

## Norms for emotions: intrinsic or extrinsic?

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**Abstract** It is often suggested that emotions are intrinsically normative or that they have conditions of correctness that are intrinsic. In order to assess this thesis, I consider whether the main argument in favor of the normativity of belief can be transposed to emotions. In the case of belief, the argument is that when we wonder whether to believe that *p*, we acknowledge that we must abide by some norms. This is understood as showing that these norms are intrinsic to the concept of belief. In contrast, it appears that no similar constraint applies when we deliberate about emotions. Indeed, I argue that extrinsic norms are sufficient to understand thoroughly the normativity of emotions. Therefore, the postulation of intrinsic norms or correctness conditions seems unmotivated. Worse, if emotions had intrinsic norms or correctness conditions, they would manifest themselves when we wonder whether an emotion is appropriate in this or that context. But they don't.

## 1. Introduction

We make numerous judgments about the appropriateness of emotions or about the emotions that we should or should not experience. Nobody disputes that some of these judgments are grounded on norms that are extrinsic to emotions but that apply to emotions as they apply to action. For instance, prudence seems often to suggest that we should be humble in order to avoid others' jealousy. Maybe, one is even morally required to restrain the joy caused by a success in the presence of less fortunates. Whether it is my own interest or another's interest that is—or engenders—a reason to restrain my pride, in both cases it is clear that the norm<sup>1</sup> that applies to my excitement is not grounded in the very nature of excitement. However, it is often considered obvious that beyond these extrinsic norms, emotions are also subject to intrinsic norms, or at least that there is a sense in which they are correct or incorrect independently of any extrinsic norm.<sup>2</sup> The aim of this paper is to object to these views.

A possible strategy in order to justify the intrinsic normative or correctness of emotions is to claim that emotions have evaluative contents. Indeed, if this is accepted, then it follows that an emotion in response to an object is correct iff the object has the value represented in the emotion's content. For instance, if one holds that fear represents its object as dangerous or fearsome, then it follows that fear is correct iff its object is indeed dangerous or fearsome. Emotions would thus have intrinsic correctness conditions in virtue of the correctness of their evaluative content. However, it is not my aim in this paper to discuss the nature of emotional content and whether emotions represent or present evaluative properties.<sup>3</sup> There are two reasons to take another route. First, it seems to me that the phenomenology of emotions and the nature of their content is not easy to grasp very firmly. Therefore, any objection to the

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<sup>1</sup> In this paper, I use only (with few necessary exceptions) the word 'norm' for normative considerations which might be expressed otherwise in terms of reason, value, normative rules, requirements, etc. and which may be different in nature and in strength since one may argue in particular that prudential, moral, personal and aesthetical norms have very little in common. There are two reasons for that. First, I want to stick to the usage in the literature on the aim of beliefs, which is mostly couched in terms of norms, and not to rephrase it. Second, I do not want to commit myself on the nature of the normative vocabulary or normative properties, objects, or whatever, that are considered. Hence, by talking of norms, my aim is mainly to avoid long disjunctions. For what I have to say, this quite abstract way of talking will be precise enough.

<sup>2</sup> See for instance D'Arms & Jacobson (2000) and authors such as Skorupski (2007) and Danielson & Olson (2007) who attempt through this claim to defend a fitting attitude analysis of value against the so-called wrong kind of reason problem.

<sup>3</sup> For a thorough discussion of the presentational version of this view, see our Dokic & Lemaire (2013).

view that emotions have an evaluative content may lack the kind of immediate appeal that we would like to have. Second, even if we were convinced that the content of emotions is not evaluative, there are other ways to flesh out the idea that emotions are intrinsically normative or have intrinsic correctness conditions.<sup>4</sup> A central one is to claim that emotions are not assessed as correct or incorrect only through an assessment of their content but that this assessment relies partly on the types of emotions we consider and partly on its content. For example, one would claim that an emotion of fear is correct if and only if its object has the property that makes the attitude appropriate—here, danger—although it is not part of the content that the object is dangerous. Given this second avenue to the view that emotions have correctness conditions, it would be nice to have an argument that objects directly to the idea that emotions are intrinsically normative or have intrinsic correctness conditions. The goal of this paper is to provide such an argument. My strategy to reach this goal is to transpose and assess the main argument that has been offered in favour of the intrinsic normativity or correctness of beliefs. This argument, that I will call the doxastic deliberation argument, starts from what is presented as a fact about deliberation. Then, it claims that the best explanation of this fact is that beliefs are intrinsically normative. Section 2 of the paper is thus very straightforward : I recall the doxastic deliberation argument and I show that its transposition to emotions pleads against the intrinsic normativity of emotions. In section 3, I turn to a more modest strategy to which the defender of the intrinsic normativity or correctness of emotions could retreat. The starting point of the argument would now grant that beliefs and emotions are only subject to extrinsic norms while insisting that the application of these norms relies on an aspect of beliefs and emotions that is independent of the extrinsic norms. The hope would then be that this element of independence is able to ground at least the intrinsic correctness of beliefs and emotions, even if this correctness is understood non-normatively. But again, it will appear that emotions are different from beliefs on this count and that there is no ground to attribute to emotions even non-normative correctness conditions. In Section 4, I consider several objections to my argument and Section 5 draws its main conclusions.

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<sup>4</sup> Mulligan (2007) is certainly a leading proponent of this view. Interestingly, he defends the intrinsic correctness thesis while denying that emotions have evaluative content, or in his words, « disclose values » (p. 222). Deonna & Teroni (2012) have more recently adopted the above combination of views.

## 2. Doxastic deliberation and deliberation about emotions

The doxastic deliberation argument to the effect that beliefs are intrinsically normative starts from what is taken to be a fact : when one wonders whether to believe that *p*, one excludes prudential and other normative considerations in favour of believing that *p* and one focuses exclusively on considerations that are relevant to the truth of *p*. In other words, the question as to whether one should believe that *p* is answered by the question as to whether *p*. As Shah makes very explicit, « the phenomenology of deliberation 5 [...] is that evidence is the only kind of consideration that can provide a reason for belief » (2003 : 464). This phenomenon is called in the literature<sup>5</sup> the *transparency* of doxastic deliberation. Once this much is accepted, one may wonder why doxastic deliberation is regulated by an exclusive concern for truth? The response offered by the normativist about beliefs is that it is because our concept of belief encompasses a norm to the effect that one should believe that *p* if and only if *p*.<sup>6</sup> Starting with the phenomenon of transparency, we conclude that beliefs are intrinsically normative.

Can we transpose this doxastic deliberation argument to emotions ? In order to respond to this question, we need first to clarify what would be the transposition of the argument to emotions. It would run like this : First, we deliberate about the kind of emotions which we should have in response to this or that object. Second, this deliberation about emotions sets aside some considerations and focuses exclusively on others. Therefore the concept of each type of emotion encompasses a norm that tells precisely which considerations are acceptable when we deliberate whether one should have an emotion of that type.

Do we have the elements to make the argument go through ? Firstly, do we deliberate about the emotions that we should have in this or that context ? We do. Moreover this deliberation is not completely inefficient. If I become convinced that my rage in a given context is counterproductive, it may help me to control my emotion and thus to have a different emotion. It may even change my emotional dispositions. For sure, we do not have emotions at will but the same remark is true for beliefs. Even if the deliberations about which beliefs or which emotions we should have do not directly and immediately change our beliefs and emotions, they nevertheless inform and affect the for-

<sup>5</sup> This literature has its roots in Evans (1982) and Moran (2001).

<sup>6</sup> Several objections have been raised about this formulation of the norm. For the sake of the argument, I will make as if there is a formulation of this norm that avoids the objections that have been raised. For a very recent defense of the possibility of such a formulation, see Engel (2013).

mation of our beliefs and emotions. The first element is thus present : we deliberate about emotions and it influences our emotional dispositions. Let us then see if we have the second element : Does deliberation about emotions exclude some considerations at the benefit of others ? To begin with, there is an important dissymmetry between doxastic deliberation and deliberation about emotions insofar as various practical norms are considered relevant in the latter case. Prudential considerations are central and seem able to explain thoroughly why and when we consider emotions such as fear, disgust and jealousy as appropriate. Moral considerations seem to underlie the appropriateness of shame and guilt. They seem to contribute also to some of our judgments about the appropriateness of sadness and admiration. In particular, it is certainly for moral reasons that we believe that it is proper to—or that we should—admire moral behaviours. Consider even the case of sadness. Although not obvious at first sight, it seems that sadness is sometimes required for moral reasons. If I am not sad enough over the death of my friend, I know that some will consider that I am somehow unfaithful to our friendship or even that I was only pretending to consider him as a friend of mine. Beyond prudential and moral considerations, aesthetic considerations seem to bear on the appropriateness of laughter, amusement and admiration, among others. Finally, if we look at the various positive and negative emotions that result from the fulfillment or frustration of our desires (e.g. joy and disappointment), it seems that our deliberation focuses on the question whether the desires themselves, as the underlying causes of these emotions, were rational : we wonder whether having the desire was in the first place a good idea, whether we had the means to fulfill our desire, whether its object would really make us happy, good, etc. In short, if we deliberate about emotions, this deliberation is not exclusively focused on considerations that could be interpreted in terms of truth conditions or in term of *sui generis* norms that would be specific to emotions<sup>7</sup> whereas it seems that doxastic deliberation excludes all the considerations that are not related to the truth of the content of the belief considered.

The foregoing remarks may lead the defender of intrinsic normativity to claim that all that has been shown is that the intrinsic norms of emotions must be understood in terms of norms that are prudential, moral, aesthetic, etc. Why not suggest that the intrinsic norms of each type of emotions are in terms

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<sup>7</sup> Indeed, it has been argued by several authors (Skorupski, 2007 ; Danielson and Olson, 2007; and more recently Chappell, 2012) that there is something like a concept of evaluative reason, of correctness or of fittingness which is relevant when one considers the appropriateness of emotions and which is a primitive normative notion.

of these norms? Indeed, there is after all no reason to consider that intrinsic norms must be *sui generis* norms. Why not suggest then that each type of emotion has an intrinsic link to some norms, although the existence of these norms does not rely on emotions. For instance, it would be part of the concept of fear that its appropriateness should be understood exclusively in terms of prudential considerations. We would thus have again for each type of emotion a divide between a set of intrinsic norms and the extrinsic norms excluded from the first set.

Although interesting, I believe that this proposal is much less plausible than the alternative one to the effect that all the norms just considered apply without discrimination to all emotions. For instance, prudential norms apply to almost all types of emotions: to fear and disgust very obviously, but to many others, maybe to all others. For instance, even if there are moral reasons to experience guilt, the experience of guilt should not be so important as to prevent agents from acting with a certain degree of spontaneity at least in some circumstances. Even if guilt is morally justified insofar as it indicates that one is taking responsibility for one's deed, guilt must end at some point. Why? For prudential reasons: because guilt diminishes our well-being and diminishes our ability to act spontaneously, it should not be too important. Similarly, anger is certainly required for prudential reasons as a response to acts of aggression, and especially to illegitimate ones, but there is also a point at which too much anger seems to diminish our well-being more than it helps us to confront situations of conflict. The argument can be generalized to all negative emotions. Even if negative emotions are not considered as required by prudential reasons as fear and disgust are, there is a degree at which and objects for which the loss of well-being produced by these negative emotions outweighs their moral or prudential benefits. This point can even be extended to positive emotions. On the one hand, we certainly have prudential reasons to experience positive emotions insofar as some of them are good to experience. But, on the other hand, there are also prudential limits since it is prudent to be aware of and to worry to some extent about the dangers and all the ways in which our actions and life might go wrong. In other words, norms of prudence explain why we should favour positive emotions and limit them. Therefore, I claim that the upshot of all these considerations is that emotions are not paired with specific norms to the exclusion of others in virtue of their own nature. Rather, the appropriateness of emotions is better understood as the result of general and extrinsic norms that are not specific to any type of emotion. They only apply differently depending on the nature of these emotions and their objects.

In summary, deliberation about emotions does not exclude extrinsic norms such as prudential, moral or aesthetic norms. Moreover, it cannot even be argued that within these considerations we can discern those which are intrinsic to each type of emotion and those which are extrinsic. To this extent, deliberation about emotions differs from doxastic deliberation because only the latter is able to distinguish intrinsic norms and to exclude prudential, moral and aesthetic norms as extrinsic.

Now, the defender of the intrinsic normativity of emotions can still argue that even if extrinsic norms apply to emotions very broadly, it does not prove that emotions have no intrinsic norm that operates by default. She may acknowledge that practical considerations sometimes overwhelm the intrinsic norm of emotions but that nevertheless each type of emotion has its proper intrinsic norms. The problem with that response is that prudential, moral and aesthetic considerations, which are all extrinsic norms, seem *sufficient* to explain thoroughly our intuitions about the norms of emotions. This point has already been very clear with fear and disgust, for which prudential norms provide all we need to explain the appropriateness of fear. Similarly, we have seen that the norms that apply to shame can be completely understood in terms of moral and prudential norms. Finally, emotions such as amusement seem to be explainable as we have seen above in terms of prudential norms and in terms of aesthetic norms : some fun but not too much insofar as many situations seems to require other responses. And when one wonders at which joke one should laugh, the answer is certainly : at the jokes that are superior in terms of one or another aesthetic property. For sure, to determine precisely for all emotions the extrinsic norms that could explain their normativity is a task that has yet to be accomplished. But there is no reason from the cases already considered to doubt that it can be achieved. Therefore, one may wonder : why should we hypothesize intrinsic norms if we do not need them to explain our judgments about the appropriateness of emotions ? Obviously, the burden of proof falls on those who claim that emotions have intrinsic norms.

Another response that I am going to develop in the next section is to grant that emotions have no intrinsic norms while insisting that they nevertheless have non-normative correctness conditions. A good reason to follow this path is that one may argue that this is in fact true of beliefs. Hence, if this strategy proves successful for beliefs, why could we not apply it to emotions ?

### 3. Categorisation schemes and force-makers

To begin with, this more modest strategy raises a doubt about the starting point of the doxastic deliberation argument. As we have already seen, this starting point is the supposedly obvious fact that doxastic deliberation excludes all non-evidential considerations. But is this truly a fact? Consider a woman who reflects on the best strategy to win a 100-meter race. Let us suppose that she has come across empirical studies which show that believing that one is going to win increases the probability of winning. Given her goal, it is perfectly clear that, in order to assess whether she should believe that she is going to win, she can and should take into account that it will improve her probability of winning. In other words, the question as to whether to believe that *p* does not reduce to the question as to whether *p*.

The normativist about beliefs is not defeated by such an objection. She may acknowledge that practical considerations sometimes overwhelm the intrinsic norm of belief but that nevertheless the concept of belief implies that one should believe the truth by default. As we have already seen with emotions, the problem with that response is that it can be argued, as Papineau (2013) has indeed, that the only norms that require us to believe truths are extrinsic, that is, prudential, moral or maybe personal.<sup>8</sup> Why should one be interested in truth if it does not further any of our interests—among which we may count our interest for truth—or any of the interests that we should pursue? Therefore, the burden of proof falls again on those who wish to claim that belief encompasses an intrinsic norm of truth.

In what follows, I do not intend to show that such an argument cannot be given in the case of belief. Rather, I will suggest that if there may be grounds for such an argument in the case of belief, we lack similar grounds in the case of emotions. More precisely, I will show that even if we assume, for the sake of the argument, that beliefs have only extrinsic norms, beliefs still have a relation to truth that plays a role in relation to these norms. In contrast, it will appear that emotions are not similar on this count.

Let us then assume for the sake of the argument that no ought applies to beliefs in virtue of their nature. If truth is to be pursued, it is only in virtue of extrinsic norms such as prudential or moral norms as Papineau suggests. However, even if the norms that demand of us to have true beliefs are extrinsic, the distinction between true and false beliefs is not itself extrinsic to

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<sup>8</sup> I do not take any stance on the view suggested by Papineau and according to which there are personal norms. This is certainly not required by the argument that I develop here.

beliefs. The latter exists independently of any extrinsic norm and is relevant for the norms that apply to beliefs. As Tim Schroeder has rightfully shown, two elements need to be distinguished when considering a norm. As an initial step, norms « may be thought of as dividing up domains into mutually exclusive and jointly exhaustive categories. Thus, etiquette divides actions into those which are polite, those which are impolite and those which are neither. » (2003 : 2). However, the existence of such a *categorisation scheme*, as Schroeder calls it, is insufficient in and of itself to constitute a norm. For a norm to exist, something more is needed that Schroeder calls the *force-maker*. On Schroeder's view, this is « what takes one category and makes it true that it is the good, to be preferred, correct, or otherwise normatively positive category. » (2003 : 3). Relying on this conceptual apparatus, the distinction between true and false beliefs appears as a categorisation scheme that is in need of a force-maker. Papineau's view can thus be specified by saying that although the force-makers of the norms that apply to belief are extrinsic, these extrinsic force-makers nevertheless give force to a categorisation scheme that is independent of these norms. In a nutshell, the categorisation scheme that distinguishes true from false beliefs receives extrinsic force-makers in the form of extrinsic norms such as the rules of prudence, morality or even the pursuit of personal goals.

Moreover, it must be emphasized that it is *in virtue* of the externality of the force-makers that considerations that are not evidence should be excluded in doxastic deliberation. It is because I want to fulfill my desires or because I have duties that I need to have good information about the world. Without correct information about the world, I would risk failing in both aims. Thus, it appears paradoxically that it is precisely because we pursue practical ends that our beliefs must track the truth. No doubt, we have practical reasons to believe what may not be true in specific circumstances such as the 100 meters competition considered above. However, in most cases, it is precisely because the force-makers of the norm that apply to beliefs are extrinsic that doxastic deliberation must exclude the considerations that are irrelevant to the truth of the belief considered. It is because we want to succeed in our action that we need true beliefs. Indeed, the more important our aims are, the more we must abide by the truth norm. In other words, the claim that the force-makers of the norms that apply to belief are extrinsic allows us to understand why these force-makers apply to a categorisation scheme that is independent of them.

In summary, even though the force-makers of the norms that apply to beliefs are extrinsic, it seems that these extrinsic norms apply to a categorisation scheme that distinguishes true from false beliefs and which is independent of these extrinsic norms. The normativist about beliefs may not be satisfied by

these concessions but at least they mark what his opponent must concede, and on which the former may hope to argue in favor of the intrinsic correctness or even normativity of beliefs. However, my aim here is not to see whether we can construct such an argument for belief. Rather, I will show that there is no reason to attribute to emotions a proper and similar independent categorisation scheme. It will follow that the case for an intrinsic correctness or normativity for emotions is even worse than the parallel case for beliefs insofar as emotions lack an independent categorisation scheme.

Let us then return to deliberation about emotions. We have already seen that extrinsic considerations are relevant to deliberation about emotions. To this extent, there is a point in arguing that the norms that apply to both emotions and beliefs are extrinsic. However, we have seen that the categorisation scheme in the case of belief is not reducible to the extrinsic norms that apply to beliefs. If prudence is the force-maker of belief norms, the categorisation scheme to which the force-maker applies distinguishes true from false beliefs. Does our deliberation about emotions show a similar dissociation? It does not. Consider deliberation about fear. The only relevant consideration is obviously prudential: If the object is dangerous, fear is appropriate and if it is not, fear is inappropriate; there is nothing to add to that. The norm of prudence is thus the force-maker of the norm insofar as it is in virtue of prudential norms that it is appropriate to be afraid of dangerous objects. But, in addition—and this is the crucial point—the norm of prudence determines also the categorisation scheme of the norm since this categorisation scheme divides fears into those that are prudent and those that are not prudent. Indeed, this seems to be just another way to say that fear is justified if and only if it is prudentially justified in response to danger. Thus, the extrinsic norm of prudence does all the work insofar as it is responsible for the categorisation scheme that distinguishes fears as prudent or not, and insofar as it also provides the force-maker—prudential norms—for which we should choose the first class of fears—those that are prudent. Bringing these two elements together, we obtain the following trivial result: it is in virtue of prudential norms that we should have prudential fears! Though trivial, it must be contrasted with the corresponding *motto* for beliefs: it is in virtue of prudential norms that we should have true beliefs.

If we now add the results of the previous section to those of the present one, it seems that the comparison between doxastic deliberation and deliberation about emotions reveals the kind of norms that apply to emotions. The main difference between these norms is that extrinsic norms are all we need to assess the appropriateness of emotions. Not only do extrinsic norms ap-

ply to fear but they provide us with the categorisation scheme with regard to which the extrinsic norms are force-makers. We do not need anything else in order to apply these extrinsic norms. In contrast, the norms that apply to beliefs, even if extrinsic, rely on or make use of an independent categorisation scheme which may allow us to say that beliefs have intrinsic correctness conditions in a non-normative sense. This latter fact may even be a starting point to argue that beliefs are intrinsically normative, although it seems to me that if the transparency of doxastic deliberation is not a fact, the normativist about belief still has to provide us with a good argument to convince us of her view.

#### 4. Objections

Among the possible objections that may be raised against the above arguments, I will discuss three of them. The first one is to point out that emotions have a biological function as beliefs do. Hence, the argument goes, there is a sense in which emotions have intrinsic correctness conditions and maybe even normative correctness conditions.

This argument faces two problems. First, biological functions are not normative. Admittedly, the biological function of, say, beliefs is to track the truth and to this extent, one may say that beliefs accomplish correctly their function when they are true. In that sense, beliefs are correct if and only if they are true. However, to ascribe a biological function to a system is not to ascribe it a normative property and as such, biological functions are not force-makers. This is because to say that a system or an organ has a biological function is just to recall that it has been selected for certain effects in the past. It says nothing about the effects that it should have. That is why there is a crucial difference between a system that has been built with the intention of accomplishing a certain function, in which case a norm applies to the system in virtue of the intention that has been conducive to its existence, and the case of natural evolution where no such intention is present. Thus, although beliefs have correctness conditions as products of evolution, these correctness conditions are not normative. This argument applies to all mental states and especially to emotions. Hence, that emotions have been selected because they were efficient responses for our survival and reproduction allows us to say that they have correctness conditions but not that they have normative correctness conditions.

At this juncture, the defender of intrinsic correctness might think however that she has all she wants : have we not just granted that emotions have

non-normative intrinsic correctness conditions? Yes, but the problem of these correctness conditions is that they cannot play the role of the categorisation scheme for which prudential or other extrinsic norms would provide their force-makers. The reason is that neither prudential nor moral nor any other extrinsic norm may favour emotions that are correct from an evolutionary point of view. Consider the case of envy. It may be, and at least it could be, that whatever person you consider, it is neither moral nor prudential to be envious of her. Hence, not only would the correctness conditions not be themselves normatives but they will not receive the support of extrinsic norms. In other words, while extrinsic norms and intrinsic conditions of correctness can be added to yield norms that apply to beliefs, this is not true for emotions because they are not suited for one another. The extrinsic norms that are the force-makers apply only to the categorisation scheme that divides emotions as, for instance, prudent or not. They do not, except by accident, apply to the emotions that are correct from an evolutionary point of view.

It might be replied that the crucial point is the existence of these intrinsic correctness conditions, and not that there are no extrinsic norms that enforce the intrinsic correctness conditions. The lack of extrinsic norms to have the emotions that are intrinsically correct may even be considered as a further reason to see the correctness of emotions as independent from extrinsic considerations.

But then one might wonder why we should be concerned with these correctness conditions. Consider again the case of envy or, at least, of a possible emotion close to envy. Let us assume that nature has endowed us with a disposition to experience this emotion in order to reproduce ourselves as much as possible even if at a very high price. To this extent, envy has correctness conditions from an evolutionary point of view. But why should we bother to be correctly envious? For sure, one might reply that there may be no response to this question and that one is ill-advised to ask for a justification of correctness conditions. One should simply acknowledge the fact that these intrinsic correctness conditions exist.

However, this answer cannot be offered by those who take evolutionary considerations as their starting point in order to explain the correctness conditions of emotions. For if biological functions set correctness conditions, it is in virtue of their effects. Therefore, it is incoherent to claim on the one hand that no explanation is needed in order to show that some correctness conditions are relevant to us, and on the other hand to build the correctness conditions for emotions on considerations that explain their existence in terms of their effects.

Let us then turn to a second objection. Against the argument presented in the previous section, one might be tempted to insist that emotions are not really different from beliefs since they cannot be appropriate if their content is not true. Hence, it might be argued that emotions can also be categorised as having a true or false content. Isn't this not showing that emotions are similar to belief insofar as they both have an independent categorisation scheme ?

Unfortunately, this objection relies on a conflation, for we must distinguish the norms that apply to the cognitive base of emotions and the norms that apply to emotions themselves. Certainly, if one experiences fear in response to the illusory perception of a dog, the emotion is inappropriate, but this is only because the perceptual experience is itself incorrect. The appropriateness of emotions relies on these other norms when they exist but they are not thereby intrinsic to emotions. Indeed, it is worth noticing that an emotion in response to an imagined fact may be appropriate although the imagined fact need not be true. This shows, first, that the appropriateness of an emotion does not systematically rely on the truth of its content or of its cognitive base. Perceptions and beliefs are not the only possible cognitive bases of emotions. Secondly, it shows that the appropriateness of emotions in its wider sense has two components, a component that applies to its cognitive base and another component that applies to emotions once its cognitive base is correct. Since the former cannot be seen as intrinsic to emotions insofar as it concerns primarily the normativity of the cognitive bases of emotions and only derivatively the normativity of emotions, it cannot ground an argument for the intrinsic normativity of emotions.

A final objection might go in the opposite direction : it would claim that there is no difference between the categorisation schemes of the norms that apply to beliefs and emotions. After all, we can categorize beliefs by distinguishing those that are prudential from those that are not. Therefore, the objection goes, they both distinguish prudent from imprudent states, whether these states are emotions or beliefs. For sure, prudential beliefs are in most cases true beliefs, but one can insist that this is not sufficient to distinguish beliefs from emotions. Therefore, I would not have shown that the categorisation scheme of the norms that apply to emotions is relevantly different from the categorisation scheme of the norms that apply to beliefs.

The main problem with this objection is that this way of closing the gap between emotions and beliefs goes in the wrong direction. Instead of showing that emotions are similar to beliefs in having an independent categorisation scheme, it shows that beliefs are similar to emotions in having no categorization scheme independent of extrinsic norms. Therefore, this objection is

nothing other than a further concession to those who claim that beliefs have no intrinsic correctness conditions. In any case, it is worth noticing that even if we grant that the normativity of belief is closer to that of the emotions, it is still true that the prudential assessment of a belief needs always to take into account the value increase that would result from the success of actions guided by a true rather than a false belief. Furthermore, insofar as we can conjecture that nearly any belief may contribute to the guidance of some action the success of which has some importance, the question as to whether we should believe *p* most frequently boils down to the question as to whether *p* is true. The cases in which the prudential norms to adopt a belief that *p* do not rely on the guiding role of *p* in action are certainly rare. This shows that even if it may be granted that the distinction between prudential and non-prudential beliefs cannot be reduced to the distinction between true and false beliefs, in most cases, the prudential beliefs will identify with the true ones. At the end of the day, this is a fact that does not apply to emotions since the appropriateness of emotions need not appeal to the notion of truth at any stage if we exclude the norms that apply to its cognitive base.

## 5. Conclusion

In this paper, I have tried to consider arguments from the ongoing debate on the aim of belief in order to assess whether emotions are intrinsically normative or have intrinsic correctness conditions without making any hypothesis on the evaluative content or nature of emotions. The central argument in this debate starts from the phenomenon of transparency that is taken to be manifest in doxastic deliberation. However, it appears that deliberation about emotions is *not* governed by a similar constraint: extrinsic norms such as prudential norms are relevant when we assess whether we should, say, fear the barking dog. In order to avoid this objection, the defender of the intrinsic normativity or correctness of emotions may adopt a more modest strategy. She may grant that there is no phenomenon of transparency and that only extrinsic norms regulate the question as to whether one should believe something. Nevertheless, she may insist that the categorisation scheme that distinguishes true beliefs from false ones is independent from the force-makers that apply to it and that this may, at least, ground that belief has intrinsic non-normative correctness conditions. She would finally contend that a similar argument can be constructed in the case of emotions. But, as we have seen, this is not the case. Hence, the comparison between doxastic deliberation and deliberation

about emotions teaches us several things. It shows that we do appeal to extrinsic considerations to assess our emotions and moreover that these extrinsic norms are sufficient to understand everything we need concerning the normativity of emotions. Even the categorisation schemes to which extrinsic norms apply are derived from these extrinsic norms. In my view, this provides a serious objection against the idea that emotions have intrinsic normativity or correctness conditions ; if emotions were intrinsically normative or have intrinsic correctness conditions, then these intrinsic features of emotions would manifest themselves when we deliberate about them.

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