

Title Page

Title: Pretence, imagination and the motivation of (social and collective) action

Concise abstract (150 words)

Pretence is sometimes taken (see Velleman 2000, Currie & Ravenscroft 2002, Gendler 2006, Doggett & Egan 2007, Van Leeuwen 2016, and Ichino 2019) to show that imagining can motivate action like belief, contrary to *the motivational view of belief*, which defines belief by its unique role in motivating action.

This paper first shows that the problem of *Belief-mediation*, which contends that these imaginings' motivational role relies on intermediate beliefs (see, O'Brien 2005, Schellenberg 2013), still plagues all recent views claiming that imagination motivates.

It then defends a revisionary account of motivation, the *Proustian model of motivation* (cf. Proust 2013): imagining and belief both motivate when modelling how a considered *action mode* (means taken to the action's end) will achieve goals with a high enough degree of certainty. I explain why social and collective action contexts, such as pretence, particularly strengthen both the felt and conceptual metacognitive endorsement of *some* merely imagined *action-modes*.

Long Abstract (300 words)

Pretence cases have sometimes been taken (see Velleman 2000, Currie & Ravenscroft 2002, Gendler 2006, Doggett & Egan 2007, Van Leeuwen 2016 and Ichino 2019) to show that some imaginings can motivate action like belief, contrary to *the motivational view of belief*, according to which belief's role in motivating action alongside desire is unique. But a recurring objection, *Belief-mediation*, contends that these imaginings' motivational role relies on intermediate beliefs (see, O'Brien 2005, Schellenberg 2013) and is not direct. I show that the problem of Belief-mediation still plagues recent views claiming that imagination can motivate and offer a solution through a revisionary account of motivation, the *Proustian model of motivation*.

According to this *Proustian model of motivation*, beliefs and some imaginings directly motivate when they model how taking particular means to a particular end (the considered *action mode*) will result in the desired goal being achieved with a high enough degree of certainty. The overall positive metacognitive evaluation of an *action-mode*, its endorsement (of which means-end belief is a paradigmatic example), can have both an affective (in the form of metacognitive feelings, such as the feeling of certainty, c.f. e.g., Proust 2013) and a conceptual (in the form of metacognitive beliefs) dimension. Both beliefs and the types of imaginings which motivate, I argue, directly motivate action in the same way as one another: when a simulated, imagined or stored and retrieved action-mode is both endorsed and accompanied by a relevant desire, this action-mode acquires a

degree of *motivational force*. The motivational force of imaginings arises in just the same way as that of beliefs.

Next, I show why social and collective action contexts, such as that of pretence, particularly strengthen the felt metacognitive endorsement of *some* merely imagined *action-modes* and endows them with enough motivational force to directly motivate action.

Title: Pretence, imagination and the motivation of (social and collective) action

Wordcount excluding footnotes and references: 4999 words

1. Introduction

Pretence is common practice in both childhood and adulthood. Young children can pretend to be a president, or an elephant, for example. Yet, what motivates action in pretence is still not sufficiently understood. Pretence has been taken by some (see Velleman 2000, Currie & Ravenscroft 2002, Gendler 2006, Doggett & Egan 2007, Van Leeuwen 2016 and Ichino 2019) to show that imaginings can sometimes motivate action like belief. This is at odds with the motivational view of belief, according to which belief's role in motivation is unique. But a recurring objection, Belief-mediation, contends that imaginings' motivational role in such cases relies on intermediate beliefs (see, O'Brien 2005, Schellenberg 2013).

This paper first argues that the problem of Belief-mediation is yet to be satisfactorily reckoned with. Next, it shows that accounting for how motivation occurs in pretence cases demonstrates that some imaginings, far from being very rarely involved in motivation, in fact have widespread direct motivational force in the exact same way as belief. According to the revisionary *Proustian model of motivation* this paper offers, beliefs and some imaginings directly motivate when they model how taking particular means to a particular end, call this an *action-mode*, will result in the desired goal being achieved with a high enough degree of certainty. The overall positive metacognitive evaluation of an *action-mode*, call it endorsement (of which means-end belief is a paradigmatic example), can have either or both an affective (in the form of metacognitive feelings, such as the feeling of certainty, c.f. e.g., Proust 2013) and a conceptual (in the form of metacognitive beliefs) dimension. Both beliefs and the types of imaginings which motivate, I argue, directly motivate action in the same way as one another: when a simulated, imagined or stored and

retrieved action-mode is both endorsed and accompanied by a relevant desire, this action-mode acquires a degree of *motivational force*. The motivational force of imaginings arises in just the same way as that of beliefs. Next, I show why social and collective action contexts, such as that of pretence, particularly strengthen the *felt* metacognitive endorsement (via epistemic feelings, but not necessarily beliefs) of *some* merely imagined *action-modes* and endows them with enough motivational force to directly motivate action.

Better understanding pretence might shed light on pretence's role in child development and on how it exercises and develops our pervasive role-playing ability and could ground an account of moral psychology for fictionalists in metaethics who view ethical statements like 'Stealing is wrong' as expressions of pretence (see Kalderon 2005). And it may provide a general model of how to enact imaginings more broadly, helping us to figure out, for example, how imagining heating our home in a fossil fuel-free world could motivate us to take action.

2. The motivational view of belief

The motivational view of belief is the view that belief's unique defining feature is its ability to motivate action alongside appropriate desires. We can understand it as the view that:

[...] all that's necessary for an attitude to qualify as a belief is that the attitude, *by itself*, and relative to a fixed background of desires, disposes the subject to behave in ways that would promote the satisfaction of his desires if its contents were true. (O'Brien 2005: 56)

This captures belief's special role in a popular view of motivation, often attributed to Hume (see, e.g., Smith 1987), according to which being motivated to act in a particular way requires both a relevant desire and a means-end belief. For example, being motivated to give money to the Ukraine Crisis Relief Fund through GlobalGiving requires a relevant desire, such as a desire to help

Ukrainian refugees make a new start, and a belief that donating money through the platform will bring about this outcome. More formally, the view is:

Belief-Desire Theory: An agent A has a motivation to Φ iff there is some w such that A has a desire to w and *A believes that were she to Φ , she would promote her w -ing.* (Nottelmann 2011, emphasis added)

It is worth pondering why belief is called for here. Presumably, A 's belief that were she to Φ , she would promote her w -ing helps to explain action choice: it explains why A is motivated to take this particular action to bring about the desired outcome. The view thus seems plausible because of belief's relationship to reasons for action. As Davidson assesses:

We cannot explain why someone did what he did simply by saying the particular action appealed to him; we must indicate what it was about the action that appealed. (Davidson 1980: 3-4)

A means-end belief about *how* our movements will achieve a particular goal seems to explain why a particular action is attractive; and thereby to ground the intention that might make it an action.

On this model, beliefs about the environment and how the subject relates to it also contribute to motivation. In the example above, donating to the Ukraine Crisis Relief Fund through GlobalGiving not only requires a means-end belief that donating money through the platform will help those affected by the Ukraine war, but also relies on beliefs about one's financial means and GlobalGiving's legitimacy, amongst others. Nevertheless, such background beliefs can be viewed as ancillary to the means-end belief which is key to motivation thanks to its rationalizing role.

3. Imagining, pretending and the motivational view of belief

Over the past thirty years, the thesis that imagining can motivate us to act in a similar way to belief, call it *Motivational Likeness*, has gained momentum (see, e.g., Velleman 2000, Currie &

Ravenscroft 2002, Gendler 2006, Doggett & Egan 2007, Van Leeuwen 2016, Ichino 2019). Authors differ regarding whether imagining's motivational role should be viewed as merely similar (e.g., Van Leeuwen 2009) or wholly identical (e.g., Ichino 2019) to that of belief. They also disagree with respect to whether imagining should be seen as playing a belief-like role alongside desire (e.g., Ichino 2019; Van Leeuwen 2014, 2016), or rather alongside an imaginative analogue to desire (e.g., i-desires or desire-like imaginings for Doggett & Egan 2007, wishes for Velleman 2000). Brushing over these differences, *Motivational Likeness*, even in its weakest construal, challenges the motivational view of belief insofar as it contends that belief's role in motivation is not so unique to the attitude as to be its distinctive characteristic. Thus, our understanding of belief's specific role must be supplemented (for example, through its teleology so that belief, unlike imagining, aims at truth, as in Velleman 2000).

Examples of pretence (e.g., pretending that I am an elephant) make up only one sort of case amongst many defended to show that imaginings can motivate like belief. Yet, an important caveat highlighted early on by Velleman (2000) is that not all behaviours which imaginings motivate are intentional actions; instead, some are better described as activities, which are neither fully intentional nor unintentional.

For example, expressive behaviour like shouting at the referee on TV may involve an imagining that the referee is present, but such behaviour hardly seems to constitute a full-blown action, even if it may not be as unintentional as a twitch either. Such activities lack the sort of intentionality which is characteristic of action (see also Schellenberg 2013). So, given that the motivational view of belief proposes to account for intentional actions, *Motivational Likeness* will be most plausible if imaginings can be shown to motivate not just any behaviour, but intentional ones. Pretence cases are therefore especially noteworthy as they typically appear intentional, unlike most other behaviours which have been defended as involving imaginings motivating.

What relationship holds between pretending and imagining is not obvious. First, it seems clear that we can imagine without pretending. I can imagine that my dog, Charlie, is barking, without pretending that she is. Second, pretence sometimes seems not to crucially involve imagining (see, e.g., Currie 2002, Langland Hassan 2012). For example, Helen Mirren's pretence that she is Elizabeth II in the movie *The Queen* (2006) may draw on her beliefs about how she would act were she the British monarch, and about what kinds of behaviours the audience might accept as those of Elizabeth, rather than on her imagining being the Queen and acting consequently. In fact, it may be especially hard for anyone to imagine from a first-person perspective that they are the Queen given how remote this perspective is from the experiences of most, by contrast to how easy pretending to be Elizabeth II appears even if Mirren's performance is especially laudable.

Despite such considerations, Velleman's own explanation of why pretence at least sometimes must involve imagining playing a motivating role still strongly supports rejecting a pure belief-desire account of such cases (2000). To show this, he analyses the example of a child pretending to be an elephant:

Elephant Pretence: A child pretends to be a thirsty elephant looking for water. Taking a chair standing aside as a pail of water, he enacts overcoming obstacles to reach it.

First, for the child to make themselves believe the chair is a pail of water most likely is too hard – especially if we agree with those who claim we cannot choose to believe voluntarily (see, e.g., Williams 1973).

Second, belief-desire accounts of pretence which try to reduce the child's imagining (e.g., I am an elephant) to conditional beliefs (e.g., If I were an elephant, I would use my trunk to drink), seem ad hoc because they fail to explain why children's creative behaviour in pretence often does not match what they might believe the imagined character would do in real life.

Rather a more plausible explanation of what goes on in pretence is that children gain relevant 'mock-beliefs' by vividly imagining being an elephant. They imagine adopting the elephant's perspective and to experience the cognitive states they would as what they imagine being (e.g., as the imagined elephant). These mock-beliefs are beliefs about the elephant's environment from the perspective of what the child imagines being rather than his own, Velleman explains. They are not actual beliefs (the child knows neither he nor an elephant can really drink from the chair). But from within the context of the pretence, he can regard his imagining "Here is a pail of water" as a belief, and this is what enables them to be immersed and act within the pretence.

4 The Problem of Belief-mediation against Motivational Likeness

Suppose you agree with this description of how imagining is involved in motivating pretence, should you therefore also accept Motivational Likeness? A strong objection against doing so, which I will show has still not been satisfactorily addressed, is the problem of Belief-mediation. In slogan form, the problem is:

Belief-mediation: Imagining motivates only in conjunction with belief, not by itself.

The trouble is that whilst imaginings may influence how one acts when pretending, they must be connected to beliefs about the actual world to motivate real-world action. Imaginings therefore play a different role in motivation than beliefs since beliefs are still additionally called for.

In a first construal, Lucy O'Brien (2005) fleshes it out by carefully unpacking Elephant Pretence. The child cannot make-believe he is an elephant without 'draping the contents of his imaginings' (ibid: 58) over actual objects or places he can act upon. For instance, moving his arm to the chair to make-believe that the elephant brings his trunk to the water requires the child's forming the belief that his arm can stand for the elephant's trunk. By contrast, belief requires no additional connection(s) to motivate alongside desire. So, she concludes, 'the motivational role of imaginings depends upon the motivational role of beliefs.' (ibid: 60).

Susanna Schellenberg (2013) further specifies which beliefs are required and why. Whilst we can sometimes react to our imaginings unintentionally, for an imagining to motivate an intentional action, one must first have beliefs about what one is imagining, and second, one must gain a new belief concerning how the environment relates to her imagining. These beliefs enable pretenders to choose to enact a specific action in order to fulfill their desire within the pretence. Although Schellenberg doesn't explicitly say this, these two beliefs provide the basis for forming a means-end belief regarding which real action will best satisfy the desire to enact the pretence, thus explaining action choice. That pretenders are in fact choosing to act in a specific way (e.g., moving their arms to pretend to be a crocodile biting) seems key to making their actions intentional.

The problem of Belief-mediation is thus that Motivational Likeness is misguided because whilst imaginings and other states might also play some role in motivation, this does not threaten the motivational view of belief since they cannot play belief's key role in rationalizing action.

Since the problem's exposition, some have nevertheless tried to defend a direct approach, according to which imaginings can directly motivate action without intermediate beliefs. Whilst I cannot address all theorists who have done this here, I will consider two representative attempts with respect to pretence.

First, Neil Van Leeuwen has made a case for imagining motivating directly by appealing to the role of mental imagery:

You have representations in your mind – mental imagery – of how monkeys behave when they find bananas. You visualize (imagistic imagining) a monkey jumping up and down and screaming. Then *imitating* what you visualize, *you* jump up and down and scream. [...] the pragmatic mental imagery [...] guides the bodily movement [...] directly, without any sort of reasoning needing to be done [...] (Van Leeuwen 2014: 798)

In other words, pretence action can be driven by imagining without relying on belief through mental imagery. Later, he moreover acknowledges that propositional imaginings (e.g., imagining

that I am an elephant) also guide pretence when they map onto the pretender's beliefs about their environment (in Van Leeuwen 2016). He gives the example of someone who pretends to stab a monster with a sword by performing a stabbing gesture with a ruler towards a pillow. The relevant imagining - that they are using the sword to stab the monster - maps onto their belief that their arm holds a ruler which stands for the sword. Yet, whilst the imagining is connected to this belief, it doesn't make the behaviour any less driven primarily by the imagining; applying Velleman's argument outlined above shows why imagining seems better suited than belief to explain such make-believe actions.

Even if mental imagery can plausibly guide action and lessen the need to reason about every step of action, making it less cognitively demanding to pretend, such an account faces two problems.

On the one hand, it does not explain how imagination (whether propositional or imagistic) alone motivates the initiation of pretence action. Presumably, having relevant imagery and appropriate desires alone do not typically motivate action. For example, I can daydream that I am in Spain without any behaviour ensuing. Yet, given the goal to show that we can be motivated to act in the same way by belief and by imagining, an explanation of how pretence action is initiated or selected as to-be-enacted as a result of imagining seems crucial.

On the other hand, it fails to account for how imagination motivates not just behaviour but intentional action in the same way as belief. It provides no account of how imagery alone leads to the selection of a particular behaviour as a means of enacting the imagining in pretence.¹ And it is equally silent on how propositional imaginings can play belief's role in rationalizing action. Imagining that the ruler is a sword cannot, by itself, explain why I choose to move the ruler without

¹ This point also applies to Bence Nanay's (2016) account of imagination-based decision making— imagining two different possibilities by itself does not determine choice; making a decision requires passing a judgement over the imagined possibilities (judging, for example, which one is better suited to yielding which outcome). It is this judgement which is usually captured via a belief.

a means-end belief that by moving it (psst!... it counts as a sword!) I will stab the monster (psst!... pillow).

Second, Anna Ichino (2019) has defended that imagining motivates directly when accompanied by suitable metacognitive beliefs and desires as well as embedded in rich inferential networks which determine what action will satisfy a desire to enact it. For example, my daydreaming that I am in Spain does not ensue in behavioural changes because this imagining is accompanied by a belief about this imagining that I do not believe that I am in Spain but just imagine it, and consequently it is relatively quarantined from my other cognitive states. By contrast, in the context of pretence, the child pretending to use the ruler to fight a monster believes that their imagining that the ruler is a sword can be viewed as a belief for the purposes of the pretence, and as they desire to act so as to kill the monster, they can consequently embed it with their other cognitions within this limited context. In fact, Ichino claims, such metacognitive beliefs and desires are also required for beliefs to motivate, so that '[...] imaginings and beliefs motivate us to act (and react) in the same ways' (2019: 1517).

Ichino's account seems to offer a plausible explanation of why some imaginings do motivate us to act whilst others do not, and the basics of an explanation of when such behaviour qualifies as intentional (i.e., when the inferential network in which the imagining is embedded favours choosing this particular action).

However, the key issue with her view is that the appeal to metacognitive beliefs and to an inferential network reintroduces Belief-mediation undercover. What ends up doing the work of motivating action is not imagining alone, but rather metacognitive beliefs about the imaginings and beliefs about how one's environment relates to this imagining.

Yet, these were just the mediating beliefs that Schellenberg (2013) highlighted as posing a problem for Motivational Likeness and which underpinned the means-end belief that rationalized the pretence action.

The arguments for Motivational Likeness presented so far thus fall short in their challenge of the motivational view of belief.

5 Takeaways from the discussion so far

Whilst accounts of how imaginings motivate in pretence cases proposed thus far fall short of showing that imagining can have just the same motivational role as belief, I will argue in this section that they nevertheless provide a backbone for a more successful account and propose such a revisionary proposal in this section, which I will dub the *Proustian model of motivation*.

Appreciating the cogency of the problem of Belief-mediation offers important insights concerning both why belief seems essential to motivation and how accounts of Motivational Likeness might be completed.

The strength of the motivational view of belief appears to lie in the rationalising power of means-end beliefs: they seem to uniquely explain action choice. A convincing defence of Motivational Likeness must therefore expose how imagining can similarly fulfill this role.

6 A revisionary proposal: the Proustian model of motivation

In this section, I will build on these takeaways and existing accounts of how imaginings motivate to propose a more fine-grained revisionary account of motivation that explains a) what about means-end beliefs motivates us to act b) how this motivating feature can in fact be shared by some imaginings without appealing to belief, building on the best parts of Velleman's account of acceptance's role in motivation as well as Van Leeuwen and Ichino's accounts of how imagination motivates.

6.1. What is it about means-end beliefs that motivates us to act?

It is broadly agreed, at least implicitly, that intention involves the positive evaluation of a proposed way of acting (see, e.g., Davidson, Bratman). Here, Bratman, in *Faces of Intention*, outlines this explicitly as he describes Davidson's view:

The premiss provided by my belief is just what I believe: the proposition that going to Davies Hall is a way of listening to Pavarotti. The premiss provided by my pro-attitude is not, however, so easily arrived at. What I want is to listen to Pavarotti or, perhaps, that I listen to Pavarotti. But, on Davidson's view, the relevant premiss is neither of these, but rather the *prima-facie* evaluative proposition that any act of mine would be desirable insofar as it is an act of listening to Pavarotti.

In what follows, I will use the term *action mode* (short for mode of action (parallel to Nguyen's 2020 notion of mode of agency but regarding a specific action rather than a set thereof)) to capture a proposed way(s) of acting - by this, I mean the more or less open-ended imagining of how one is to act to achieve the specific goal of an action.

I take it that the content of an action mode can be imagistic (such as when we simulate a specific way of taking action) and/or propositional (such as when we imagine that action more generally, and it is less specific and compatible with a set of more specific action modes).

For example, consider the action that I draw. My intention to draw can involve a general action mode, in which case it will easily be satisfied by my drawing in any sort of way that fits the general action-mode of drawing, whether it be just scribbling a few lines in graphite on a sheet or constructing an elaborate sketch on my iPad. But, it can also be much more specific, such as when the representation of the goal of drawing I have in mind when intending to draw involves my simulating drawing in the style of the cave-paintings found at Lascaux, in primitive earth-like tones.

I take it that intention goes further than mere motivation insofar as it involves not only being attracted to an action mode (feeling like it is the right way to act) in this way but also being committed

to this action mode (cf., e.g., Bratman's view re. committing to plans) as a consequence of both desiring its outcome and accepting that it is the best way to achieve this outcome, or endorsing that particular action mode in a way that isn't easily defeasible (i.e., normative trouble is on the horizon when the motivation at the heart of intention is lacking (e.g., akrasia)), *pace* competing motivations.

Moreover, whilst motivation is typically associated with intention, it additionally involves an affective pull to execute a particular action mode. In the case of means-end beliefs, the motivational pull is partly played out by the assent or feeling of certainty characteristic of belief. This affective assent or felt certainty is partly what leads us to feel pulled towards a particular action mode, or to have reasons to perform it.

Velleman's account of how imaginings such as those involved in pretence motivate rightly highlights that the sorts of imaginings which motivate have in common with belief that they are *accepted*, i.e., evaluated as apt representations of how a proposed way of acting will fulfill a desired outcome.

Belief's *motivational force*, thus, stems from endorsing (or being attracted to) an action mode through the positive metacognitive evaluation of its action mode. Typically, one's selection of a particular action mode as to-be-performed will be justified in line with the degree of certainty or acceptance one has towards the likelihood *that this action-mode will achieve the desired goal*.

6.2 The Proustian model of motivation

My revisionary Proustian model of motivation develops Velleman's insight that the evaluation of a proposed way of acting as likely to realise our desired outcome (i.e. as likely to succeed) is key to intention and motivation building on Ichino and Van Leeuwen's accounts to complete them in a way that addresses Belief-Mediation.

Recall, Velleman describes acceptance as a merely normative notion that captures the fittingness of particular imaginings and beliefs to their targeted world with respect to how adequately they portray it. One way to cash this out is that imaginings and beliefs both motivate in virtue of the positive evaluation or endorsement of an action-mode's fittingness. And Ichino's account of pretence further developed this explanation by suggesting that metacognitive beliefs to the effect that they endorsed the imagining as an apt action-mode are a key factor in allowing some imaginings, and not others, to motivate. However, such metacognitive beliefs led to the come-back of the problem of Belief-Mediation.

A better explanation of how some imaginings partake in action selection that does not rely on beliefs can straightforwardly be provided simply by broadening our notion of metacognitive judgements.

Whilst the evaluation of an action mode can *sometimes* be captured conceptually, by a means-end belief to the effect that one believes that taking the means specified by a proposed way of acting will result in the outcome desired, it often is done purely through non-conceptual metacognitive feelings.

As Joelle Proust (2013) has argued, such evaluations can not only take place via propositional attitudes (system 2) but also via affective attitudes, epistemic feelings, such as the *feeling of certainty*. One such affective attitude, which one can feel towards an action mode, is the *feeling that this is the right way to act*. Such epistemic feelings play a key role in explaining the evolution of metacognition and its development in non-human animals.

Metacognitive assent or endorsement, on this Proustian view, can involve an affective and/or conceptual judgment by the agent that the dynamic action mode imagined will achieve success for the agent.

Means-end beliefs typically capture a type of endorsement which has both a conceptual and affective dimension: means-end beliefs not only involve a conceptual judgment that taking this action will achieve the desired outcome but are associated with the noetic feeling of certainty (cf. Proust 2013)

and consequent feelings of agency. The sort of endorsement at the heart of belief thus often involves a non-conceptual, affective, form. And the pull at the heart of motivation seems crucially dependent on this *felt* positive evaluation of an action mode (i.e., feeling like this action will get us what we want).

According to this dynamic model, motivation always results from a positive metacognitive evaluation of an imagined action mode. This metacognitive evaluation, call it endorsement (a type of assent), of which means-end belief is a paradigmatic example, can have both an affective and a conceptual dimension. Motivation crucially relies on the affective aspects of this metacognitive evaluation of action modes.

7 Accounting for imagination's inconsistent motivational force

Collective action contexts, such as that of pretence, elicit complex *feedback loops* that strengthen both the felt and propositional endorsement of imagined action modes in a way that enable them to motivate just like belief. They do so by making imagined scripts more readily endorsed as they are more readily accessible as part of a common scoreboard of modes of agency (cf. Camp & Flores 2024; Nguyen 2019) and more likely to be positively evaluated and to elicit feelings of certainty and fluency (cf. Proust 2013) which are at the core of feelings of agency (cf. Carruthers 2019). I briefly explain why, in these contexts, some imaginings are more apt to motivate than others.

Take a first example of a social action, an action that involves co-evaluation in its success conditions.

Consider: I draw so that you recognise my dog, Charlie.

In order to evaluate and select any given proposed action mode, I will not only need to track how they propose to portray Charlie and assess the fittingness of these to correctly portray Charlie, I will also need to track how you imagine Charlie and what you will recognize as adequately Charlie-like.

If I start sketching and see you frown, the feedback I will perceive will lead me to change my evaluation of the action mode I was following so as to respond to my beliefs about your knowledge. The action mode followed is thus dynamically updated in line with the received feedback. This can be captured not necessarily by a belief that my previous action mode was inapt - I might have been drawing a perfectly accurate portrait of cute Pomsy Charlie, and so believe that the action mode previously used was adequate. But the felt doubt or lack of certainty towards the previous action mode will have led me, in spite of my belief in its correctness, to divert from my prior way of acting.

Pretence cases like the pretence to be an elephant are typically social actions in this sense - indeed, I cannot pretend without trying to communicate to another (or to myself as another) that I am acting as if something. On the Proustian view of motivation, in spite of beliefs that I am not acting as an elephant, I will feel like my lifting my arm in a particular way (see figure below) can aptly count as being an elephant if I have experienced such gestures often enough as elephant-like even if I believe then to be nothing close to the behaviour of actual elephants. In part, what happens in such cases involves my referring to a script which I have either reasons to believe or to feel is apt thanks to either the feedback I receive within the context of the interaction with another in a pretence play, or acquired from habits, experience or culture.

In both cases, the felt certainty over the aptness of an imagined action mode is enough to endow this imagining with some motivational force as described in section 5. The motivational force of such imagined action modes will increase with more feedback about the aptness of these imaginings in the same way as further evidence strengthens the degree of certainty and acceptance one can reasonably have over their beliefs.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have argued that appealing to *metacognitive feelings* offers a way to move beyond the belief-mediation objection and explain pretence and its evolution without overintellectualizing it.

When pretending to sword-fight, feeling that our imagining of a ruler that it is a sword is an appropriate representation to have of the ruler can enable this imagining to play a similar role in action-guiding than the belief that this imagining can be viewed in a belief-like way.

I have proposed a revisionary Proustian model of motivation which explains how and why beliefs and some imaginings directly motivate in the same way as one another: when a simulated, imagined or stored and retrieved action-mode is both endorsed and accompanied by a relevant desire, this action-mode acquires a degree of *motivational force*. The felt certainty which typically contributes to this motivational force is characteristic of belief, but also achieved by some imaginings in social and collective contexts which elicit co-constructed feedback loops through the participants' interactions with one another.

The motivational force of imaginings thus arises in just the same way as that of beliefs. The acceptance or endorsement of an imagined *action-mode* as modelling how taking particular means will achieve a particular end can involve both an affective (in the form of metacognitive feelings, such as the feeling of certainty, c.f. e.g., Proust 2013) and a conceptual (in the form of metacognitive beliefs) dimension.

References

- Currie, G. 2002. Imagination as motivation. *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 102 (3):201-16.
- Currie, G. & Ravenscroft, I. 2002. *Recreative Minds: Imagination in Philosophy and Psychology*. Oxford University Press.
- Doggett, T. & Egan, A. 2007. Wanting things you don't want: The case for an imaginative analogue of desire. *Philosophers' Imprint* 7:1-17.
- Gendler, T.S. 2006. Imaginative contagion. *Metaphilosophy* 37 (2):183-203.

- Ichino, A. 2019. Imagination and Belief in Action. *Philosophia* 47 (5):1517-1534.
- Kalderon, M.E. 2005. *Moral Fictionalism*. Clarendon Press.
- Langland-Hassan, P. 2012. Pretense, imagination, and belief: the Single Attitude theory. *Philosophical Studies* 159 (2):155-179.
- Nanay, B. 2016. The role of imagination in decision-making. *Mind and Language* 31 (1):126-142.
- Nottelmann, N. 2011. Belief-Desire Explanation. *Philosophy Compass* 6 (12):912-921.
- O'Brien, L. 2005. Imagination and the motivational view of belief. *Analysis* 65 (1):55-62.
- Proust, J. 2013. *The philosophy of metacognition: Mental agency and self-awareness*. Oxford University Press.
- Schellenberg, S. 2013. Belief and Desire in Imagination and Immersion. *Journal of Philosophy* 110 (9):497-517.
- Smith, M. 1987. The Humean theory of motivation. *Mind* 96 (381):36-61.
- Van Leeuwen, N. 2009. The Motivational Role of Belief. *Philosophical Papers* 38 (2):219-246.
- Van Leeuwen, N. 2011. Imagination is where the Action is. *Journal of Philosophy* 108 (2):55-77.
- Van Leeuwen, N. 2014. The Meanings of "Imagine" Part II: Attitude and Action. *Philosophy Compass* 9 (11):791-802.
- Van Leeuwen, N. 2016. The Imaginative Agent. In *Knowledge through Imagination*, ed. A. Kind and P. Kung. 85-109. Oxford University Press.
- Velleman, D. 2000. On the aim of belief. In his *The Possibility of Practical Reason*. 244–81. Oxford University Press.
- Williams, B. 1973. Deciding to believe. 136-5. In his *Problems of the Self*. Cambridge University Press.