Organon F 20 (4) 2013: 507-526

The Distinctive Rationality of Intentions[1]

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RECEIVED: 30-09-2012 • ACCEPTED: 27-02-2013

ABSTRACT: In this paper I intend to defend Broome's cognitivist view that reduces practical normativity to theoretical normativity, but argue that this leaves unaccounted for distinctively practical norms that I seek to capture as a system of local obligations to have particular intentions. The krasia requirement dictates what obligations we have relative to the normative beliefs that we have but does not tell us what intentions it is rational to have all-things-considered.

KEYWORDS: Broome – cognitivism – krasia – practical rationality.

1. Cognitivism and normativity

This paper attempts to account for a distinctively practical normativity. What normativity is this, exactly? Is there a normativity involved in practical reasoning that is distinct from that involved in theoretical reasoning? It is not enough to say simply that these are different kinds of reasoning with different subject-matters and have intentions or actions as their conclusion. In other words, before I can even get started, I need to narrow down what is distinctive, and to do this I need to discuss cognitivism.

[1] The author would like to acknowledge that funding for this paper was received from the FCT Portugal under grant awards "Argumentation, Communication and Context", PTDC/FIL-FIL/110117/2009 and "Is moral reasoning essentially dialogical?" SFRH/BPD/77687/2011.

Cognitivism generally is the thesis that norms of practical rationality are to be accounted for in terms of norms of theoretical rationality, i.e., norms concerning doxastic states like belief. If cognitivism is true, then there is no distinctively practical normativity; hence, we must find some normativity that cognitivism does not explain. I will take a norm of practical reasoning and show what normativity remains unexplained by a given cognitivist account. This residuum will then be whatever is distinctive and will be the explanandum for a non-cognitivist account. The basis of this non-cognitivist account will be the *krasia requirement*.

For my norm of practical reasoning I will give the *instrumental requirement*:

(IR_W) Rationality requires that (if I intend to x and believe that y is a means to x-ing, then I should intend to y).[2]

This seems to be basic to any reasoning about what to do. For my cognitivist account I will give Broome's (2009) attempt to give a cognitivist account of IR_W. Broome attempts to show that the normativity involved in IR_W can be accounted for by the normativity involved in norms that say, for example, that you should not hold inconsistent beliefs. In particular, he attempts to show that it is by satisfying requirements on theoretical reasoning that we bring ourselves to satisfy IR_W.

Broome's method of accounting for IR_W is to describe a process of reasoning that satisfies it by satisfying a requirement of theoretical rationality. Kolodny (2005) argues that "for any rational requirement on you, there must be a process of reasoning through which you can bring yourself to satisfy that requirement," but Broome (2006, 2) quite explicitly rejects Kolodny's arguments for this view, expressing agnosticism towards its conclusion, and in Broome (2009) we see why, for he says:

> The attitudes that can figure in your conscious reasoning must be ones you are conscious of, which is to say ones you believe you have. Conversely, if you believe you have an attitude that actually you do not have,

[2] There is ongoing debate I do not mean to survey here whether wide or narrow-scope requirements are to be preferred and over what issues should determine our preference. I will assume a wide-scope requirement. If there is a cognitivist account of a wide-scope requirement then there ought to be a similar account of the corresponding narrow-scope requirement, so the distinction should not matter for my purposes.

> the fact that you do not have it cannot impinge on your conscious reasoning.
>
> The consequences are disturbing from a theoretical point of view. They leave us with an unpleasant dilemma... [R]easoning cannot [always] bring you to satisfy *Instrumental requirement* [sic]. We shall have to conclude either that *Instrumental requirement* [sic] is not a genuine requirement of rationality, or alternatively that it is a genuine requirement but not one that reasoning can always bring you to satisfy. (Broome 2009, 18)

By describing such a process Broome does not take himself to be proving IR_W to be a genuine requirement,[3] and, there being some cases (where the reasoner believes that they have an intention they do not actually have) where IR_W cannot be so satisfied, Broome explicitly leaves this issue open. By appealing to requirements that can be satisfied by reasoning Broome is limiting what a cognitivist account has to explain, viz., the normative force of IR_W and not its substance, where this means that it is not required that practical norms be equivalent in extension to theoretical norms but only that the normative force of the former be derivable from or reducible to the normative force of the latter.

I will give the useful summarization of Broome's account given in Bratman (2009, 31-32), who refers to a requirement of theoretical reasoning he calls BC (Bratman 2009, 14) where this can be defined as:

> (BC_W) Rationality requires that (if you believe that E and you believe that E will only occur if M, then you should believe M).

Armed with IR and BC (which I have called IR_W and BC_W and substituted into what follows) he shows how, by satisfying BC, Broome hopes to show that a reasoner can satisfy IR:

(1) Intention is not belief.
(2) It is not in general true that if you intend E you believe E.

This last is because (and here Broome and I agree)

(3) You can sometimes intend E but fail to believe you intend E; and in such cases you may well not believe E.
(4) But, if you do believe you intend E then you will believe E.

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[3] Høj (2009, 2) mistakenly attributes Kolodny's view to Broome too.

(5) And for your intention to E to enter into practical reasoning about means to E, you need to believe you intend E.
(6) So when your intention to E enters into your practical reasoning about means to E, you believe E.
(7) And it is this belief that E that provides the premise for your reasoning, namely: E.
(8) If you also believe that E only if M, and if these beliefs do not change, BC_W requires that you believe M; and that is where your reasoning can lead.
(9) But if in the "background" you believe that M will obtain only if you intend M, then if you do arrive at the belief that M this will normally be by way of intending M. In satisfying BC_W in this way you will satisfy IR_W.

This, then, is Broome's broadly cognitivist picture of reasoning from intended ends to intended means. Broome wants to acknowledge, though, that it remains possible to intend E, believe that this requires both M and that you intend M, but falsely believe that you intend M. Broome grants that in such a case you fail to satisfy IR_W, though you may well satisfy BC_W. But, says Broome,

(10) In such a case "your false belief blocks any reasoning that can bring you to satisfy IR_W." So,
(11) Insofar as IR_W is a rational demand that can be satisfied by reasoning it is demand [sic] that derives from BC_W. Insofar as IR_W seems to impose demands that go beyond what is imposed by BC_W, these are not demands that can be satisfied by reasoning.

In this sense, it is BC_W that is fundamental for a theory of practical reasoning from ends to means.

This requires some commentary.

There are basically three parts to this summary. The first part consisting of steps (1) to (7) are meant to justify "I believe E" as a premise that can be got from the intention that E and that is then used in the conscious reasoning that is modelled in the second part consisting of steps (8) and (9). This reasoning goes:

a) I believe that E.
b) I believe that E only if M.
c) I should believe M.

Step (8b) is the means-end belief and (8c) is derived from (8a) and (8b) by BC_W. Step (9) is meant to go from the belief that M to the intention that M. According to Bratman this is because you believe that M will obtain only if you intend M and so "if you do arrive at the belief that M this will normally be by way of intending M" (Bratman 2009, 32). Høj (2009, 6) breaks this into two stages: normally you would only form the belief that M by forming the belief that you intend that M, and normally you would only form the belief that you intend that M by forming the intention that M.

What Broome actually says is slightly different. He begins:

> Straightforward theoretical reasoning would bring you to believe you will buy a ticket... However, you are limited by a special constraint, which prevents you from doing straightforward theoretical reasoning. You believe you will not buy a ticket unless you intend to do so. Therefore, if you are rational, you cannot come to believe you will buy a ticket... unless you also come to believe you intend to buy a ticket. (Broome 2009, 14)

Since we are prevented from doing "straightforward theoretical reasoning" we cannot go immediately from (8a) and (8b) to (8c); we are prevented from forming the belief that M because we do not now believe we have the intention that M. If, however, the beliefs in (8a) and (8b) remain unchanged [as stipulated in (8)] then the only way to satisfy the rational requirement is to form this belief too. So the belief that M and the belief that I intend that M are formed as part of the same step of reasoning, so to speak, or to put it slightly differently, the conscious reasoning has two conclusion-states which an unconscious process ensures match each other so as not to violate any requirements or introduce any incoherence. This seems similar to the first stage described by Høj although it is not clear whether Høj has realised that the belief that M in (8c) is not caused to occur before the belief that I intend that M is caused. Up to the formation of these conclusion-states it is the theoretical requirement BC_W that captures the normativity of the reasoning.

Broome continues that in normal circumstances "you cannot acquire the belief that you intend to buy a ticket except by actually acquiring the intention of buying one" (Broome 2009, 14), which is to say that the process by which you come to form the belief that you intend that M normally operates by causing you first to intend that M. This seems plausible and similar to the second stage described by Høj. However, there is a dis-

analogy with what Høj says because Høj argues as if both stages are likewise ways of avoiding violation of a requirement of theoretical rationality; this is true of the first stage, but not the second. The connection between the belief that I intend that M and the intention that M is merely a causal dependency and not a normative constraint at all, whether theoretical or practical; it is not that an intention that M is rationally required for forming the belief that I intend that M.

The third part consisting of steps (10) and (11) is Broome's defence of the idea that IR_W can in some sense be derived from BC_W or more generally from requirements on theoretical reasoning despite the fact that a reasoner may be completely theoretically rational and yet be instrumentally irrational because failing to have the appropriate intention. Broome (2009, 17-18) says that when this happens there is no way of getting out of this situation by reasoning because the false belief blocks any such reasoning. You cannot, as Bratman would like to do, reason to an actual intention.[4]

Let us look at these three parts in order.

What is the relation between intending that E and the belief that you will E? We need the latter for use as a premise in (7) and it is questionable whether we are entitled to it. Broome's view expressed in (1) to (3) contrasts with the view that intending something entails that you believe you will do it. Bratman (2009, 21) calls this the Strong Belief Thesis and rejects it. There are two reasons why an agent may be reluctant to believe that E: because they believe that their attempt to carry out the intention will not succeed or because they believe that they will not carry out the intention at all, possibly because at the time the intention should have been carried out they will have ceased to believe (having forgotten) that they have the intention. The first might be described by saying "I will try that E," but the second is best described simply by saying "I intend that E (but may not)". It is the second that seems to be reported in (3) which says that you may well not believe that E because you fail to believe you intend that E although you do in fact intend it, and it is this that Broome wants to allow for by replacing the Strong Belief Thesis with what he calls the *belief-intention link* (Broome 2009, 12):

[4] Bratman objects that we are not blocked because we can go through the same reasoning again and on this occasion the intention may be caused to occur. This is true, but a more charitable interpretation of Broome would ascribe to him the view that no process of reasoning can be guaranteed to result in an intention.

Belief–intention link:
If N believes that she herself intends that p, then, because of that, N believes that p.

If N has forgotten that she has the intention that E then she will not believe that E, but if she has not forgotten then this link implies that she must believe that E. However, this does not seem to cover the case where you may not believe that E because you think your attempt to E may fail. Broome seems to say that in such cases what you have is not really an intention but something weaker that is not subject to the same norms, but it will be shown that this kind of response is evasive. An equally evasive alternative is to say that it is true if the content of the intention does not involve a success-verb, such as would be the case if the intention were for a basic action (a bodily movement). Taking all the necessary steps for buying a ticket might then count as buying a ticket and we can be confident that we will do this even if we are not confident that, having taken these steps, we will be in the state of having bought a ticket, e.g., because there are no tickets left. But this is doubtful as well, for we use success-verbs in our reasoning and do not seem to be conscious of using them in anything other than their ordinary senses.

The reasoning process as Broome presents it consists of saying things to yourself. Saying to yourself (or another) "I will E" as an intention and not as a predictive belief expresses both the intention that E and the belief that you intend that E, since you are not in a position to say sincerely that you intend that E unless this intention is one you believe you have. In saying it sincerely you are also expressing the corresponding predictive belief [i.e., the belief in (7)], argues Broome:

> You cannot sincerely express an intention to do something without believing you have that intention. Consequently, when you sincerely express an intention, you must believe you will do what you intend. That is why you are in a position to express this belief simultaneously.
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> The evidence I offer for the existence of this belief-intention link is just that expressing an intention is also expressing a belief; both take the form of saying the same indicative sentence. So you cannot express an intention without expressing a belief that you will do what you intend. And you cannot do that sincerely without having the belief. (Broome 2009, 12-13)

This is Broome's argument for the *belief-intention link*. The first sentence seems reasonable: if I do not believe that I have the intention that E, I cannot sincerely say "I will E" or even "I intend that E," and I cannot engage conscious reasoning on the basis of attitudes that I do not believe I have.

How "consequently" I must believe that E does not seem at all obvious. The appeal to sincerity suggests that perhaps Broome believes that it is a sincerity condition of the speech act of expressing the intention that E that one believes that E, that a speaker or reasoner would not be entitled to say this unless they believe they will do what they intend to do. This would be an attractive solution if there were such a sincerity condition. Unfortunately there is not: the sincerity condition for expressions of intention and for commissives in general is simply having the intention and not any belief that the intention will be fulfilled (cf. Searle 1979, 14). Nor is it obvious that we do always express an intention and a predictive belief by the same indicative sentence (perhaps Broome believes this by generalizing only from examples that do not involve success-verbs); certainly we do sometimes but it does not seem well-motivated to limit the account to those cases where we would, i.e., intentions for which the *belief-intention link* is true. The norms we are trying to account for seem to apply equally to those cases we would not express by saying "I will E"; whether we call such tentatively held attitudes 'intentions' or not is less important than whether the norms at issue apply to them. Bratman and Høj say that they do and I am inclined to agree that this is correct. However, I think this is less of a problem for Broome's model than may be thought. Broome does not need to limit his account to intentions that satisfy the *belief-intention link*; reasoning with weak intentions is simply to reason *ex hypothesi*, just as we may construct and follow arguments whose premises we believe to be false. We do not need to actually be sincere in order to reason as if we are.

To say that an intention is weak is only to say that one is more easily disposed to cease having it, in which case, under normal circumstances, one will cease to believe that one has it, and, if the *belief-intention link* is true, this will mean that I will not believe that it will be fulfilled. Let us look at the wording of (8): "If you also believe that E only if M, and *if these beliefs do not change*, BC_W requires that you believe M." The grammatical form is deceptive, for it makes BC_W look like a narrow-scope requirement. In fact, it is a wide-scope requirement, viz. "BC_W requires that (if you also believe that E only if M, and *if these beliefs do not change*, BC_W requires that you be-

lieve M)." So this conditional is satisfied if the beliefs do change due to weakness of the intention. In such a case we would not have (8c) as the conclusion-state, but the model never actually said that you would. If they do not change, then the weakness of the intention is immaterial – a weak intention that does not change is on a par with a strong intention that does not change. If this is correct then the problem of weak intentions is a pseudo-problem.

However, this presupposes that the *belief-intention link* is true, and we have seen no convincing argument for this yet. The linguistic fact that we often express both intentions and predictive beliefs as "I will E" is not convincing, yet I think there is something right about what Broome says. Certainly there is something at least a little paradoxical in saying "I intend to return the library books, but they will not be returned," and this seems to be because if I say that I will do something, I usually do so with the intention to make it known to the listener that they are entitled to expect its being done – I am not merely describing my own state of mind but making a kind of normative commitment. It is not entailed that it will be done or that I believe that it will be done – Broome is wrong to present the link as an entailment – but there is an implicature. Like all implicatures it can be cancelled, as we have already seen, by saying something like "I intend that E but I may not succeed".

The interesting thing is, if we accept Broome's idea that reasoning amounts to saying things to oneself, an implicature is enough to get to step (7), and once we have got that far, it is conceded that the reasoning in (8) and (9) is valid. The relation between intending that E and the belief that you will E is the implicature from "I intend that E" to "E" or "E will be done." In turn, this means that when we say to ourselves "I intend that E" we are entitled to say "E" unless we cancel this implicature. In saying this we can still be counted as reasoning if reasoning is a process of saying things to oneself, despite the lack of any deductive entailment.

Has Broome then succeeded in giving a cognitivist account of the instrumental requirement? There are still serious problems. There are timing issues, for surely I am already instrumentally irrational if I do not have coherent intentions, even before I have the belief that I intend the end and even if I never form the belief that I have this intention. Furthermore, the pressure to make myself instrumentally rational should begin as soon as I have this intention and the belief that I have the means to achieve it and not, as Høj (2009, 13-16) says of Broome's model, only after the intention

and the means-end belief have been expressed or even later at the last moment that the means is still effective as a means. Although I am not necessarily irrational when I leave taking the means "to the last moment" it seems that I am under some rational pressure to take the means before then. Lastly, suppose that I do have the intention to take the means yet I do not have coherent beliefs, which is to say that I satisfy IR_W but not BC_W. If I then lose that intention, then surely this is where I begin to be instrumentally irrational and under pressure to remedy that problem, and (says Brunero 2009, 316-317) this is an additional problem and an additional pressure to that due to the fact that I am *already* violating a requirement of theoretical rationality.

Broome has already conceded that there are cases where the theoretical requirements are satisfied and instrumental requirements are not (because the belief that one intends the means is false) and, presumably, also vice versa. Now it seems he must also concede that even in cases where both types of requirement are satisfied, they can be satisfied at different times. Now, we could say that we are not aware of being in violation of the instrumental requirement unless we are conscious of being in an incoherent doxastic state, where this is brought about by being in violation of a theoretical requirement, and it is only then that we can purposely get out of this state by reasoning. Here we appeal to the idea that the normative force of the instrumental requirement can be captured by the normative force of theoretical requirements even if the instrumental requirement itself is not captured by theoretical requirements. Yet it might still be objected that we should not be in a state where we intend an end yet do not intend what we believe to be our preferred means to that end; by being in this state we are violating a rational (state-)requirement. This is a special case of the wider assumption that it is irrational to have incoherent intentions just as it is irrational to have incoherent beliefs. Is this assumption true?

I do not believe that intentions have to be coherent in the same way as beliefs do. This is because I believe that any change to the strength or content of any practical, goal-oriented attitude must be explained by the fact that success at achieving the goal is more likely after that change than before. Let me put it this way: suppose that I form the belief that my goal (moving a log, for instance) is going to be harder to achieve than originally thought. I will be less likely to say, if asked what I am doing, that I am moving the log. I will likely say that I am *trying* to move the log. But what am I actually doing differently from when I would have said "I am moving

the log"? More to the point, what am I actually thinking differently? Has my intention changed to a mere trying, something that is less than a full-blown intention? No: the intention or goal-oriented attitude has the same strength as before. Has the content changed so that I no longer intend to move the log but only intend to try to move the log? No: I would not achieve my goal by reaching the state of having tried. No change of these kinds would make it more likely that I succeed in moving the log. Of course, I may decide that moving the log is so difficult that I abandon it as a goal; this kind of change obviously would not be explained as making achievement of the goal more likely, but this is a different matter. Call this the Evolutionary Advantage Constraint. Making changes to your intentions to make them more coherent will sometimes go against that constraint; it will put you at a disadvantage.

One of the clearest cases is the natural thought that you cannot have inconsistent intentions. I believe that you can have inconsistent intentions. By this I do not mean that one can have directly contradictory intentions: it is more questionable whether one can have the intention to x and the intention not to x at the same time without being irrational (though I will give a scenario where I think this is in fact possible). What I claim is that I may have the intention to x and the intention to y even when I believe that I cannot achieve both x and y together. I believe this is the case in Bratman's video game scenario. In this scenario a person is playing two games simultaneously in each of which one is attempting to hit a target, but the two games are linked in such a way that if he succeeds in one game then the other game shuts down. In short, because of the way it is set up it is impossible for the person playing the game to hit both targets thereby fulfilling both intentions, and the person knows it. The person might describe what he is doing when he is playing the games as *trying* or *intending to try* to hit each target, but Bratman seems to think it would be wrong for them to say that they *intend* to hit each target because this will leave them in the irrational state of having inconsistent intentions.

On the face of it there are two ways in which we might unpack this "trying," two ways in which we might weaken the claim that in each case the person intends to hit the target, referred to above as changing the strength or the content of the attitude. One is to put "try" into the content of the intention, i.e. instead of I(hit the target) having I(try to hit the target). This seems a very unnatural way of doing it – it is not as if the end being aimed at is having tried (although having tried may sometimes be

aimed at, e.g., if what you intend to do next depends on whether you have tried. If you have tried and failed to x by y-ing then you should try to x by z-ing, but you should not intend to z before trying to y).

A more natural way to unpack "trying" is to take it as modifying the intention rather than its content, in other words instead of I(hit the target) having I*(hit the target). Bratman argues that the person does not really *intend* to hit the target (because this results in inconsistent intentions) in either case but has a weaker attitude towards hitting the target that is not subject to the same kind of consistency constraints (although still subject to norms of means-end reasoning). For the sake of convenience I will call this intending-to-try. However, one can ask what this really accomplishes. Should we introduce a distinct kind of attitude simply in order to avoid inconsistency when a full-blown intention is just as likely or perhaps even more likely to succeed? Suppose that one begins playing both games and only learns that it is impossible to fulfil both of one's intentions whilst playing. What advantage to achieving one's intended ends does one gain by modifying one's intentions into intentions-to-try? None at all. Perhaps one might, on learning this, think oneself better off concentrating on just one of the games, but surely one is not rationally required to do so.

What, then, does the person playing the game mean when they say that they will try or intend to try to x? Only that they intend to x but are not confident of success. "Trying" is simply the pragmatic means by which the implicature that we will x is cancelled; it means "I intend to x (but I may not x)".[5]

If this is right then either there is no rational requirement for intentions to be consistent, or there is no evolutionary advantage in being rational in this way and we are better off being irrational. I prefer the first horn of this dilemma; we are not always irrational when we are in the state of having inconsistent intentions.[6] But are we irrational when we are in the

[5] Kolodny suggests something similar in (2008, 395 ff. 34).

[6] Kolodny (2008, 377-378) comes to the same conclusion for the video game case for much the same reasons. He expresses the point in terms of maximizing expected utility. Interestingly, he says that beliefs must always be coherent because avoiding believing a falsehood always has a higher utility than believing a truth. Therefore, if you have contradictory beliefs you believe one falsehood and one truth, yielding a net loss in utility. But this is not always the case with intentions. Having one intention that can be fulfilled and one intention that cannot does not necessarily have lower expected utility than having neither of these intentions. However, it seems to be implied that if fulfil-

state of having an intention for an end and not having the intention to take the means to that end?

Suppose that, because it is the one and only means to some other end that we have, we have the intention not to y. That is to say $I(x_1)$, $I(x_2)$, I(not-y), not-I(y), B(y is the one and only means to x_1), and B(not-y is the one and only means to x_2) where x_1 and x_2 are the intended ends. Obviously x_1 and x_2 can never both be achieved since the means for one denies the means for the other – they are incompatible. But I don't think this means that we must drop $I(x_1)$ or $I(x_2)$; after all, we might think of another means, or if we fail in intentionally taking the means to one of our ends we may wish to switch our focus to the other intention. If I try to carry out my intention not to y but fail then I can form the intention to y or, since it is implied that I have already y-ed (albeit unintentionally) I will find myself in the state of having achieved x_1 unintentionally. Note that this state is not necessarily the state of having x_1-ed; one of the x_1's logical preconditions is false, namely that you are not already in a state that logically precludes the action: you cannot close a window that is already closed, you cannot climb up a mountain when you are already at its summit, you cannot raise an arm that is already raised as high as it will go.

Despite their incompatibility I do not think that it is irrational to keep both $I(x_1)$ and $I(x_2)$. Obviously, we would not make achievement of x_1 and x_2 more likely by dropping them as intentions or weakening them in some way. By extension, the same goes when we add in I(not-y). We have yet to find normativity still requiring explanation.

However, supposing for a moment that intending the means to our end is the rational state to be in, then we are rationally required to have I(y) as well as I(not-y), and, as I have already said, although having incoherent intentions is tolerable having directly contradictory intentions is somewhat

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ling one of the intentions has higher utility than the other then the other should be dropped on the grounds that by intending the other you make it more likely to fulfil that other and, ipso facto, less likely to fulfil the intention that you have more reason to have. I am not so sure of this. The Evolutionary Advantage Constraint does not, then, give precisely the same results as Kolodny's utilities-based account, although it is basically the same idea.

Incidentally, this may tell against Broome's (2007) use of deontic dilemmas to argue against narrow-scope formulations of requirements of practical rationality – we need not assume that the intentions detached from such narrow-scope principles are irrational because incoherent.

more questionable. If we are rational, then we are irrational. In this situation we are not always irrational when we do not intend the means to our end. Perhaps it might be objected that what this means is that we are irrational in keeping both $I(x_1)$ and $I(x_2)$ after all, since it seems that either x_1-ing or x_2-ing must be logically impossible due to a logical precondition being false. This is true, yet as long as we are unaware of which is logically impossible it does not seem to be irrational to be in this state. This is the normativity needing explanation, and it seems to be a distinctively practical normativity, for the cognitivist account is not nuanced enough to allow for cases where the instrumental requirement can rationally be violated, cases where it would be irrational to have the intention even though it is rational to believe that you have the intention.

I will claim now that we *ought* to have the intention for the means and because of this it is generally rational to have this intention, but sometimes it is rational not to have this intention, although this does not mean that the rational requirement to have this intention has not been violated.

Before the theoretical treatment, let me give an example. Suppose, on a cold day, my pet cat stands on the window-ledge, wanting me to open the window and let her in from the cold. I intend to let her in, and, as the means for letting her in, I intend to open the window. At the same time, I have an intention not to let cold air in, and this is what will happen if I open the window. I am in a bit of a dilemma. I decide to do the decent thing and let the cat in. Do I thereby cease to have the intention not to let cold air in, and, once the cat is safely inside, reform that intention and then intend to take the means by closing the now open window? This all seems rather unnecessary. It seems far better to say that I had the intention not to let the cold air in all along. What if the window has got stuck in the cold, that is to say, I intend to open the window and make a genuine attempt to open the window, but I fail? In failing, I have already succeeded in achieving my intention to not let cold air in, not by actually closing the window, it is true, but because the window is already closed. Does this mean that I would be irrational to have the intention of closing the window? There are two reasons why it might be thought so: a) because it contradicts my intention to open the window, and; b) because it is pointless to form intentions to bring about states that already obtain (viz., the window's being closed). On the other hand, it is nevertheless the means to my end of not letting cold air in, and generally it is rational to intend the means to ends that you have and irrational not to. Also, should the window become open,

should it be necessary to form the intention to close it? Wouldn't it be better to say that this intention was already there but dormant in some sense? We do not need to imagine intentions vanishing and being reformed depending on whether the window is opened or closed; this would be a cognitively uneconomical way of doing things. All we have to do is recognize there is more than one way in which an intention can be satisfied – it can be successfully carried out or it can be, I shall say, *escaped*.

Oughts are things that we can satisfy either by doing what we ought or by escaping it. Schroeder (2004, 252-253) gives an example of Al who does not wish to keep his promise to meet Rose for lunch and so asks her to release him from his promise. If she does then it is no longer true that he ought to keep his promise since there is no such promise anymore; it is not that he has kept his promise by being released from it. Rather, he has *escaped* it. Because it does not predict this asymmetry between satisfying an obligation and escaping it, a wide-scope requirement to do what you promise to do is inadequate, Schroeder argues.

The idea I want to examine is whether we can reduce the instrumental requirement to a special case of the requirement that you ought to do (or intend to do) whatever you believe you ought to do. This is often called the *krasia requirement* or following one's conscience. Like a promise, the normative content of the belief generates an obligation to have certain intentions, but the *krasia requirement* does not go so far as to say that you are irrational all-things-considered if you do not have these intentions. There may be good reasons, reasons that can be offered in excuse or mitigation, for not having the intention one ought to have, which reasons may include an opposing obligation generated by another normative belief, another end. One can have incoherent oughts, but it is not the case (simply because it is impossible) that you ought to satisfy both oughts; sometimes it is more rational to violate the *krasia requirement* than to satisfy it. Put another way, violations of local rational requirements are tolerable and often necessary to satisfy global requirements that determine ultimately what is rational all-things-considered. It is a mistake, however, to suppose that because it is rational to violate a rational requirement the requirement is not really a requirement or not really exceptionless. The reason we give for not having the intention one ought to have functions by opposing its normative force to the normative force of the reason for having that intention – it does not function descriptively as an explanation of why the *krasia requirement* does not apply in this case. The *krasia requirement* does apply, and is violated;

the 'ought' involved is local but not defeasible, and these two things should not be mixed up.

Schroeder's version of the narrow-scope *krasia requirement* is:

Narrow ConscO: If you believe that O(you do A), then O(you do A).[7]

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[7] Schroeder rejects this principle, appealing to the bootstrapping objection: it cannot be the case that you ought to do something just because you believe you ought to – believing something does not make it so unless the belief is infallible, which it is not. If your belief that you ought to do A is false then by definition A is not something that you ought to do and so a principle that says that you ought to do A [i.e., that concludes O(you do A)] must be false. He prefers another narrow-scope principle formulated in terms of subjective reasons, viz.,

> Narrow ConscSR: If you believe that O(you do A), then you have a subjective reason to do A.

If your belief that you ought to do A is false it is not the case that you cease to have a subjective reason to do A. For this reason Narrow ConscSR is to be preferred to Narrow ConscO (cf. Schroeder 2004, 349-351).

Against this, I would argue that when the belief is true you do not satisfy the requirement just by having the subjective reason. Suppose that this reason to do what you ought to do is defeated by another reason subjectively stronger. I am not saying that in such a situation it would be wrong to act on this other reason. I am saying that this other reason must be offered as mitigation for violating the requirement, but this can only mean that the requirement is violated despite having the subjective reason Narrow ConscSR says that you should have.

It seems that not everybody shares this intuition. Kolodny's intuition (2008, 379) is that no requirement is broken at all in having incoherent intentions, rather than that the requirement is broken but overridden. I am not sure this is true for the krasia requirement; the necessity to give a reason for not doing what you intend suggests to me that there is a requirement in place. I am tempted to say the same of Brunero's (2010, 34-38) interesting example of the girl who believes she has conclusive reason to go to the lecture but does not believe that she has sufficient evidence for this belief. Brunero says that although it is not irrational to form the intention to go to the lecture, she is not required to form this intention; it is not that there is a requirement she has better reason to comply with. My intuition about this situation clashes with Brunero's. I think that she does violate the krasia requirement when she fails to have the intention to attend the lecture but that she has reason to do this, and this is shown by my intuition that she is obliged in some way to explain why she has not formed the intention, and the reason performs this function because it has a normative force that conflicts with the normative force of another reason and not because it simply describes a situation where the krasia requirement does not apply or provides a counter-example to this particular formulation of the requirement.

Now, consider the situation where Al finds himself in the right time and place for the promised lunch with Rose but did not appear at this time and place in order to keep his promise, and further that he knows this. It seems wrong to say that Al has satisfied his promise or that he has done what he ought to do, yet he seems to have put himself in a situation where it is actually impossible for him to keep his promise. It makes no sense to ask Rose to release him from his promise. He has escaped his promise, but not through Rose's agency. The obligation to keep his promise is void unless he gets up to go somewhere else before Rose arrives, in which case it reappears. Similarly, if my left arm is already raised it cannot be the case that I ought to raise my left arm, and if I believe that my left arm is already raised then I can no longer believe that I ought to raise my left arm. I have escaped the *krasia requirement*.

What I would like to claim is that the oughtness involved in the *krasia requirement* is transmitted from ends to means. If I ought to x_1 (let my cat in) and to have the intention to x_1 then I ought to y (open the window) and to have the intention to y, and if I escape from the requirement (e.g., my cat is already in and it is my neighbour's cat on the window-ledge) so that it is no longer the case that I ought to x_1 and to have the intention to x_1 then equally it is no longer the case that I ought to y and to have the intention to y. The reason why I may be in an irrational state when I do not have the intention to take the means to an intended end is because the means inherits from the end the feature that it is something that ought to be done.

This does not rule out the fact that taking the means may have consequences that are things you believe you ought not to do. It is quite possible that you ought to y and ought not to y. Consider again x_1 and x_2. These are both things we believe we ought to do (and are assumed to be, and the states corollary to their fulfilment are assumed to be, equal in desirability). According to the *krasia requirement*, they are things we ought to do, and this implies that the intentions to take the means are intentions that we ought to have and that we are rational when we have them. However, suppose that the logical precondition for x_1 is not satisfied because we are already in the state that would result from x_1-ing had we been in a different state (my cat is already in). In other words, we *escape* the *krasia requirement* for x_1; there ceases to be any obligation to have $I(x_1)$ and, thence, any obligation to have I(y) (which does not necessarily mean that we cease to have those intentions or that we are rationally required to cease having those in-

tentions). Yet at the same time that I(y) ceases to be obligatory it becomes a reason not to have I(not-y), on the grounds that we are already in one of equally desirable states and not-y-ing will not change that situation. Although having $I(x_2)$ and I(not-y) satisfies the *krasia requirement* for x_2 and is rational in so far as it does, this is one of those cases where it is more rational to violate the *krasia requirement*. Intentions that one ought to have (in the sense of 'ought' being used here) are not necessarily the ones it is most rational to have. This implies that, in this situation, when one becomes aware of what state one is in it is more rational not to have the intention for a means that will take you out of that state than it is to have that intention, irrespective of the fact that one violates the *krasia requirement* in not having that intention. In other words, if it were not for the fact that letting the cat in was considered by you to be the decent thing to do and you were indifferent between that and not letting cold air in, it would be more rational to not let cold air in, on the grounds that this is what you are already doing and there is no motivation to change. Having contradictory intentions is rationally preferable when you do not know which of the states you are in (the normative forces of the reasons being in dynamic equilibrium), but ceases to be when you do know what state you are in.

2. Conclusion

The Strong Belief Thesis is false. The *belief-intention link* is false. Yet something like the *belief-intention link*, with a pragmatic implicature in the place of a material implication, is true, and, perhaps surprisingly, this is enough to provide the reasoner with the predictive belief that he will carry out his intention successfully as a premise, even, also perhaps surprisingly, when he does not believe that he will carry out his intention successfully. Our reasoning is not limited to what we sincerely believe or intend but can be carried out *ex hypothesi*, as it were. This gives Broome's model more scope and versatility than Bratman and Høj, and probably Broome himself, thinks.

Practical reasoning as such ends in the belief that I will fulfil my means-end intention and the belief that I intend to carry out the means. Providing (as the conditional says) that my premise-beliefs remain unchanged this is the only way to make my beliefs coherent. This does not, however, necessarily make my intentions coherent – satisfying the requirements on the

beliefs does not guarantee satisfying the requirements on the intentions, which is to say that the *instrumental requirement* does not have the same extension as the theoretical requirements. Nevertheless, it is true that it is only by satisfying the requirements on the beliefs that we can by reasoning bring ourselves to satisfy the *instrumental requirement* and only, I argued further, by violating the requirements on the beliefs that we can be led to believe (sometimes falsely) that the *instrumental requirement* is likewise violated. Because of this I tentatively suggested that the normative force of the *instrumental requirement* could be given in terms of the normative force of theoretical requirements even though they differed in extension, and this was sufficient for a broadly cognitivist account of the *instrumental requirement*.

This left a residuum of normativity to account for – a distinctively practical normativity – that at least sometimes one is in an irrational state if one has an intention for an end but not the intention for what is believed to be the means to the end, but also that sometimes this is not an irrational state, even if rationality requires you to believe you have this intention. I held as a constraint on this normativity that it must comply with what I called the Evolutionary Advantage Constraint. Paying close attention to this assumption I came to the conclusion that one is not necessarily irrational when one has incoherent and even directly contradictory intentions, so norms against such combinations of intentions could not explain the irrationality of at least some violations of the instrumental requirement, for there were no such norms.

The explanation, I urged, is a set of obligations to have certain intentions. When intended ends are not incoherent or incompatible there is an obligation to intend their means also, and so one is not rational if one intends to E, believes that M is the preferred means to E, and not intend M. But if an intended end is incoherent or incompatible with another end then it may be rational to intend the means to both even if this means having intentions that are directly contradictory. In the kind of incompatibility I considered there is always one *krasia requirement* that could be escaped, and which intentions it is rational to have depends on which end has higher priority or which is reflected in the current state, it being irrational to have the intention to take any means to leave a state unless this is the means to a state *more* desirable than the current one. This is to say that it can be rational to violate a requirement of practical rationality, viz., the *krasia requirement*, when one has reason to do so. Not all incompatibilities are

like this, but ones that lead to directly contradictory intentions are. Ones that lead to only inconsistent intentions are not irrational.

The *krasia requirement* has here been put forward as a genuine requirement of practical rationality and can account for our intuitions in the one case of the *instrumental requirement* that Broome's account did not seem to account for, the one place where there seemed to be a distinctively practical normativity.

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