to be on a par with the ones I have put forward, some further motivation needs to be presented, as was done when we doubted that the standard views accounted for the explanatory relations of desire. But it is not clear what this motivation could be. In order to provide the required motivation, the objector should at least point to some differences between desires and deontic attitudes or between the desirable and the ought-to-be. But what are they?

As far as desires and deontic attitudes are concerned, it has been argued that desiring that p and deontic attitudes share the same content, the same direction of fit in all the relevant respects, the same relation with the belief that p, the same correctness conditions and the same type of gradability. This contrasts with the objections mentioned earlier, since these were motivated by some distinctions between desires and the representation they allegedly constitute. This then provides some ground to doubt that the views satisfy the requirement on explanation. Since the considerations mentioned are crucial for understanding the intentionality of desire, and in the absence of further motivation, the burden of proof lies on our objector.

What about the relation between the desirable and what ought to be? Is there a relevant distinction here? On the face of it, both features are distinct from the good and provide a basis for what ought to be done. This contrasts with what has been said about the relation between the desirable, on the one hand, and the good and what ought to be done, on the other. I cannot see why desirability could not be reduced to what ought to be. Both seem to take the same content, namely states of affairs. And what is a case for a state of affairs that is desirable but should not in some sense obtain? I cannot think of a single case of this sort. This again contrasts with what has been said about other normative properties. Finally, in the absence of a distinction between the two, why should desirable states of affairs be explained by states that ought to be or the other way around? Although these remarks rely on my incapacity to see a difference where there might actually be one, this suffices to demonstrate that our objection did not rely on a mere intuition and provides some directions for a more refined objection on our view. But so far, I do not see any reason to doubt that the deontic view suffers from the same problem than alternative views as far as explanation is concerned.

[532] See §5.1.1. Values, Ought-to-be and Motives – Explanatory Consonance.

9.6. Values and Norms

A last line of objection concerns the explanatory relations of desire as well. Recall that the crux of our picture relied on the thought that deontic attitudes, i.e. desires, are grounded by evaluative ones and ground motivational ones *in virtue of* norms being grounded in values and grounding motives.[533] Now, these relations of dependence between norms and values are questionable. Why should norms depend on values rather than the other way around? This is all the more questionable, as the stance taken on this issue goes against a long-standing tradition, Kantian in spirit, according to which norms are more fundamental than values.[534] More precisely, this anti-Kantianism is worrisome in at least two respects.

First, assuming that tenants of Kantianism are right on this issue and assuming further that desires are deontic attitudes implies that evaluative attitudes are explained by desires, rather than the other way around. Since we wanted to account for the thought that desires are explicable by evaluative states, and given the anti-symmetry of explanatory relations, the deontic view will be at pains to make sense of this explanatory relation.

Moreover, even if one does not adopt a Kantian stance on this issue, it remains problematic that our view of desire relies on such a controversial meta-ethical issue. Indeed, it seems that the defender of the deontic view cannot avoid taking a non-Kantian stance, as the main motivations for the deontic view consist in such a stance about this meta-ethical issue.

If this is the case, the main line of argument has been threatened again and our main conclusion is a *non sequitur*.

In response to this challenge, I confess that the deontic view implies a particular view about the relation values bear to norms. Still, I do not think that this is as problematic as one might think, for the following reasons.

Let us assume, for the sake of the argument, that Kantianism is right, i.e. values depend on norms. Observe that the competing views of desire seem to have an advantage over the deontic view, as they can acknowledge both the dependence of values on norms and the dependence of desire on evaluations. For, explaining one type of evaluation by appealing to another, as does the defender of the axiological view, or explaining motivations by

[533] See §5.1. Deontic Desiderative Consonance.
[534] See Ogien & Tappolet 2009 for more details here, in particular the thought that the non-Kantian stance on this issue can be equated with consequentialism.

evaluations, as favoured by the friend of the motivational view, are compatible with values being dependent on norms. This however is not the full story. Indeed, if it is assumed that values depend on norms and that representations bearing an essential relation to these properties inherit the relations instantiated by them, it appears that the evaluation that is the ground of desire is in turn grounded on a representation of norms. If the desirable depends on the good and if the good depends on norms, then desiring depends on evaluating which in turn depends on a deontic representation. But what is this deontic representation? The standard views of desire do not provide a natural answer to this question. Moreover, they are constrained to say that this representation of norm is neither a desire nor an evaluation, on pain of the explanation becoming vacuous. By contrast, the deontic view seems to have an advantage in this respect. At the cost of denying Kantianism, it can account for the thought that desires depend on evaluations and that is the end of the story, as values are not grounded in further normative entities. Although compatible with Kantianism, standard views of desire lead to a mysterious representation that is better be explained. This is worrisome.

Moreover, independently on the truth or falsity of Kantianism, it is not clear that competing accounts are immune to similar stances on meta-ethical relations.

It is worth noting that the defender of the motivational view will inherit the same problem, given the deontic nature of motives. It can thus acknowledge the thought that desires, i.e. motivations, depend on evaluations, only by denying Kantianism. Both views are thus on a par. By contrast, one might think that the axiological view has an advantage over the alternative views in this respect, as it is the only view examined that does not imply a claim about the relation between the deontic and the evaluative. Still, on the axiological view, some claim about the relations some values bear to others is assumed to be true, as one type of value, namely the desirable, will be grounded in another. It appears thus that some meta-ethical commitments are unavoidable to make sense in detail of the explanatory relations of desire. If it is a vice to commit oneself to any meta-ethical commitment, then any view examined is guilty.

Finally, in case one is not convinced by the previous observations, it is worth reminding the reader that our analysis of caprice has provided us with a reason to doubt Kantianism. Although some stance is taken, and despite this anti-Kantian stance being questionable, some motivation in its favour has been provided. This version of the objection collapses then into

objections already addressed in the course of our claim that some states of affairs are good, despite not being required. The burden of proof is thus on our Kantian objector.

Although a lot more should be said to completely rebut the challenges mentioned, and other worries the deontic view might suffer from, I hope that the observations provided are sufficient to demonstrate the potential of the deontic view and to shift the burden of proof onto the sceptics of the view. Since the modest aim of this dissertation was to reveal the virtues of the deontic view, I believe that the challenge has been met, these objections notwithstanding. Let me close this investigation by widening the scope of our inquiry in addressing some conclusions that can be drawn from our exploration.

Conclusions

"Our children are our livers walking on the ground."
Arabic poem

Time has now come to draw some conclusions. In these concluding pages, I first summarise the main claims of this dissertation before tackling the issue of their relevance for further philosophical debates. I hope that these observations will demonstrate the potential of the deontic view of desire and its significance for philosophical issues other than the ones addressed so far.

10.1. Summary

In this work, I have tried to motivate the thought that there is room for an alternative view of the intentionality of desire and that the deontic view of desire constitutes this promising alternative. Indeed, standard views of desire face the problems of explaining the direction of fit of desire and of accommodating the death of desire principle and the explanatory relations instantiated by desire. I have argued that, by contrast, the deontic view of desire, as far as it appeals to the deontic mode of desiring, can make sense of the three crucial *desiderata* in virtue of norms of the ought-to-be sharing the relevant properties. In a nutshell, I have claimed that the boundaries of the conceptual space occupied by deontic attitudes elegantly fit those of desiring.

This is not to say that standard views of desire do not capture anything about desire. Quite the contrary, if the deontic view is correct the standard views of desire emphasize what appear to be the grounding relations instantiated by desire. In this respect, the deontic view can secure the grain of truth of the standard views of the intentionality of desire. Indeed, it can make sense of the intuition that desires involve positive evaluation by assuming that desires are necessarily grounded in positive evaluations, despite not consisting in them. Second, it acknowledges the strong link desires bear to motivation by counting desire as the ground for motivation.

Finally, I have used the deontic view to approach the puzzles of the normativity and typology of desires, before defending it against general objections. In all these respects, it appeared that the deontic view can provide promising answers to these challenges, although I have restricted myself to present some gestures that should be developed in more details.

But there is more. The deontic view indeed can help us to approach important further philosophical debates that have not been touched – or not in detail – in this dissertation. In what follows, I shall sketch some directions for future research inspired by the deontic view. Because a lot more can be said, these pages are merely meant to provide general insights without entering into the subtleties that are necessary to address these issues more systematically. But hopefully these hasty observations will reveal the relevance of the deontic view with regard to more general issues and thus why it matters.

10.2. Why the Deontic View Matters

Since the deontic view is a view about desires that relies on a normative feature, at least three *loci* of relevance can be distinguished. The first concerns the philosophy of desire proper. The second extends to the philosophy of mind more generally. The last, by contrast, addresses practical rather than theoretical issues. Let us generalise the scope of relevance progressively by beginning with issues revolving around desire proper.

10.2.1. The Deontic View and Aspects of Desires

I shall restrict myself to four issues raised by the philosophy of desire and that have not been approached yet in this dissertation. They concern the phenomenology of desire, conditional desires, self-knowledge of one's desires and perverted desires.

Phenomenology

A first issue, rarely discussed in the contemporary literature, concerns the phenomenal character or, for short, the phenomenology of desiring. At least some desires indeed go with a particular phenomenal character.[535] There is sometimes something it feels like to undergo a desire rather than, say, to be amused or to wonder about something. But what is this special quality? At least two issues should be distinguished here. Both will be approached with the help of the deontic view.

A first puzzle concerns the description of the phenomenal tone of desiring. Several candidates suggest themselves. One might conceive of the phenomenal character of desire as essentially

[535] This might be restricted to occurrent and strong desires, but I will not argue for this restriction here. The existence of the phenomenology of desire has been put into doubt in virtue of the direction of fit of desire, as in Hulse, Read & Schroeder 2004, or in virtue of the difference in the phenomenal character of distinct types of desires, as in Stampe 1987: 360 (note 20).

involving the phenomenology of action readiness.[536] Alternatively, it can be captured by what it feels like to evaluate states of affairs.[537] Another long-standing tradition captures it by the phenomenology of lacks or absences[538]. Without entering into the details, we can note that these descriptions do not come without problems. For, *prima facie* at least, such descriptions might equally fit the phenomenal character of other types of mental states (for instance, respectively, intentions/decisions, evaluative states and perceptions of absence). If so, they do not seem to provide room for a *sui generis* phenomenal character of desire. Now, this is problematic, given that we are very good at recognising the special tone of desiring in contrast with these other mental phenomena, which suggests that the phenomenal character of desire is proper to them. By contrast, the deontic view suggests a new candidate for the phenomenal character of desire. On this view, to desire a state of affairs feels like requiring it. In other words, the view is committed to the existence of "deontic feelings" of some sort, which are supposed to capture the way desiring feels like. Now, *prima facie*, it does not seem that other types of mental states instantiate this phenomenal tone. At least this is so by assuming that the phenomenal character that is generic to some type of representation goes hand in hand with the mode of the representation and by assuming further that no other mental representation instantiates this deontic mode. Although I confess that no conclusive argument has been provided here, this observation is sufficient to provide directions for future research as far as this phenomenological task is concerned.

On top of providing a description of the desiderative tone, one implication concerning a second aspect of the phenomenology of desires can be drawn from the deontic view.

This issue is the existence or inexistence of valence in desire. Some mental states, for instance emotions, seem to have a valence in the sense of being essentially and intrinsically either positive or negative (or maybe both)[539]. Now, this seems to go hand in hand with their phenomenal character. Consequently, if valence is relevant for the phenomenal character and if the deontic view bears an implication to the existence or inexistence of valence of desire, it will shed light on this aspect of the phenomenology of desire. Now, the extent to which the deontic view does so depends of course on the existence or inexistence of valence in the case

[536] See for instance Dancy 2000: 89 and Strawson 2010: 286.
[537] See Friedrich 2012 for instance.
[538] See Silverman 2000 for the Lacanian and existential views of desire as experiences of absence.
[539] I shall ignore complications raised by the case of surprise. On the valence of emotions, see Teroni 2011; on mixed feelings, see Massin 2011.

of desire. The questions then are the following. Does desiring have a valence? And what is the implication of the deontic view in this respect?

At first glance, one might think that desires involve valence on the ground that they are either positive or negative, i.e. have a polarity, and assuming that polarity somehow goes with valence. Since desiring is to be distinguished from its negative counterpart, namely aversion, one would expect positive desires to have an intrinsic positive valence and the reverse for aversion. If so, desires are analogous to emotions in this respect.[540]

This being said, there are reasons to doubt this picture. From a phenomenological perspective, it is not clear that desiring intrinsically feels good like positive emotions do (say, being pleased). This can further be motivated by the thought that intrinsically positive experiences would be part of what one would rationally think to be intrinsically good. Now, imagine that one is asked to list all the intrinsically positive things there are. It is plausible that one would mention pleasure and all positive emotions. But would desiring figure in the list? This is not straightforward. This is compatible with the existence of an intrinsic valence of desire, namely a negative one, as suggested by some descriptions of the phenomenal character of desire[541]. This reply however is dubious, since it is implausible that *all* desires that have a phenomenal character do involve such negative feelings. My desire to take a bath might involve a calm and serene phenomenal character that it not tainted by any negative feeling. Moreover, conceiving of the phenomenal character of desire as intrinsically negative can hardly distinguish the phenomenal character of positive desire from that of aversion, as both would then feel negative. Finally, even if it is assumed that some distinction between the phenomenology of desire and that of aversion can be captured by this proposal, the analogy between desires and emotions would be significantly threatened.

If this is correct, it appears that desires do not involve *intrinsic* valence, contrary to emotions. If they involve a valence, the valence will be extrinsic and dependent on other features than the mere desire itself, in contrast to emotions. If so, the right phenomenological description of desiring should acknowledge this fact.

Going back to the deontic view, I believe that the phenomenological description that it implies meets this constraint. For nothing in the experience of requiring that p, although

[540] This is not to say that positive attitudes cannot feel negative. If they do, this is due to extrinsic features of the attitude, for instance when the subject evaluates the attitude negatively.
[541] See again the conception of desire as experience of absence, p. 296.

being positive in polarity, requires the state to be positive in valence in the sense mentioned, i.e. to feel good. Requiring might feel good, but might as well feel bad, depending on further elements, without having particular phenomenal valence in itself.

Moreover, the deontic view allows the possibility of capturing the valence of desire by appealing to extrinsic features, for instance the valence of the ground of the desire, the presence or absence of beliefs that the state is likely to obtain, and the subjective evaluation of the state desired. Let us consider an example. According to the deontic view, desiring to go to Paris feels neither positive nor negative in itself. Now, the experience might feel positive were it, for instance, based on a positive evaluation of Paris that would infuse the desire with its positive valence, all things being equal. But the same desire might as well feel negative were it accompanied by the belief that there are few chances that the desire be satisfied or when the fear that Paris might be boring is co-existent with the desire and evaluation. Similarly, one might be ashamed about such a desire, in which case the phenomenal character will partly be negative, and so on and so forth. Since these aspects of the phenomenology of desire constitute features that are naturally combined with deontic attitudes or requests, namely their basis, the beliefs about likelihood of their satisfaction, and the evaluation of the mental state, I believe that the deontic view can account for valence in a promising way. This thought should of course be motivated further, but it suffices to show the heuristic value of the deontic picture in this respect.

Conditional Desires

In a recent article, McDaniel and Bradley have put forward a revisionary view of desire in order to provide a solution to the puzzle of conditional desires[542]. In this section, I shall present the puzzle and the revisionary view defended by the authors, before suggesting a new solution to the puzzle with the help of the deontic view.

Consider the following desire. Sam wants to have a drink later (say, having a drink at t), as long as he will not be too tired at t and provided thus that he will, at t, desire to have a drink. This desire, in contrast to others, is not unconditional, because it is conditioned on its own persistence. Other desires are conditional as well. For instance, instrumental desires depend on non-instrumental ones. But instrumental desires are not conditioned on their own persistence, unlike the example mentioned. The focus of McDaniel & Bradley is to provide

[542] McDaniel & Bradley 2008.

an account of desires that are conditioned on their own persistence, or for short "conditional desires".

As the authors point out, one straightforward way of understanding conditional desires consists in conceiving of them as attitudes towards a conditional.[543] The desire to have a drink at t if one still desires, at t, to have a drink would have the following content: $D(q \rightarrow p)$, where p refers to having a drink and q to the desire to have a drink. As intuitive as it seems, the authors argue that this proposal is wrong. Indeed, recall that it is sufficient for material conditionals to be true that their antecedent be false. This implies that ¬q constitutes a condition in which the conditional desire is satisfied. This however is counter-intuitive. For why would the desire for having a drink if one still desires to do so be satisfied when one ceases to desire to have a drink at the relevant time? Rather, the authors argue that conditional desires are neither satisfied nor frustrated in such situations. This speaks against what they call the received wisdom, as it is natural to think that any desire is either satisfied or frustrated. They think however that this is false, i.e. there are desires that are neither satisfied nor frustrated. They write:

> *Some desires are neither satisfied nor frustrated*. Suppose B now desires to have a beer later conditional on his wanting one later, but when later comes, B does not desire a beer. Suppose he does not get the beer. Surely it is just wrong to say that his previous desire has been frustrated. Suppose he does get the beer. Surely it is just wrong to say that his previous desire has been satisfied.[544]

They conclude that any account of conditional desires appealing to conditional content, be it a material conditional or a subjunctive one, is doomed to fail.[545] The reason is that conditional content cannot acknowledge the thought that conditional desires can be neither frustrated nor satisfied.

Taking seriously the possibility of desires that are neither satisfied nor frustrated, the authors account for conditional desires as follows. A conditional desire is *cancelled* if, and only if, its condition does not obtain.[546] By "cancellation", they do not mean that the desire ceases to exist. Rather, they mean that the desire can neither be satisfied nor frustrated. On this ground, the authors suggest to conceive of conditional desire as a three-place relation involving (1) a

[543] Idem: 269-272.
[544] Idem: 271.
[545] Idem: 270-1.
[546] Idem: 274-5.

person, (2) an object, and (3) a condition.[547] They provide thus "a new story about conditional desires" that goes for any type of conditional desire, the main claims being the following:[548]

> S desires that p given q is *satisfied* if and only if p and q are true.
>
> S desires that p given q is *frustrated* if and only if p is not true and q is true.
>
> S desires that p given q is *cancelled*, i.e. neither satisfied nor frustrated, if and only if q is not true.

Part of their picture however consists in extending this account of conditional desires to the analysis of *any* desire, even unconditional ones. These are what I take to be the main lines of McDaniel & Bradley's revisionary picture.

It is far from the scope of this section to discuss this proposal in detail. In particular, I shall assume that desires can be cancelled, i.e. neither satisfied nor frustrated, and approach the case of conditional desires from the perspective of the deontic view. It will appear that the deontic view can account for conditional desires, and even allow for the existence of cancelled desires, without adopting the revisionary view of desire put forward by the authors.

Let us approach the aforementioned example of a cancelled conditional desire from the perspective of the standard views of desires. Let us assume that a subject did desire to have a drink later if she still desires to do so, but at the relevant time does not desire to have a drink because, say, she is tired. The evaluative and the motivational view can hardly account for the absence of such a desire.

Firstly, the axiological view implies that the subject ceases to have the desire because she represents having a drink as being negative in value at the relevant time of the absence of the desire. But it is still possible that the subject positively evaluates having a drink, despite not desiring a drink. This might not be so in any circumstances; for instance, if the subject is exhausted, having a drink might be represented as being unpleasant. But there is room for ceasing to have the desire despite one representing having a drink as good, for instance if one

[547] Idem: 276-7.
[548] Idem: 277.

is slightly tired and therefore does not desires to have a drink despite one being aware that having a drink would be nice.[549]

Secondly, the absence of the desire to have a drink is also compatible with the subject being disposed to act in such a way that she has a drink given the conditional desire he had. It is true that given that the subject does not desire to have a drink, she is not motivated to have a drink. Still, assuming that she desires to have a drink if she desires to, she is in a sense still disposed to have a drink. For if she has some coffee, she would not feel tired anymore and as a result would desire to have a drink and thus be disposed to do so. Although the disposition might be masked, there is no reason to think that it is absent. For masked dispositions are distinct from absent ones. If desires were dispositions to act, the absence of the desire to have a drink at t would imply that the subject is not disposed in any way to have a drink, but this misses the fact that the subject would desire so were the situation be different.

Prima facie, standard views of desire thus do not clearly fare well with the case described. By contrast, the deontic view can account for the case in all its relevant descriptions. On this view, the absence of desiring a drink, at t, amounts to the subject not taking having a drink as right, at the time t. This implies neither that the subject does not represent this state as being good nor that she is not disposed in some sense to bring it about in virtue of the conditional desire she has (for instance, if she does not feel tired, then she will bring about this state). The deontic view can thus provide an intuitive description of the case. But where does that leave us with conditional desires in general?

The reason for the absence of the desire in the previous example relies on the desire being conditional. Now, if the previous observations about standard views are correct, the standard views cannot account for the absence of such a desire. For the condition of its absence is not met, provided that the subject might positively evaluate that p or be disposed to act in favour of p. By contrast, the deontic view can account for conditional desires in a way that explains the absence of the desire. For, on this view, a conditional desire is a desire for p conditioned on representing p as right. Now, in the example mentioned, it is plausible that the subject does not represent p as right and thus does not desire that p.

This description can be further motivated by the existence of conditional norms.[550] Norms indeed can be such that one is required to do a particular action only if one is required to do

[549] This case is compatible with the subject representing having a drink as being good all things being considered. For this, I have claimed, is compatible with not having the corresponding desire.

some other action. For instance, one ought to drive on the left in England only if one ought to drive correctly. Were it right on some occasion to drive incorrectly, then the former norm will not hold. Again, the conditional norm will not be in place unless its antecedent holds. In case the antecedent does not hold, the consequent will not hold either. Since the antecedent norm might be defeated, the consequent norm will be defeated as well. Now, there is no reason to think that similar stories do not apply with norms about the same content unless with regard to time, as in the example of conditional desire at stake. Consider that one ought to drive on the left at t1, where this captures the content of the norm. Now, suppose that at t1, one is in Paris. It is not the case at t1 that one ought to drive on the left, where this is a tenseless norm. Therefore it is not the case that one ought to drive on the left at t1 either. The reason again is that the tenseless norm does not apply at some times, which precludes the tensed norm to hold at the relevant time. Appealing to conditional norms is thus a way to account for conditional desires. In fact, McDaniel & Bradley themselves suggest an analogy between conditional desires and conditional orders which shares the spirit of the present proposal.

Finally, what is the implication of our proposal with regard to the cancellation of conditional desires or the possibility of desires being neither frustrated nor satisfied? Consider that one ought to F only if one ought to G. Consider then that it is not the case that one ought to G. Is the former norm satisfied or not? I agree that it is neither satisfied nor frustrated. This however does not require us to conceive of norms as a three-place relation. Indeed, there is a straightforward explanation why such a norm is cancelled, i.e. its condition does not hold and thus the norm itself does not hold either. In other words, the absence of the condition implies that the norm is not in place and thus cannot possibly be satisfied or frustrated.

This proposal does not entail that the norm is about a conditional of the form: $O(OG \rightarrow F)$. In that case, no progress would have been made. Moreover, one way to comply with this conditional norm is to make its antecedent obtain and then satisfy the consequent. For instance, one might act in such a way that one ought to drive correctly in order to drive on the left side on the street. This however does not capture the spirit of the norm, which is about driving on the left, were some further condition to obtain. This suggests that the conditional form of the conditional norm, if anything, would be the following: $O(\neg(O\neg F) \rightarrow F)$, to be read as it ought to be that one F-s if it is not the case that one ought not to F. This norm

[550] On conditional requirements and norms, see Broome 2007, Jackson 1985.

however is trivial and invites us to think of the antecedent as a necessary condition of the existence of the norm, rather than as the antecedent of a conditional norm.

This story is similar in spirit to the explanation of McDaniel & Bradley, but nothing in it requires giving up received wisdom about the satisfaction conditions of norms and desires, nor thinking of norms and desires as three-place relations. If this is correct, conditional desires might inherit the feature described, namely their ontological dependence, from conditional norms, without adopting any revisionary picture about satisfaction conditions of desire. Consequently, the deontic view can account for the existence of conditional desires by sharing part of the moral of McDaniel & Bradley without implying the controversial picture of desire they are happy to embrace.

Note finally that if one is not convinced by the account suggested, there is a troubling symmetry between conditional desires and conditional norms, which suggests that the deontic view can offer a fruitful contribution to this debate.

Self-Knowledge of Desire

An emerging issue surrounding desires concerns the self-knowledge or more generally the self-attribution of desire.[551] Although self-knowledge of one's beliefs has been extensively discussed, few accounts have been extended to the case of desire. This section will not address the relevant literature in detail. Rather, I shall assume one general view of self-knowledge of one's attitude, namely the so-called "transparent view" (more shortly). With this view in mind, a deontic rule for knowing one's desire will be proposed and contrasted with Byrne's rule for self-knowledge of one's desire that fits well the standard accounts of desire.[552] But first a little detour on the so-called transparent accounts of self-knowledge is required.

As argued by Evans and others, knowing one's belief can be achieved without looking inwards or paying attention to one's mental states.[553] Indeed, it is sufficient for the subject to ask herself whether p obtains in the mind-independent world in order to know whether she believes that p.[554] As Evans puts it,

[551] See Byrne *forthcoming*, Fernandez 2007, Ashwell 2013, among others.
[552] Byrne *forthcoming*.
[553] See Evans 1982.
[554] I shall ignore problems surrounding time here, since nothing here relies on those issues.

> "in making a self-ascription of belief, one's eyes are, so to speak, or occasionally literally, directed outward — upon the world."[555]

If so, one might adopt the following rule to acquire knowledge about one's beliefs:

> *Belief* – If one is tempted to answer that p after wondering whether p obtains, then one knows that one believes that p.[556]

Assuming that the gist of this picture is right and in order to provide an economical account of self-knowledge, gaining knowledge about other types of mental states of one's own, including desire, should be gained along similar procedures, i.e. by looking outwards rather than inwards.[557]

In a recent article, Alex Byrne aims at providing an account of self-knowledge of desire that mirrors the one of belief just mentioned. The rule he suggested can be formulated as follows:

> *Desire Standard* – If one is tempted to answer that F is a desirable option after wondering what the desirable option is in some situation, then one knows that one desires that F.[558]

Byrne however addresses an objection to this account, namely the case of accidie. For one might believe that an option is desirable, still not desire it. In that case, the aforementioned rule will mislead one into self-ascribing a desire that one does not actually have.[559] Let us assume that the account provided suffers from this problem. Still, contrary to Byrne, I think that a similar objection can be run against any Evansian account of self-knowledge and that it thus does not constitute a fatal objection. Indeed, in wondering whether p, one might as well come to the conclusion that p, but out of self-deception, one might still not believe that p. This suggests that, for the rule to be successful, subjects should be rational. This condition applies to the rule of self-knowledge of one's desires as well as of one's beliefs. I thus do not think that accidie is a problem for Byrne's account. So let us ignore this refinement.

Despite this, Byrne's account is nonetheless problematic, at least as far as desirable means good. Indeed, although one might not believe that p after having faced the conclusion that p, it is still the case that one *should* have believed so and thus formed the belief that one

[555] Evans 1982: 225.
[556] See Byrne *forthcoming* for a similar proposal.
[557] Idem.
[558] See Byrne *forthcoming*: 16. Since the rule relies on options for actions, I assume that this account relies on the motivational picture of desire. This is why I deem it to be the standard one.
[559] See Byrne *forthcoming*: 19-20 for a reply to this objection.

believes so. This however is not so for the rule of desire mentioned. Indeed, one might as well conclude that p is a good option, still not desire that p, and rightly do so. As mentioned in a previous chapter, desiring what one deems to be good and merely good (rather than right) might constitute a case of caprice and thus be inappropriate. If the evaluation of an option is not sufficient for the option to be worth desiring, the rule relying on the evaluation of options will not be sufficient for the self-ascription of desire either.

The deontic view elegantly provides a way out of this difficulty, while being similar in spirit to the transparent approach. The rule for self-knowledge of one's desire relies on deontic rather than evaluative states of affairs.

> *Desire Deontic* – If one is tempted to answer that p is right after wondering what is right, one knows that one desires that p.

Again, for the rule to be successful, one should be rational and thus not only believe that p is right after having faced the verdict of the rightness of p, but also desire that p. This, as mentioned, is not a problem that is specific to the deontic rule.

Finally, let me compare this rule with the rule that is implied by the motivational view of desire. After all, this might be what Byrne had in mind. On the motivational view, subjects can self-ascribe desires for states of affairs by wondering whether the state of affairs p ought to be done.

> *Desire Motivational* – If one is tempted to answer that p ought to be done after wondering which states of affairs ought to be done, one knows that one desires that p.

With the same proviso as the one mentioned earlier, namely that the subject must be rational, this rule is a promising way of knowing one's desire. However, given what has been said on the relation between desire and motivation in this dissertation, it might be that the task is accomplished through an indirect route. This rule indeed justifies one to attribute a motivation. And if motivations depend on desires, then it justifies one to attribute a desire as well. But for this reason it is not clear that it constitutes the analogue of the aforementioned rule for belief. Rather, the analogue of this case concerning belief might be the rule that justifies one to attribute knowledge that p rather than the mere belief that p. Whatever this rule, if such a rule exists, it will *eo ipso* also constitute a method for the self-ascription of beliefs, provided that knowing p requires believing that p, among other things. If this is

correct, the deontic rule has a structural advantage over the motivational one, despite both rules being equally effective in accounting for the knowledge of one's desire.

Sexual Perversion

A last issue concerning desire proper that is worth approaching from the deontic perspective is the case of perverted desires. For the sake of simplicity, let us focus on sexually perverted desires. Among them figure desires that are the manifestation of paedophilia, fetishism (desire to engage in sexual activity with inanimate objects), partialism (desire about sexual activity involving only one part of the body), voyeurism and exhibitionism, among others. Although the issue of sexual perversion and hence of sexual perverted desires has been discussed from several perspectives, to my knowledge, it has not been approached by paying attention to accounts of desire. Roughly and simplifying things, the main accounts of sexual perversion to be found in the contemporary literature either are biologically inspired or rely on criteria for a full inter-subjective sexual activity.[560] These accounts will not be the object of the present discussion, since they do not rely on particular views of desire.[561] This is surprising as it is plausible that views of desire will provide distinct approaches to this issue.

In order to present the deontic perspective on sexual perversion, several assumptions should be made. First, I shall assume that an account of sexual perversion can be offered, although this might be no trivial task[562]. Second, I shall restrict myself to uncontroversial cases of perversion and ignore controversial ones (like masturbation for instance[563]). Third, I shall assume that sexual perversion is not necessarily a moral issue. Indeed, although some of the sexual perversions are immoral (e.g. paedophilia), not all of them seem to be so. For instance, fetishism does not necessarily involve any subject's suffering and therefore does not seem to be immoral. Fourth, and finally, I shall assume that a necessary condition for a desire to qualify as sexual is that the desire is for sexual feelings (in particular, sexual pleasure). With those assumptions in mind, the question is: how are we to account for the perverse character of sexually perverted desires? Let us examine how each account of desire will approach this issue.

[560] See in this respect Nagel 1969, Solomon 1975, Scruton 2006.
[561] See Priest 1997 for a presentation and critic of this literature.
[562] Against this assumption, see Priest's scepticism (1997).
[563] See Scruton 2006 for an account of masturbation as a perversion.

Consider the axiological view. If the axiological view of desire is correct, sexually perverted desires should be about states of affairs that are negative in value. Let us assume that the relevant value is the value of the sexual (either the sexy or the sexually pleasant). Is this illuminating? It is clear that in some cases of sexual perversion (for instance, in paedophiliac desires), the desire is about what does not instantiate sexual value. But this is not clearly so for all sexually perverted desires. Consider partialism for instance. The part of the body that is the object of the sexual desire might as well count as sexy and sexual activities with this part might as well be sexually pleasant. Why should that then count as a sexual perversion? Likewise, consider voyeurism. Voyeurism might be considered as immoral in virtue of the victim not consenting to being seen in this way by the voyeur. But consider voyeurism with consenting "victims". A subject that only sexually desires to see people having sexual activity intuitively counts as sexually perverted, even if the "victims" are consenting. But in that specific case the object of the sexual desire might instantiate the value of the sexy and sexual pleasure with this object might be appropriate. If so, why would such a desire constitute a perversion? The defender of the axiological view might appeal to the thought that such sexual pleasures, though existing and about what is somehow sexy, are not of the right kind. I agree. Still, as far as value *calculus* is concerned, our question remains unanswered, since the value of the state seems to be positive in nature.

Consider now the motivational view of desire. On this view, a sexual desire is perverted if the subject should not bring about the desired state of affairs. Is this correct? Although it is natural to think that states of affairs involving sexual perversion should not be brought about, it still remains to know in virtue of which property such states of affairs should be avoided. Given what has been said above, appealing to the value of the sexy and of sexual pleasure will not help here. The account, although likely to be true, does not say much.

Consider finally the deontic view of desire. On this view, a sexual desire is perverted if the subject desires a state of affairs that is not sexually right. Whatever the details of the picture, there is an intuitive sense in which the states of affairs desired by a sexual perversion are not sexually right. For instance, one might desire objects that cannot instantiate the value of the sexy, in which case one is victim of a category error. Alternatively, one might as well desire what is actually sexy though in the wrong way, for instance in focusing on one aspect of sexual pleasure, while complete sexual feelings are wider than the relevant aspect. These, along with others, will constitute ways in which one can desire what is sexually wrong.

In addition to its intuitive appeal, it is worth emphasizing that the picture does not suffer from the problems of the standard ones. For it does neither entail that the state of affairs desired is not sexually pleasant or good, while it entails that the subject should not bring about such a wrong state of affairs. In other words, appealing to the right seems to provide us with all we need in order to understand sexual perversion. Although a lot more can be said, in particular in fleshing out the faces of sexual rightness, I believe that the deontic account provides a plausible direction for future research in this respect as well. If the explanation of sexual perversion can be generalised to other types of perversion (e.g. food perversion), the deontic view might help to us approach the general issue of perversion.

After having sketched puzzles concerning the philosophy of desire proper, let us explore more general issues in philosophy of mind that can be approached from the deontic perspective. Since those are more general issues, the presentation will be more elusive.

10.2.2. The Deontic View and the Mind

Desires bear important relations to other mental phenomena. If the present account of desire is on the right track, it should help to better understand these relations. Moreover, by relying on modes, the present work bears important implications on general features of the mental. This section addresses both issues. First, I present the account of the relationship desires bear with emotions that is favoured by the deontic view and the picture of motivation it invites us to adopt. Second, I approach two more general issues in philosophy of mind with the help of the deontic mode, namely the issue of representations that presumably have both directions of fit and the issue of the nature of attitudes.

Emotions and Desires

Desires bear an intimate relation to emotions. For instance, loosely speaking, part of being afraid is to desire to flee from the feared object. Likewise, part of hoping that an event will happen is being relieved or at least being happy that the event happened. But how are we to understand these relations? Do emotions imply desires or the other way around (or both)? The present account of desire has a say on the relation between emotions and desires as far as

it is assumed that emotions involve an essential relation to values[564] and that norms are distinct from, although based on, values.

Indeed, with these assumptions in mind, the deontic view implies first that emotions are distinct from desires. This claim can be motivated further by what has been said against the axiological account of desire. Those objections imply that any reduction of desire to emotions – or the other way around – is unwarranted, provided that evaluations and desires do not share some relevant properties, for instance the same relation to the belief that p or the same directions of fit. This concerns also partial reductions, as the be-sire view of emotions. On this view, emotions are a compound state made of beliefs and desires. Now, given the distinctions between desiring and evaluating mentioned in this thesis, emotions can hardly be understood as involving desire as one of their essential parts.

Can we say more about the relationship desires bear to emotions with the help of the deontic view? Assuming further that norms are grounded in values suggests that desires are potentially grounded in emotions, among other things. Indeed, it makes sense to explain norms by appealing to the value of the state of affairs the norm is about. In the absence of such a ground, norms seem to be arbitrary.[565] In a similar vein, it makes sense to conceive of emotions as one of the possible ground of desires, the common ground being more generally evaluations (be they emotional or not). In their absence, desires would seem to be arbitrary as well.

This however is not to say that some emotions cannot be grounded in desires. For instance, one might be happy that p because one desired that p. According to our picture, these cases are possible and will be handled as follows. Emotions are representations of values. Now, some representations of values depend on one's having a particular desire. Still, this desire itself, if grounded in a further attitude of the subject, is grounded in an evaluation and thus possibly on an emotion. Turning to our example, it is true that one is happy that p because one desired that p. Still, one desired that p because one positively evaluates p, for instance appreciates p. This chain of deontic and evaluative representations is also present in the relationship norms bear to values. Indeed, the fact that norms are grounded in values does not

[564] See De Sousa 1987, Tappolet 2000, Goldie 2003, Mulligan 2009, Deonna & Teroni 2012 for evaluative views of emotions.
[565] See Tappolet & Ogien 2009 for this general issue, as well as p. 163.

prevent the satisfaction of some norm from instantiating a further value than the value that grounded the norm, as suggested in our discussions of caprice and of the fitting relation[566].

If this is correct, the present proposal suggests directions for future investigation concerning the relationship between desires and emotions. Given that this issue has been rarely addressed in the contemporary literature,[567] the present picture can help to fill an important lacuna.

Desire and Motivation

The deontic view does not merely have a say on the ground of desires. As it appeared in the unfolding of this thesis, it invites one to adopt an account of motivation as being grounded in desire.

I have already given reasons for the thought that being actually motivated is a complex phenomenon depending on desiring the result of the action, believing that the state desired is within one's power (or at least not believing that it is not within one's power), and being rational. This picture constitutes a natural way to go for the defender of the deontic view, provided that motivation is understood here as a phenomenon that is essentially tied to the ought-to-do, that ought implies can and that the ought-to-do is grounded in the ought-to-be.

In order to reveal the originality of this picture, let me contrast it with the main perspective on the relationship between desire and motivation that is present in the recent literature. To my knowledge, the literature has mainly focused on whether desires and in particular some types of desire necessarily motivate. The candidates for desires that do not motivate suggested recently are desires about inert objects (for instance, the desire about necessary truths[568]), desires about what does not lie in the subject's power (for instance the desire about world peace[569]) and desires about the obtaining of states of affairs that preclude any action of the subject (e.g. the desire that a committee make up its mind in my favour without my intervention[570]). From another perspective, Strawson's Weather Watchers constitute an

[566] See p. 227 and §4.1.2. The Normativity of Fit.
[567] See Taylor 1986, Mulligan 1998 and Deonna & Teroni 2012 for some exceptions. On the relationship between emotions and motivations, see Prinz 2004: 192-196.
[568] Some examples are the desire that the value of π not be expressible as a fraction of two natural numbers (Schroeder 2004, p. 16) or the "want[ing] this to be the right answer to the maths problem" (Dancy 2000, p. 87). Schroeder generalises to desires about other kinds of necessity, like the desire "that there be superconductors that are ductile and that conduct at over 40° Celsius" (Schroeder 2004, p. 16).
[569] See Dancy (2000: 87) for the examples of desires about the past or about things in the future that fall beyond the subject's power.
[570] Schroeder 2004, p. 17. See Wall 2009 for a discussion of such desires.

example of inert desires as these are creatures that have desires despite not being able to act and in the absence of any disposition to act at all.[571]

With the exception of Strawson's Weather Watchers, one feature that these candidates have in common is that the absence of motivation is accounted for by the *content* of the desire. Now, I think that specifying the content of desire is not the right way to proceed, which provides further motivation for the account of motivation I have sketched. As noted by some authors, one might as well be motivated to act in such a way that one believes, say, the committee chose oneself without one's intervention, that two plus two equal four or that one remove the past.[572] For it is sufficient that the subject believes that these states of affairs lie in her power, whatever the truth or falsity of her belief, in order for her to be actually motivated to bring about these states of affairs. If the modal belief is false, that is, if the state of affairs desired does not lie in the subject's power, then the subject should not be actually motivated to act, on the ground that ought implies can. But this does not prevent subjects with false beliefs from being actually motivated to bring about these states of affairs.

Of course, if the content of some desire is such that it does prevent having the belief that the state desired is in one's power, then the content of such a desire will be relevant, although indirectly. But it is not clear that such a candidate exists. Alfred Mele, in defending a view that is similar in spirit to the observation put forward in this section, thinks that there are such desires. He writes:

> "Someone who desires world peace may be convinced that there is nothing she can do to promote it. Consequently, she may be in no way inclined to make efforts aimed at promoting it."[573]

This is roughly in line with our picture according to which actual motivation to bring about the content of one's desire requires the absence of the belief that one cannot bring about the desired state of affairs. This said, Mele concludes that essentially motivating attitudes are desires about a specific content, namely desires about actions. He writes:

> "if desiring to A, where 'A' is an action-variable, were not to preclude the presence of certain cognitive states, one might desire to A while having no motivation to A. For example, if an agent could desire to

[571] See p. 83.
[572] See for instance Wall 2009 for a discussion of desires the content of which allegedly precludes any action of the subject.
[573] Mele 1995: 393.

> A while being convinced that she cannot A, she might not be the least inclined to try to A. However, desiring to A does preclude the presence of cognitive states of this kind."[574]

Although I agree that motivating desires should bear a necessary relation to action, I believe that the restriction to desires about actions is neither necessary nor sufficient for a desire to be motivating. On the one hand, one might as well desire states of affairs rather than actions and be motivated to act in such a way that these states of affairs obtain. Although there is an intimate link between desire and action in such a case, there is no need to restrict the *content* of the desire to actions. Moreover, one might desire some particular action, while believing that the action is beyond one's power. For instance, after a car accident, Sam might desire to walk again, while believing that there is nothing he can do to bring about this state of affairs. Although such a case might better be described as hope rather than desire, there are reasons to consider hopes as a type of desire or as entailing desire.[575] If this is correct, restricting ourselves to desires about actions is not sufficient for the desire to be motivating either.

Although this is a controversial issue, I believe that the deontic view rightly invites us to adopt a more complex account of motivation than the one equating it with desiring or with desires of certain types. This does not prevent the view from acknowledging the close relationship desires bear to actual motivation, whatever their content, although it does so by taking into consideration the modal beliefs as well as the rationality of the subject. This closes the deontic approach of the relationship desires bear to other mental phenomena.

Let me conclude this section on the deontic approach to puzzles pertaining to the philosophy of mind by addressing two issues that can be enlightened by the present dissertation and that belong to this domain of investigation.

Pushmi-Pullyu Representations

As mentioned in our discussion of the axiological view of desire, it has been claimed that some representations have both directions of fit.[576] Likely candidates are conspecific signals like honeybee dances, but also speech acts like declarations and mental representations like emotions or evaluative beliefs, among others. Consider for instance honeybee dances. On the

[574] Mele 2003: 399.
[575] See Mele 2003: 22.
[576] See for instance Millikan 2005, McDowell 1998, Bayne 2010.

one hand, these representations indicate the location of the nectar and thus purport to represent the mind-independent world. On the other hand, the same representations invite conspecifics to reach the location of the nectar. They thus also aim to bring about a change in the world. In the same vein, the declaration "The meeting is open" can be said to both represent the fact that the meeting is open as well as constitute the very opening of the meeting. Does this imply that those representations have both directions of fit? Since the present dissertation argues in favour of an account of the direction of fit via the modes proper to representations, it can help us to approach this issue.

The account of direction of fit that I have put forward implies that there are no representations with both directions of fit and that have one and only one content[577]. This is due to the contrariety between receptive and deontic modes, at least for serious representations, that has been defended in an early chapter.[578] Still, some story about the so-called *Pushmi-Pullyu* representations should be told. If these representations do not instantiate both directions of fit, how can we account for the temptation that they have distinct directions of fit and play distinct roles? In this respect, two tools tied to the deontic mode are fruitful: the first relies on grounding relations that are part of the deontic view, whereas the second concerns the relation modes of representations bear to their expressions. Although not specific to the deontic view, these observations go hand in hand and thus suggest natural ways to go for the friend of the deontic view. Let me present them in turn.

One way to acknowledge the thought that some representations *in some sense* have both directions of fit is to appeal to the grounding relations the representation bears to other ones. Indeed, it has been stressed in our discussion that representations might either be grounded in or ground other representations, despite them having a distinct direction of fit. Although this does not *strictly speaking* imply that some representations have both directions of fit, this can accommodate the intuition that they *loosely speaking* involve both directions of fit, in virtue of the grounding relations instantiated. Consider for instance evaluative beliefs. It is plausible to think that evaluative beliefs can ground desires. In spite of evaluative beliefs instantiating, strictly speaking, merely one direction of fit, the relation they bear to desire can

[577] For reasons of simplicity, I shall ignore the possibility of representations with both directions of fit about distinct content, since it is reasonable to think that a token representation has one *and only one* content.
[578] See §6.4. Explaining the DODP – A Deontic Explanation. The clause on serious representations is meant to exclude the case of imagination, as the mode of the possible imaginings instantiate is compatible with the deontic mode, unlike the mode of belief discussed.

accommodate the thought that *in a sense* they instantiate the world-to-mind direction of fit as well. Since the relationship between distinct modes of intentionality constitutes a partial explanation of the grounding relations instantiated by representations, appealing to modes constitutes a promising way of describing some cases of *Pushmi-Pullyu* representations.

The appeal to modes can also account for dual directions of fit in another way, namely by appealing to the relation modes bear to the expression of representations. Some candidates mentioned indeed constitute expressions of mental representations, for instance declarations and presumably signals. Assuming that proper expressions of mental representations inherit the direction of fit of the mental representation expressed and that directions of fit depend on the mode of the representation implies that expressions depend on the mode of intentionality as well.[579] If so, the right description of representations allegedly instantiating the dual direction of fit depends on the type of representations declarations and honeybee dances express. Now, it is plausible to assume that they express intentions or desires. Indeed, the proper function of such representations seems to be to transform the world rather than merely represent it. For instance, it is plausible to think that honeybee dances have been selected in virtue of the benefit resulting from the change they bring about. Now, it is likely that a representation having this function has the world-to-mind direction of fit. Although directions of fit are not analysable by functions, both seem to go hand in hand[580]. If so, honeybee dances and declarations will inherit the direction of fit of desire and intentions, namely the world-to-mind one. This does not prevent these representations from being complex and bearing strong relations to other types of representations, along the lines mentioned earlier.

Although these observations are highly speculative, they provide possible descriptions of *Pushmi-Pullyu* representations that secure a clear-cut contrast in terms of direction of fit.

The Nature of Attitudes

Not only does the present proposal appeal to modes, but it also relies on some thoughts about the nature of attitudes that merit careful investigation. Let us make explicit how these observations on attitudes can be used to build a general theory of attitudes.

At first sight, some mental states constitute attitudes, while others do not. For instance, desires, emotions, beliefs, suspicions, doubts do constitute attitudes, among others. By

[579] See §5.2.3.1. From Modes to Moore's Paradox.
[580] See §4.3.1. Functional Roles.

contrast, perceptual experiences, memories and knowledge intuitively do not constitute attitudes. For instance, attitudes can be described as stances or positions one takes; but the latter states mentioned do not seem to constitute any stances. Whether some mental states, like intentions, constitute attitudes or not is *prima facie* unclear. Let us restrict our attention to uncontroversial cases of attitudes. What are they? What turns a mental state into an attitude? And what is meant by the metaphor of stances alluded to earlier? Although propositional attitudes have been discussed in detail, philosophers have neglected the more general issue of the nature of attitudes. Now, the assumptions about attitudes that have been presented in an earlier chapter constitute a promising starting point.

Let me begin by examining a non-starter. Given what has been said about modes, attitudes cannot merely consist in mental states instantiating a particular mode. For some mental states that do not constitute attitudes, for instance perceptual experiences, might still instantiate a mode. If this is correct, modes are not all there is to attitudes although attitudes do involve modes.

In order to proceed carefully, it is worth presenting three properties of attitudes a plausible theory of attitudes should account for. First, attitudes, or at least serious ones, have bases, i.e. they are grounded in further mental states[581]. Second, attitudes, or at least serious ones, admit of degrees[582]. Finally, statements ascribing attitudes are opaque or intensional, as it has been suggested for ascriptions of belief and desires[583].

A promising way of accounting for these properties is to think of attitudes as being reason-responsive mental states. Desiring and believing, for instance, do constitute responses to reasons, respectively, for desiring and believing. This restriction to reason-responsive states allows excluding perceptions, memories and presumably knowledge from the range of attitudes, provided that such states are not responsive to reasons.[584] The metaphorical talk of stances would then be captured by appealing to types of responses to reasons.

At least two distinctions are relevant to understand better what is meant by reason-responsiveness here.

[581] This restriction is meant to exclude the case of imagination, as it is unclear whether imaginings are motivated by further mental states.
[582] Likewise, it is odd to think that imaginings admit of degrees.
[583] See p. 37.
[584] One potential worry with this proposal is the case of imagining. If imagining is an attitude, the claim should be strictly speaking restricted to serious attitudes. Imagining might thus be understood as pretending that one is responding to some reason, i.e. making as if one is in a serious attitude.

Firstly, it is possible to be aware of or sensitive to a reason, while not responding to it. For instance, in the case of irrational belief, one might be aware of a reason to discard the belief. Still, notwithstanding this awareness, one might not revise it and thus not respond to the reason as required. This suggests that responding to reasons involves something more than merely being sensitive to them, and that this something more is the adopting of the attitude that is in line with the reason.

But there is more. One might respond to some reason by adopting one type of attitude that is in line with it, while the same reason calls for adopting another attitude. For instance, one might respond to a reason to act in believing that the action is right. Still, this reason also calls for the adopting of the corresponding desire or intention about the action believed to be right. In other words, reason-responsiveness requires the right kind of response to the reason and not any response that is in line with it will do.

Let us call "holding reasons" the meeting of these two constraints, namely *responding* to reasons by adopting the *right* attitude(s). In the present investigation, desires end up being attitudes in virtue of being responses to what one deems to be right. To use our terminology, a subject desiring a state of affairs holds what she takes to be a reason speaking in favour of the rightness of this state. This is the sense in which desires are deontic *attitudes* rather than another type of deontic representation, like deontic beliefs or other representations, as far as other types exist.

With this picture of attitudes, we can account for the three features of attitudes mentioned earlier as follows.

First, in being responses to reasons, and by assuming that the relevant reasons are further mental states of the subject, it follows that attitudes involve bases. The basis of the attitude precisely is the reason one responds to. In the present dissertation, desires end up being responses to reasons for desires, i.e. reasons for the coming to obtain of a state of affairs that is yet to come. Those reasons are provided, at least partly, by evaluative states, as defeasible as these reasons might be.

Second, assuming that reasons admit of degrees, in being more or less conclusive, can partly account for the strength of attitudes. As these more or less stringent reasons speak in favour of taking a more or less strong stance, this vindicates the thought that the gradability in question concerns the attitude rather than content. This contrasts with other mental states that

admit of degrees but do not constitute attitudes (for instance memories). In the present dissertation, the strength of desire has been understood as consisting in the force of the requirement which at least partly depends on the degree of reasons to desire one is presented with.[585]

Third, and finally, since attitudes are based on mental states that can be formed by the means of partial evidence and can even be false, it follows that ascriptions of co-referential attitudes are opaque. For instance, as desires can be based on false beliefs, co-referential ascriptions of desires are not transparent.

Although a lot more should be said, for instance about the expression of attitudes or their involuntary character, I believe that the picture presented constitutes a promising starting point in the understanding of attitudes.

So far, I have motivated the thought that the deontic view can shed light on important debates in the philosophy of mind. Now, since the deontic view relies on a deontic property and as deontic properties are essentially normative, the view bears important implications in normative or practical philosophy. To these I finally turn.

10.2.3. The Deontic View and the Normative

I shall sketch five issues belonging to normative philosophy (or theoretical philosophy about the normative) the deontic view can provide a significant contribution to. The four first are meta-ethical questions, while the last concerns ethical theory.

The Puzzle of Practical Reasoning

Although not all actions are the outcome of practical reasoning, at least some of them result from such a process. For instance, reasoning from one's desire and one's instrumental belief that some means is required to satisfy the desire, one might conclude that some action is required and form in turn the attendant intention. But how are we to describe the steps of the process of practical reasoning in more detail? It is not the purpose of this section to address

[585] See p. 330.

this issue in detail. Rather, I shall stick to the presentation of an answer to this question that relies on the deontic view.[586]

For the sake of the argument, let us assume that practical reasoning is a type of reasoning involving desire as one of its premises, and resulting in the forming of an intention.[587] With these assumptions in mind, it appears that the description of the reasoning will be different depending on one's account of desire. For instance, on the axiological account, the reasoning springs from one's evaluation of a state of affairs, while the first step of the reasoning is a disposition to act on the motivational view and a deontic attitude on the deontic picture. Now, these views do not seem to be on a par, as the following worries suggest.

Prima facie, the motivational description of practical reasoning is puzzling. On this view, the starting point of the reasoning is one's being disposed to act. But one might expect that this is precisely the result of the reasoning as well. Indeed, intending to act can be conceived as a type of disposition to act. If so, one of the premises of the reasoning will be too similar to the conclusion of the reasoning, which might be problematic.

As the evaluative description does rely on evaluations, it does not suffer from this problem. But, *prima facie* again, it seems subject to the reverse worry. How does one infer an intention from an evaluation? As these representations seem to be too dissimilar in type, some bridge from the premise to the conclusion seems to be required. Adding the instrumental belief would introduce a further type of mental state and thus make the picture even more heterogeneous.

If these criticisms are correct, the following moral can be drawn. A promising picture of practical reasoning should not contain a conclusion that is too similar in type to one of the premises while at the same time allowing for a level of similarity that warrants the inference from the premises to the conclusion. In other words, the account should capture the right balance between dissimilarity and similarity between the parts of practical reasoning. I take it that the deontic picture can fit this requirement.

Indeed, since the deontic picture relies on norms, the picture of practical reasoning it implies will rely on norms as well. The picture implied by the deontic view is the following:

(1) Desire that p: {O-to-be} (p)

[586] I owe part of the observations of this section to Peter Railton.
[587] See Schueler 1995 for more details.

(2) Instrumental belief: {E} (F → p)

(C) Intention: {O-to-do} (F)

The presence of the deontic feature allows for inferential relations, whereas the distinction between the ought-to-be and the ought-to-do implies that the conclusion is different in type from the premise involving desire. It appears that this picture meets the challenge of accommodating the structure of practical reasoning, as it has been formulated earlier. Although a lot more could be said, the deontic view provides us with an intuitive starting point.

Motivating Reasons

As stressed, desires play an important role in debates about practical reasons. But this issue is rarely approached by paying attention to the nature of desire itself and in particular to the different views of desires available.[588] This is a puzzling lacuna. How could one assess the normative profile of desire, i.e. whether desires are reasons for acting or not, without a clear idea of what desiring is or at least without considering the implications of distinct views of desires in this respect? In order to make some progress, let us sketch how the deontic view can contribute to the issue of *motivating* reasons, as I think that it is relevant to this issue.[589]

Although people are more inclined to deny that desires can be *normative* reasons than they are to deny that they can be *motivating* reasons, some have argued that desires cannot be *motivating* reasons either. For the sake of the argument, let us assume that motivating reasons are mental states rather than facts.[590] A classical argument against the view that desires can be motivating reasons runs as follows. Since the likely candidates for desires constituting motivating reasons are motivated desires, one might think that motivating reasons are provided by the state motivating the desire – evaluative beliefs for instance – rather than by the desire itself.[591] I shall not discuss this argument here but merely ask whether the deontic view invites one to embrace it or not. At first sight, one might think that our picture is in line with this argument, given that it relies on desires being grounded in further mental states.

[588] Exceptions are Chang 2004, Stampe 1987, Smith 1994.
[589] I will not address the issue of normative reasons in this conclusion. About the distinction between motivating and normative reasons, see Smith 1994, Parfit 2011.
[590] See Dancy 2000 for the relevance of this distinction.
[591] See Nagel 1978.

This however is too quick. The appeal of the previous line of argument is often to be found in the assumption that desires are mere motivations. If desires are nothing but motivations, then one might think that the fact that one is motivated to act actually does not provide one with a further reason to act. This would be bootstrapping and make rationality too easy to achieve. Hence, on is tempted to consider the motivating reason for having the desire as being the motivating reason to act. But on the deontic view, desires are not bare motivations, a distinction that undercuts part of the appeal of the argument sketched. Moreover, there is in principle nothing inconsistent in thinking that deontic attitudes can constitute motivating reasons, despite their being grounded in evaluations. Why could not such a representation make a difference in the motivating reasons one has?

As an example, one might think of cases where the presence of an evaluation is not sufficient for the subject to have a motivating reason, as our cases of caprice suggested. In the same vein, one might think of cases where the desire provides a motivating reason or at least adds some motivating reason (if it is assumed that motivating reasons admit of degrees). Imagine that a person believes that eating now would be good, but has no desire to do so. Consider now another person who has the desire to eat now. Intuitively, does not the latter subject have a motivating reason in contrast to the former or at least have a further motivating reason that the former does not have? Thinking of the latter subject as evaluating the state of affairs does not seem to help, as both subjects positively evaluate it, although in a different way. Likewise, thinking that the second person has a motivating reason only in virtue of being motivated to act might be a case of bootstrapping. But assuming that the latter subject requires eating might make a difference to the presence of her motivating reasons to eat in these circumstances. This of course is not to say that only desires or that all desires are motivating reasons. Rather, this is merely meant to show that thinking of desires along deontic lines might be one way of providing room for a contribution of desire to our motivating reasons. These are naturally vexed issues that should be addressed in far more details but they reveal at least how approaching the problem from the perspective of these views of desire might be helpful. Let us now move on to a third meta-ethical problem.

The Problem of Negation for Expressivism

Expressivism in meta-ethics is the view that, despite appearances, normative judgements do not purport to state facts, but are the expressions of non-cognitive states, among which

prominently figure desires. This view does not come without problems, an important one being the problem of negation. In a nutshell, the problem is the following, as Mark Schroeder puts it:

> "The problem is that they [i.e. expressivists] have not, to date, been able to explain why 'murdering is wrong' and 'murdering is not wrong' are inconsistent sentences."[592]

In this section, I present the problem of negation and sketch how the deontic view can account for it. The reason I will discuss this issue from the perspective of the deontic view is that desires are the paradigmatic example of non-cognitive attitudes in virtue of their characteristic direction of fit. I shall thus assume that expressivism is the view that normative judgements express *desires*. Now, it appears that not all views of desires are on a par as far as the problem of negation is concerned, which impacts the plausibility of this claim. Let me first summarise Schroeder's presentation of the problem of negation for expressivists.

Consider the statement "Jon thinks that murdering is wrong". Schroeder writes:

> "There are three places to insert a negation in 'Jon thinks that murdering is wrong', all of which receive distinct semantic interpretations:
>
> **w** Jon thinks that murdering is wrong.
>
> **n1** Jon does not think that murdering is wrong.
>
> **n2** Jon thinks that murdering is not wrong.
>
> **n3** Jon thinks that not murdering is wrong.
>
> Sentence n1 denies Jon the view that murder is wrong, n2 attributes to Jon a negative view about the wrongness of murdering, and n3 attributes to Jon a positive view about the wrongness of not murdering. According to n2 he thinks that murdering is permissible, whereas according to n3 he thinks that it is obligatory. Conflating any two of these three would be a disaster.
>
> Yet that is precisely the danger for expressivists. For according to expressivism, thinking that murdering is wrong is being in the mental state expressed by 'murdering is wrong'. That is, it is disapproving of murdering. But there are simply not enough places to insert a negation in 'Jon disapproves of murdering' to go around:
>
> **w∗** Jon disapproves of murdering.
>
> **n1∗** Jon does not disapprove of murdering.
>
> **n2∗** ???
>
> **n3∗** Jon disapproves of not murdering."[593]

The question is to know how to express the state present in n2, namely tolerance about murder, in order for it to be inconsistent with the state expressed in w, i.e. disapproving

[592] Schroeder 2008: 573.
[593] Schroeder 2008: 578.

murder. In order to do so, the expressivist should either account for attitudes that conflict in virtue of content, as the case of believing that p and believing that not p, or motivate another account of inconsistency.[594] Several proposals have been offered. Among others, Gibbard appeals to conflicting intentions of hyperplanners, while Schroeder himself appeals to the attitude of "being for". I shall ignore these accounts here and shall rather show how the deontic view has elegant resources to meet the challenge in a simpler way than the alternatives mentioned. The present account can be understood as similar in spirit to Horgan & Timmons's view relying on the deontic operator, despite the presence of subtle distinctions that do not matter for my purposes. For what is crucial is that the proposal is directly inspired from the deontic view.

Before proceeding, some terminology should be in place. The deontic view distinguishes between desire, aversion, and indifference as follows. Desires are representations of content as what ought to be, aversions are representations of content as what ought *not* to be, while desiderative indifference is neither the former nor the latter state. For the sake of simplicity, let us formulate the three attitudes as follows:

Desire that p: $O(p)$

Aversion that p: $O\neg(p)$

Indifference about p: $\neg(O(p))$ and $\neg(O\neg(p))$

Each attitude admits of negative content, since one might desire that not p [$O(\neg p)$], being averse to not p [$O\neg(\neg p)$] and being indifferent about not p [$\neg(O(\neg p))$ and $\neg(O\neg(\neg p))$].

Assuming that what ought to be is right and that what is right is permissible[595], we can formulate the following norms corresponding to the truth makers of the four sentences mentioned above, where "F" stands for murder.

w Jon thinks that murdering is wrong : $O\neg(F)$

[it ought not to be that one murders]

n1 Jon does not think that murdering is wrong : $\neg(O(\neg F))$

[it is not the case that it ought to be that one does not murder]

n2 Jon thinks that murdering is not wrong : $O(F)$

[it ought to be and is thus permissible that one murders]

n3 Jon thinks that not murdering is wrong : $O\neg(\neg F)$

[594] Schroeder restricts himself to the former possibility.

[595] See p. 274 and 219 for this assumption.

[it ought not to be that one does not murder]

Let me discuss the crucial cases for the problem of negation, namely the norms expressed by w and n2. Given that the right implies the permissible, the fact that it ought to be that F implies that F is permissible. Now, this is inconsistent with the norm that one ought not to F, i.e. the first norm, given that the latter norm is about the negation of the former. In that case, there is an inconsistency between w and n2, as wanted. Moreover, this inconsistency naturally follows from the implication that goes from the right to the permissible and has not been stipulated, in contrast with what Schroeder objects to other accounts.

Going back to the deontic view and the account of attitudes that correspond to such norms, we end up with the following picture:

w Jon thinks that murdering is wrong: $O\neg(F)$

[Jon is averse to murder, i.e. represents murdering *as wrong*]

n1 Jon does not think that murdering is wrong: $\neg(O(\neg F))$

[Jon is indifferent about murder, i.e. neither represents not murdering *as right* nor *as wrong*]

n2 Jon thinks that murdering is not wrong: $O(F)$

[Jon desires murder, i.e. represents murdering *as right* and thus *as permissible*]

n3 Jon thinks that not murdering is wrong: $O\neg(\neg F)$

[Jon is averse to not murdering, i.e. represents not murdering *as wrong*]

Since desiring murder implies, on our account, conceiving of murder as permissible and since this is inconsistent with being averse to murder, we end up with the right inconsistency.[596] By contrast, standard views of the intentionality of desire cannot account for the permissibility of murder as straightforwardly. On the one hand, the approving of murder – an evaluative attitude – is not sufficient for thinking of murder as permissible, since one might evaluate a state positively without thinking of it as permissible. On the other hand, being motivated to bring about murder captures the same intuition, as what ought to be done implies that the

[596] Note that one might as well formulate the first norm as follows: O(¬F). In that case, there is still an inconsistency between w and n2, although one that involves content rather than mode. This goes with a difficulty. One might think that the attitude expressing permissibility about murder can be the desire to not murder, provided that what is wrong is sometimes permissible. Still, despite appearances, it is worth noting that the deontic operators remain different between the permissibility and the impermissibility to murder, as the impermissibility to murder states an obligation not to murder, while the permissibility merely states the permission to murder. As the right admits of such variation in strength, some distinction and thus some disagreement between the people holding the attitude remains.

action is permitted. Still, as mentioned several times, this attitude can be explained by thinking of some states as right and thus permissible, in which case the motivational proposal does not account for tolerance of murder in a primitive way.

Provided that appealing to the intentionality of desire is a natural way to proceed in order to describe inconsistency and that the deontic view captures the wanted inconsistency with its main claim, I believe that the deontic view of desire can help expressivists to solve the problem of negation, without the appeal to uncommon attitudes like the second-order attitude of being for or hyperplanning.

Ross's Problem

So far, the dialectic of the thesis relies on explaining puzzles about desires by the help of norms and of their properties. But if desires and norms go hand in hand, as it has been argued, one might as well account for puzzles about norms by appealing to desires and their properties. It is at least useful to do so if the puzzle in question arises for both desires and norms, and when the solution is less controversial in the case of desire than that of norms. In this section, I approach Ross's problem concerning norms with the help of our corresponding intuitions concerning desires. Let me begin by sketching Ross's problem.

Ross's problem concerns the disjunction of norms. Consider that one ought to do F, say, send a letter. According to standard logic, if F is true one can infer the disjunction (F or G), whatever the truth of the second disjunct. It follows that if one ought to do F, i.e. send the letter, one ought also to (F or G), say, send the letter or burn it. This however is counter-intuitive. For burning the letter intuitively is not the right thing to do. Where did we go wrong? This is (roughly) Ross's problem.[597]

For the sake of the argument, let us assume that the conclusion mentioned is indeed counter-intuitive, i.e. norms about a disjunction are not necessarily correct even if the norm about one of the disjunct holds. Since this violates a standard rule of classical logic, we need some further motivation to adopt this claim. I will not explore logical subtleties that might provide us with such a motivation. Simplifying somewhat, I shall appeal to the deontic view of desire.

Recall that the deontic view relies on the deontic mode, which contrasts with the mode of belief. Now, exploring the case of belief is useful, as it contrasts with the case of desire as far

[597] See Ross 1941 and Broome 2007.

as Ross's problem is concerned. Consider that one believes that p. According to standard logic, one is then justified to believe that (p or q) from the belief that p, all other things being equal[598]. In other words, it is permissible to believe a disjunction as soon as one believes one of its conjunct, all things being equal. So far, this result is intuitive and in line with standard logic. It might be explained by the fact that if p is true then any disjunction involving it will inherit this feature. Or so it seems.

Now consider desires. Does it follow from desiring that p that one is warranted to desire that (p or q)? Intuitively, it does not. Imagine that I rightly desire to eat Japanese. Consider then that I desire either to eat Japanese or to insult Mary for no reason. If it is assumed that insulting Mary for no reason is wrong, then the desire about the disjunction intuitively is wrong as well. Or so it seems. This is not to say that desiring a disjunction is never warranted: disjunctive desires are correct provided that the disjunction they are about is right.

Although revisionary of standard logic, this picture can be further motivated by paying attention to conjunction. Although desiring that p and desiring that q might be right, it does not follow that desiring that (p and q) is right, as suggested by our discussion of caprice. If it is assumed that the treatment of conjunction goes hand in hand with that of disjunction, despite the relevant differences, our exploration of the aggregation of desires gives us reason to adopt the same conclusion for the disjunction.[599]

If so, the deontic view provides a motivation for thinking that the rightness of one disjunct does not imply that the whole disjunction is right as well. Consequently, it invites one to dissolve Ross's problem, as the problem relies on a rule of standard logic that does not apply to deontic statements, like I argued for the case of the conjunction. This, I confess, is very revisionary and should be defended in much more detail. Still, this might not be as far-fetched as one thinks. For why should deontic propositions share the same logical properties as non-deontic ones? I leave this question open and close the discussion of meta-ethical directions of future research offered by the deontic view. Let me finally address a crucial issue in ethical theory in response to which the deontic view could be deployed.

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[598] For instance, the disjunction should be conceivable. I shall ignore the details here.
[599] The literature on detachment (see Broome 1999 and 2007) provides further support for our general line of argument, but I shall not discuss this controversial issue here.

Normative Relations and Ethical Theories

Recall that the present dissertation relies on the assumption that norms are grounded in values. On top of constituting an important issue in meta-ethics, some have argued that the inquiry on the relations between values and norms constitute a promising way of addressing the crucial ethical question of the right ethical theory, in particular the debate between consequentialism and deontology. In this section, I shall concentrate on Ogien's and Tappolet's proposal along these lines, namely addressing normative ethics with the help of the meta-ethics of values and norms, and show how the present dissertation can contribute to their line of argument.[600] Let me begin first by summarising the gist of Ogien and Tappolet's picture.

The authors argue that norms are distinct from values and, more precisely, that norms are *grounded* in values.[601] From this meta-ethical premise, they conclude that consequentialism should be preferred over deontology. This follows from the assumption that consequentialism implies a close relationship between moral actions and values, while deontology relies on a strong relation between moral actions and norms.[602]

Let me address the claim that norms depend on values first, before considering the conclusion they draw from it with regard to the right ethical theory.

As the present dissertation relies on the same meta-ethical relation as the one put forward by the authors, the deontic view and common assumptions about evaluative attitudes can provide a nice contribution to their argument. Their claim can indeed be motivated further by the two following pieces of this dissertation.

Recall that the distinction between desires and evaluations has been motivated by the distinction between norms and values. But one might as well appeal to the deontic view in order to further motivate the distinction between values and norms. Indeed, as Ogien and Tappolet argue, emotions are closely linked to values, as suggested by the close relation between the terms "disgust" and "disgusting" or "admiration" and "admirable", among others.[603] By contrast, no term for emotions seems to be related to norms. Now, the main claim of this dissertation is that desires are essentially linked to norms in the same way as emotions are essentially linked to values. Although the relation has not been established by

[600] Ogien & Tappolet 2009. See also Tappolet *forthcoming*.
[601] Idem: 77-111.
[602] Idem: 131-155.
[603] Idem: 49-52.

lexical means, it shares the spirit that lies behind the lexical correspondence of emotion terms with evaluative terms. For instance, it has been claimed that norms capture the correctness conditions and thus constitute the formal object of desires the same way values constitute the formal object of emotions.[604] Now if emotions bear an essential relation to values, while desires bear an essential relation to norms, and if emotions are distinct from desires, this provides us with a further reason to think that values and norms are distinct.

In the same vein, the deontic view can provide further motivation for the claim that norms are grounded in values. If evaluative attitudes are to values what desires are to norms, and if desires are grounded by evaluative attitudes, it follows that norms are grounded in values.

In addition to these considerations pointing in the same direction as the author's proposal, one distinction between their claim and the present thesis is worth considering. In particular, this distinction impinges on their conclusion about the primacy of consequentialism. By norms, the authors mean above all what I have called the ought-to-do in the present dissertation, partly because deontologists themselves focus on this kind of norms. However, I have argued that it is important to distinguish, among the norms, norms of the ought-to-do type from norms of the ought-to-be type. The authors acknowledge the latter distinction by claiming that the ought-to-be constitutes a *sui generis* category that should neither be conflated with values nor with the ought-to-do.[605] This being said, as far as I understand them, the authors do not consider the theoretical option according to which an ethical theory bears an essential relation to the ought-to-be. On this option, the right thing to do is neither what one ought to do nor is it to bring about the good, but is captured by what is right *period*. Let us call this middle-ground option "deonticism" in order to distinguish it from deontology and consequentialism. Now, this is the option I wish finally to explore.

Indeed, assuming that moral actions are actions that morally ought to be constitutes a promising starting point, as revealed by confronting this assumption with the well-known problems of deontology and consequentialism put forward by the authors, among other worries.

[604] See p. 111. See Mulligan 1998 for a similar claim, although the relation he mentions holds between norms and the will, rather than desires.
[605] Ogien & Tappolet 2009: 71-72.

As far as deontology is concerned, one important problem relies on the emphasis their defenders put on rules for actions, like the norm of not lying. Since lying is intuitively permissible in some situations, this constitutes a counter-intuitive implication of deontology. Now, it is worth noting that equating moral actions with actions that are right does not suffer from this issue. For one might think that it is precisely sometimes right to perform actions that are all things being equal forbidden, for instance white lies.

Still, as the consequentialist also has an answer to this classical objection to deontology, more should be said to motivate our "deonticist" option. In particular, it remains to be known whether it has some advantage over consequentialism.

Prima facie, the consequentialist, in particular Ogien and Tappolet, might not be impressed by our option, on the ground that the ought-to-be still relies on values. Since the existence of this dependence relation constitutes their main argument against deontology, it might as well undermine the "deonticist" option sketched. However, consequentialism faces problems that, I claim, can be easily fixed by "deonticism". Let me restrict myself to three of them.

The first concerns the thought that, as mentioned several times in this dissertation, some states of affairs are good, despite not being right. If consequentialism is the view that equates the morally right action with the one that maximises the good, it follows that capricious actions, for instance, are morally right. For they precisely maximise the good. Now, although caprice is not necessarily immoral, it is counter-intuitive to think that it constitutes what one ought to do. If so, although we agree that the right is based on the good, the fact that the right is distinct from the good importantly affects the issue of finding an adequate account of morally right actions. Consequently, the consequentialist argument against deontology which relies on the dependence of norms on values does not apply to "deonticism".

Moreover, the present alternative can easily fix at least two important problems for consequentialism that are presented by Ogien and Tappolet themselves, among others. These concern supererogation and the existence of goods that are not worth promoting.

Consequentialism is sometimes said to face the problem of supererogation. The problem is the following. Since some actions are good though not mandatory, maximising the good requires acting in non-mandatory ways, which is counter-intuitive. So, consequentialism is wrong as it prescribes to maximise the good. I will not discuss this objection or Ogien and Tappolet's answer to it, as this would go far beyond my purpose. One standard response to

the challenge is to adopt satisficing consequentialism, i.e. the view that it is sufficient to do what is good for the action to be moral. Now, as it has been noted in the literature, this reply sounds *prima facie ad hoc*.[606] By contrast, assuming that what should be done is nothing but what is right seems to give us with all we need. For if non-supererogatory actions are right, there is no need for subjects to act in supererogatory ways, although this would be permissible as well. The distinction between what is right *period* and what is, so to speak, better than what is right *period* that is admitted by "deonticism" can thus help us to solve the problem of supererogation in a natural way.

Moreover, a further problem for consequentialism that is mentioned by the authors pertains to the existence of things that should not be promoted but rather honoured. Consider friendship. It is odd to think that one should not act in a way that friendship is *maximised*. Rather, one should be a good friend, i.e. *honour* friendship. Again, I shall assume that the objection is right and ignore the author's answer to this objection.[607] For my purposes, it is sufficient to show that doing what is right is a formal way of describing what should be morally done and thus admits of different realisations, be it *promoting* the good in some situations but also *honouring* some goods in others. If these constitute intuitive ways of aiming at the right, then there is no need to adopt a disjunctive account of what should be morally done, as appealing to the right encompasses both options and maybe even more.

Let me conclude with a final speculation. So far, I have focused on the debate between deontology and consequentialism by pushing forward a third option called "deonticism". But there is a well-known alternative to deontology and consequentialism, as Ogien and Tappolet acknowledge, namely virtue ethics. One might suspect that the "deonticist" option just sketched after all is nothing but virtue ethics. For the virtuous agent, as Aristotle famously described her, behaves in the right way: she chooses and performs the right actions, feels the right emotions, has the right desires, and does so for the right motives, at the right time, to the right degree, and so on. Her life nicely espouses the contours of the right. If the alternative just sketched collapses into virtue ethics, then I am happy to embrace the conclusion that the careful exploration of the central concepts of ethics suggests adopting virtue theory. This, to

[606] See Ogien & Tappolet 2009.
[607] Idem: 188-198.

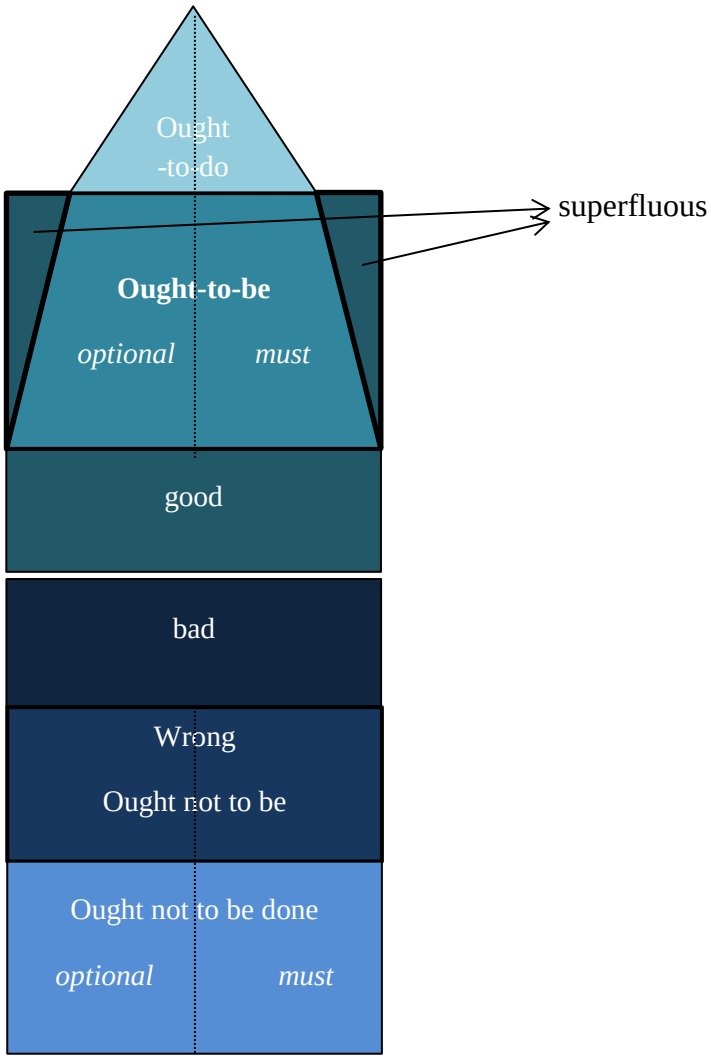
say the least, is a controversial speculation. Still, I hope that it reveals how much the deontic view of desire embraces.

If the observations presented in this chapter are on the right track, it appears that the logic of the liver I have motivated can shed an interesting light on the life of the mind and the world of values and norms that colour our lives with importance. I hope thus that this investigation has rendered justice to the thought that desires are intriguing and beautiful objects that merit to be scrutinised in detail. For without them, our world would be nothing but a flat ocean of dullness. Becoming the galaxy of absent aspirations, the world would lose much of its charm.

Appendix

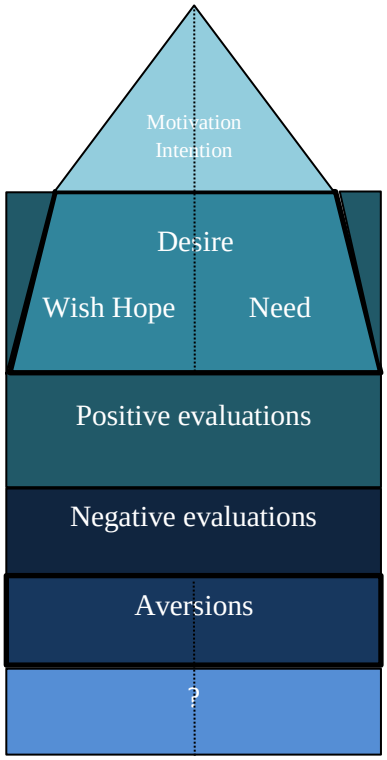
Appendix 1: Values, Ought-to-be and Ought-to-do

This schema represents what I think is the conceptual space of desire, namely the space of the ought-to-be, and the relations between the ought-to-be and other entities within the normative realm. It is to be read as follows. Concerning the upper part of the schema, the one starting with the space of the good, the properties that stand above the others are grounded on the latter. For instance, the ought-to-be is grounded on the good. For the lower part of the schema, what stands above grounds what stands below. For instance, the bad grounds what ought not to be.



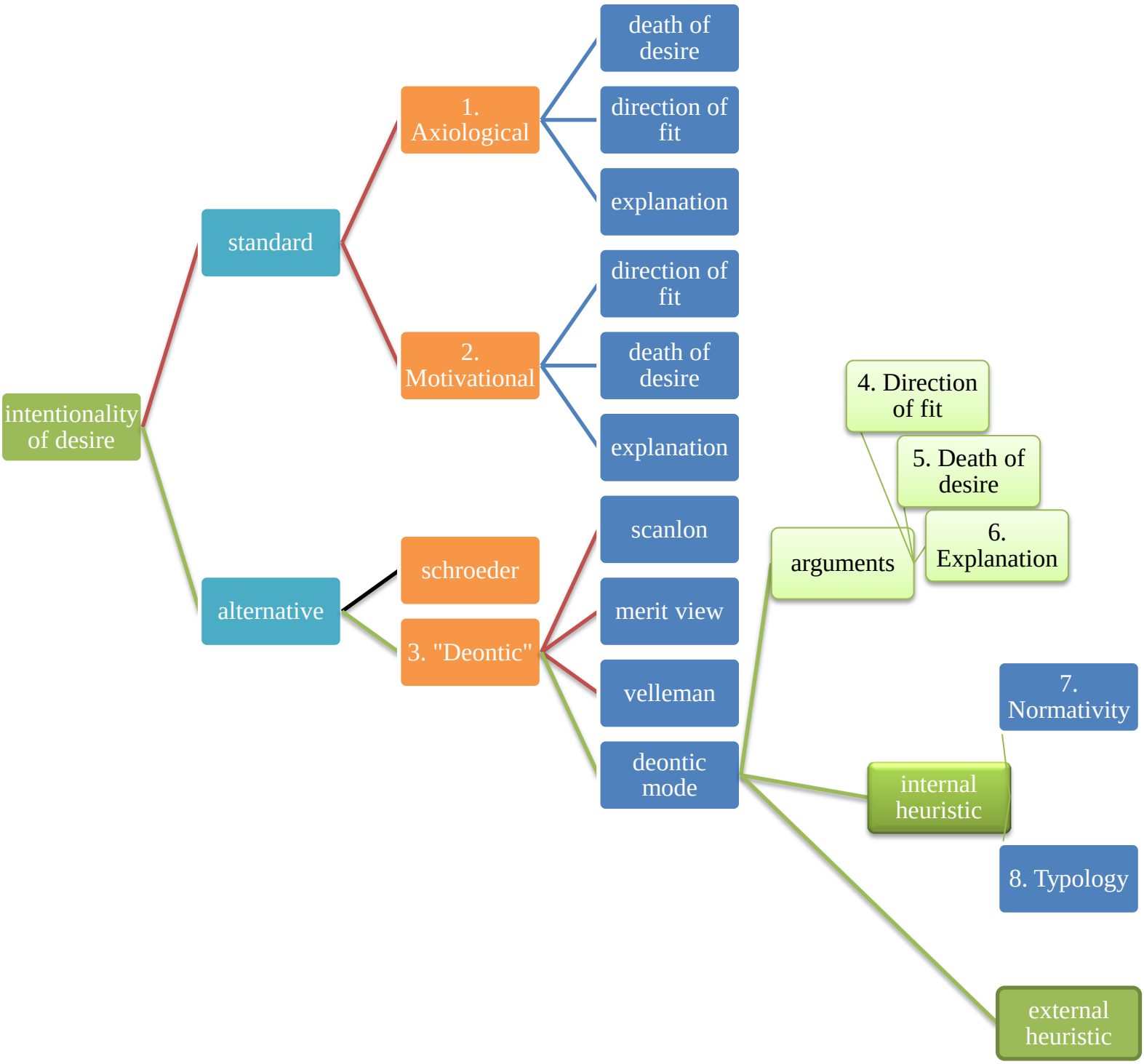
Appendix 2: Evaluation, Desire, and Motivation

This schema represents the mental analogue to the previous one. It describes the intentionality of some mental states with the help of the normative entities presented in the first schema. It is to be read as follows: for instance, desiring is representing a state of affairs as what ought to be. This is grounded on positive evaluations and ground motivational states.



Appendix 3: The Dialectic of the Thesis

This tree summarises the dialectic and structure of the present dissertation. The red path corresponds to the options dismissed, while the black path is the one defended. The numbers refer to the chapters of the dissertation. It can be useful to remember the reader the main articulations of this dissertation.


intentionality of desire
standard
alternative
1. Axiological
2. Motivational
schroeder
3. "Deontic"
death of desire
direction of fit
explanation
direction of fit
death of desire
explanation
scanlon
merit view
velleman
deontic mode
arguments
4. Direction of fit
5. Death of desire
6. Explanation
internal heuristic
7. Normativity
8. Typology
external heuristic

c

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