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HOW TO DISSOLVE THE MORAL PROBLEM

Abstract

According to Michael Smith, there is so much metaethical disagreement because it is difficult to explain both the objectivity and the practicality of moral judgments in the framework provided by the Humean picture of human Psychology. Smith himself hoped to solve this problem by analysing the content of our moral judgments in terms of what our fully rational versions would want us to do. This paper first explains why this solution to the moral problem remains problematic and why we therefore are no closer to solving the problem. It then outlines how the moral problem could perhaps be dissolved instead. The second half of the paper thus first reconstructs the moral problem in the framework of dispositionalism about belief. It then suggests that, if we think of moral beliefs in dispositionalist terms and take 'believe' to be a vague predicate, we can come to see why many of the most fundamental metaethical questions cannot be answered. The last section of the paper then extends this method of dissolving metaethical questions to other popular views about belief.

Keywords: Belief · Dispositionalism · Michael Smith · Moral Problem · Metaethics

1. Introduction – the Moral Problem

One remarkable thing about Michael Smith's 1994 book *The Moral Problem* is the big picture of metaethics, which its Chapter 1 provided.[1] After drawing the distinction between first-order moral and higher-order metaethical questions, Smith (3–4) pointed out that metaethicists disagree about almost everything. There is disagreement, for example, about whether moral facts exist, whether they are ordinary natural facts or *sui generis*, whether moral properties are causally efficacious, whether there is a necessary connection between moral judgments and motivation, whether moral judgments are beliefs or desire-like attitudes, whether moral requirements are requirements of rationality, and about whether morality is objective. Today, thirty years later, metaethicists still continue to disagree about these questions.

Smith, however, also wanted to explain why there is so much disagreement in metaethics. This explanation gives *The Moral Problem* its

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1   Hereafter, all unattributed references are to Smith (1994).

name. The problem is, according to Smith (5–7), that two features of our moral practices pull in different directions when we assume a Humean view of human psychology. The first of these features Smith called the 'objectivity of moral judgments' (6), which he captured in the following way (12):

1. Moral judgments of the form 'It is right that I φ' express a subject's beliefs about an objective matter of fact, a fact about what is right for her to do.

This feature of morality is the claim that, in moral inquiry, we are concerned about getting the answers to different moral questions right, which assumes that there are objectively correct answers to be had.

Smith called the second central feature of morality the 'practicality of moral judgment' (7), which he captured thus (12):

2. If someone judges that it is right that she φs then, *ceteris paribus*, she is motivated to φ.

This feature is based on the observation that, all else being equal, we expect people who make sincere moral judgments to be motivated accordingly. As Smith (7) put it, 'moral judgments seem to be ... opinions about reasons we have for behaving in certain ways, and ... having such opinions is a matter of finding ourselves with a corresponding motivation.'

The problem, according to Smith, is that these two features of morality have exactly the opposite implications in metaethical moral psychology when we assume the Humean picture of human psychology. According to that picture (7), there are two fundamentally different kinds of mental states: beliefs that purport to represent how the world is and desires that represent how the world is to be. On this view, beliefs are motivationally inert, but they can be evaluated in terms of truth and falsity. By contrast, desires are not assessable in terms of truth or falsehood as they are states of being motivated. Smith formulated the central crux of this psychological picture as follows (12):

3. An agent is motivated to act in a certain way just in case she has an appropriate desire and a means-end belief, where belief and desire are, in Hume's terms, distinct existences.

The moral problem (i.e., the explanation of why there is so much disagreement in metaethics) then is that the propositions 1–3 form an inconsistent triad (12). 1 entails that moral judgments are beliefs, and 2 that they are necessarily connected to being motivated and hence according to 3 to desires. Yet, 3 states that no belief can have a necessary connection to a desire – believing that things are thus and so is one thing, and desiring the world to be in some way is something else.

This big picture also enables us to map the logical space of different metaethical views, and this map has been hugely influential – it has guided

a whole generation of metaethicists through the field. We can understand different metaethical views as rejections of one of the previous propositions 1–3. The expressivists and other non-cognitivists reject 1, the idea that moral judgments express beliefs; the externalist cognitivists reject 2, the necessary connection between moral judgments and motivation; and the anti-Humeans 3, the idea that beliefs and desires are distinct existences.[2]

Smith's (13) diagnosis of the state of metaethics in 1994 was that the disagreements between these positions will not go away because each position is trying to reject and explain away a proposition which seems more certain than the key elements of those positions themselves. The fact that the same metaethical disagreements continue to this day seems to confirm this diagnosis. Yet, after both diagnosing what is behind the fundamental metaethical disagreements and providing a map of the logical space, Smith also wanted to *solve* the moral problem. He argued that the alleged contradiction generated by 1–3 is merely an apparent one. Smith suggested that once we analysed the non-obvious content of our moral beliefs correctly, we would be able to explain the necessary connection between moral beliefs and motivation in rational agents within the framework of the Humean belief-desire psychology.

This is where this paper comes in. §2 first outlines an objection to Smith's solution, which has to do with its inability explain why certain combinations of beliefs and desires are incoherent. The rest of the paper outlines a way in which the moral problem could be dissolved rather than solved. For this purpose, §3 uses dispositional approaches to belief to construct an alternative big picture of the metaethical landscape. Just like Smith's big picture, it too will enable us to map the logical space of different metaethical views. §4 will, however, suggest that the adoption of this new way of seeing the metaethical landscape has significant consequences. Instead of offering a positive solution to the metaethical problems, it will provide us with a way of dissolving many of the central metaethical questions. Finally, §5 concludes by explaining why the proposed dissolution of the moral problem does not depend on the dispositional account of beliefs, but rather it can also be adapted to fit the frameworks provided by the other leading approaches to belief.

2. An Objection to Smith's Solution

As already mentioned, Smith (13–14) wanted to provide an analysis of the non-obvious content of our moral judgments to explain, within the Humean framework, both the objectivity and the practicality of those judgments. This analysis proceeded in two steps. Firstly, Smith (§3.2 and §3.6–§3.9) argued that moral judgments are judgments about what we have reason to

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2   Smith (12–13) takes Ayer, Hare, Blackburn, and Gibbard to be proponents of the first strategy; Frankena, Foot, Scanlon, Railton, and Brink proponents of the second strategy; and Nagel, McDowell, Platts, McNaughton, and Dancy proponents of the third strategy.

do. Secondly, he (§5.9) also suggested that a judgment about what you have reason to do in a given situation is a judgment about what our fully rational versions would desire from their idealised perspective real people like you to do in that concrete situation in the actual world. The consequence of this analysis is that a moral judgment of the form 'It is right that I φ in C' would just be the belief that our fully rational selves in the evaluating world would want our non-idealized selves to φ in C in the evaluated actual world.

Let us then see how this analysis is supposed to solve the moral problem. Firstly, it seems to secure the objectivity of moral judgments in two ways. Firstly and more obviously, because moral judgments are on this view beliefs, they are be truth evaluable (185). There is some fact of the matter what desires we would have if we had all the relevant true beliefs, no false ones and deliberated correctly, which is why our moral beliefs can be true or false. Secondly, Smith (164–174) also argued that your own moral judgments are not merely about what the idealized, fully rational version of you would want you to do in your actual circumstances, but rather they are about what everyone's fully rational versions would advise their actual, less than fully rational versions to do in your circumstances. This stipulation is required, according to Smith, so that we have a common subject-matter when we debate what we have reasons to do.

Smith (§5.10) also claimed that the previous analysis can be used to explain the practicality of moral judgments. To see how, we need a more careful formulation of 2 where the *ceteris paribus*-clause is replaced with a rationality-condition. We thus get (61):

2*   If an agent judges that it is right for her to φ in circumstances C, then either she is motivated to § in C or she is practically irrational.

This claim seems to allow us to explain the practicality of moral judgments within the Humean framework. It is constitutive of rational agents that they have a disposition towards coherent and unified combinations of mental states, and hence insofar as you have conflicting combinations of mental states you are irrational (159). Smith then claimed that the combination of (i) believing that everyone's fully rational versions would want their actual versions to φ in C and (ii) lacking a desire to φ in C yourself is incoherent (1997: 100). After all, you believe that a more informed and better reasoning version of you too wants you to φ in C and yet you do not want to φ yourself. As a consequence, insofar as you are a rational agent, your disposition towards coherence and unity will kick in and produce a desire in you to φ in C. This means that, insofar as you are rational, you will have the motivations that match your moral judgments. Furthermore, this explanation seems fully compatible with the Humean idea that beliefs and desires are distinct existences, and it does not assume any brute, inexplicable necessary connections between beliefs and desires either. The moral problem solved?

I believe that there is a problem at the heart of Smith's solution. This is because, even if the solution does not require any necessary metaphysical connections between beliefs and desires and so in a Humean spirit it takes such states to be distinct existences, the solution still is objectionably anti-Humean because it assumes that there are coherence-relations between beliefs and desires.[3] It is, however, less clear of what such relations between beliefs and desires could consist.

According to Smith, beliefs have the mind-to-word direction of fit – they 'purport to represent the way the world is (7).' This representational aspect of beliefs enables us to explain why two beliefs are either consistent with each other or contradict one another (see Fullhart and Martinez (2024)). Roughly put, two beliefs are consistent if there is a possible world in which both are true and inconsistent when there is no such a world (that is, when the truth of one of the beliefs excludes the truth of the other in the same world). We can similarly explain when two desires, as states that represent how the world is to be, are either coherent with one another or conflicting with each other. Again, roughly, two desires are coherent with one another if there is a world in which they are both satisfied, and conflicting when there is no such world because satisfying one of the desires rules out satisfying the other.[4]

Smith's (1997: 100) solution to the moral problem, however, requires that, in addition to these intra-belief and intra-desire relations of coherence and incoherence, it would also make sense to talk about whether a given belief either coheres or conflicts with a given desire. That is, his view requires that we can meaningfully say whether a given representation of how the world is coheres or conflicts with a given representation of how the world is desired to be. This is required because Smith's solution to the moral problem is based on the idea that your belief that our fully rational selves would want our actual versions to φ in C would cohere more with your desire to φ in C than with your lack of a desire to φ in C (or desire not to φ in C). Now, I agree with Smith that, *intuitively*, it seems like here it would be more coherent, given the content of your belief, to have the former desire rather than the latter one. But, nowhere in *The Moral Problem* do we get an explanation of why that former combination of a belief and a desire would be more coherent than the latter combination, and we never get an account of what coherence between beliefs and desires would consist of more generally.[5] We never get

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3   Hume rejects necessary connections between distinct existences in Hume (T: 1.3.14.35) and is famously sceptical about coherence-relations between beliefs and desires too (T: 2.3.3.5).

4   Geoffray Sayre-McCord (1997: 75–76) objected to the idea that there are normatively significant coherence and unity relations between desires. For a response, see Smith (1997: §4).

5   For a different way to develop this same problem, see Sayre-McCord (1997: 74). For Smith's attempt to respond to Sayre-McCord's concern 'rather swiftly', see Smith (1997: 101). Smith's response assumes that the objection is based on the concern that there cannot be normatively significant coherence and unity relations between different

an answer to the question of under what conditions would a given belief and desire pair be either consistent or inconsistent with one another. This makes me believe that Smith's view replaces one traditional metaethical mystery (necessary connections between beliefs and desires as distinct existences) with a new metaethical mystery, the required coherence and incoherence relations between beliefs and desires.

This gap in Smith's solution can be used to make sense of several more recent developments in metaethics. Firstly, it allows the non-naturalist realists to attempt to give a similar explanation of the practicality of moral judgments.[6] A non-naturalist can claim that moral judgments are beliefs about *sui generis* moral properties. She can then claim that the content of the belief that φing in C has the non-natural property of rightness is such that desiring to φ in C coheres better with this belief than lacking that desire. Like Smith, the non-naturalist can then argue that the coherence-relation here is *intuitive* and cannot be explained in any other terms. This means that Smith's solution to the moral problem does not seem like an improvement to the solutions that are available for the non-naturalist realists.

There are two other reactions one might have to the previous objection to Smith's view, which would both try to rely on the traditional coherence-relations to explain the practicality of moral judgments. Some expressivists would argue that the moral judgment that it is right to φ in C (i.e., the 'belief' that our fully rational selves would want our actual versions to φ in C) is in fact at least in part a desire-like attitude. It could, for example, be a combination of a desire to be a certain kind of an improved version of oneself and a belief that such an improved version of oneself would want us to φ in C.[7] As a

desires. Smith (ibid.) then suggests that, if there are such coherence relations between desires, they will explain the relevant coherence relation between the relevant belief and desire, but this just does not seem to be the case given the different directions of fit of such states.

That the relevant coherence and incoherence relations between beliefs and desires are problematic is furthermore supported by the fact that the standard general tests for coherence and incoherence relations between mental states seem to fail to recognise them. For example, let's assume that a belief is satisfied when true and a desire when the world comes to be so that it fits the way the desire specifies. In this case, we can think that two mental states are coherent when there is a possible world in which both states are satisfied simultaneously (see Fullhart and Martinez (2024: 317)). Consider then a case in which an agent believes that our fully rational versions would want us to φ in C. In this case, there are possible worlds in which this belief is true (and thus in which it really is the case that our fully rational versions want us to φ in C) (i) some in which our desire to φ in C is satisfied (given that we φ in C) and (ii) some in which our desire not to φ in C is satisfied (given that we do not φ in C). This means that, on this test, both the desire to φ in C and the desire not to φ in C are equally coherent with the belief that our fully rational versions would want us to φ in C because the satisfaction of neither of those desires is ruled out by the truth of that belief. This means that, according to this test, the belief in question cannot cohere any more with either one of these desires.

6   See, e.g., Scanlon (2014: 65–66), and for a critical discussion Dreier (2015: 166).

7   See, e.g., Ridge (2014: ch. 4).

consequence, the hybrid expressivists who hold the previous view would be in a position to offer *intra-desire* explanations of why when you judge that it is right to φ in C, having a desire to φ in C would be more coherent. This, however, is just a more complicated way of saying that expressivists can explain the practicality aspect of our moral judgments (though Smith would presumably question whether they can explain the objectivity aspect too).

By contrast, some cognitivists would argue that, when you judge that it is right to φ in C, the corresponding desire to φ in C is in fact deep down some kind of a belief with the mind-to-world direction of fit, perhaps the belief that you have reason to φ in C.[8] As a consequence, these cognitivists would be in a position to offer an intra-belief explanation of why having a desire to φ in C is more coherent when you judge that φing in C is the right thing to do, and thus why, as a rational agent, you would have that desire if you made the moral judgment in question. Yet, the problem with this view response is that it seems to reject the Humean picture of human psychology, the idea that beliefs and desires are distinct existences.

Overall, there is then a worry that Smith has failed to make the seemingly inconsistent propositions 1–3 fully consistent with one another, and so it still seems like we need to reject one of those propositions. Furthermore, after 30 years of debating, we seem no closer to a consensus concerning which proposition that should be, and so the metaethical disagreements carry on as before. The rest of this paper suggests that, instead of trying to solve the moral problem, there might be a way of dissolving it. This will, however, require introducing a new big picture to capture the logical space of metaethical views in a different way, which is a task I will turn to next.

3. Metaethics Meets Dispositional Accounts of Belief

Just like Smith grounded his understanding of the metaethical landscape on the foundations of the Humean picture of human psychology, I want to begin by assuming a different big picture of human psychology, namely the dispositional approaches to belief. It is worthwhile to note that this big picture of human psychology and the nature of belief is assumed here merely for the sake of the argument as it enables us both to draw a new map of the metaethical territory (this section) and, with the help of this new map, to dissolve Smith's moral problem (§4). However, my intention is not to defend the dispositional approach. This is because, in the concluding §5, I will suggest that similar arguments to dissolve the moral problem can also be made in the frameworks provided by the other popular views about the nature of belief.

One key difference between the Humean and the dispositionalist big pictures of human psychology is that, whilst the Humean picture assumes that

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8   See, e.g., Gregory (2021).

internal representations and internal structures of the mind are fundamental to being in a given belief state, the dispositional picture sees such things as almost irrelevant for being in the state of believing. Rather, according to the dispositional accounts, beliefs consist of (i.e., are nothing but) 'dispositions to act and react in various ways in various circumstances' (Schwitzgebel 2010: 533).[9] This means that, on these views, beliefs can rightly be ascribed to beings solely based on the patterns of their actual and possible behaviours, irrespective of what, if anything, is going on inside of their minds. The events internal to the mind are on this view relevant derivatively and only when they ground and explain the relevant patterns of behaviour.

What then are the relevant dispositions constitutive of a belief that p?[10] This is a question I will attempt to address in more detail below, but according to the traditional forms of dispositionalism, they consist, for example, of dispositions to assent to utterances of p in the right circumstances, to exhibit surprise when it turns out that not p, to assent to q if p implies that q, to depend on p in one's plans and actions, and so on. All of this is very abstract, and so it is helpful to illustrate this view with Gilbert Ryle's famous more concrete example (1949: 135):

> ... to believe that the ice is dangerously thin is to be unhesitant in telling oneself and others that it is thin, in acquiescing in other people's assertions to that effect, in objecting to statements to the contrary, in drawing consequences from the original proposition, and so forth. But it is also to be prone to skate warily, to shudder, to dwell in imagination on possible disasters and to warn other skaters. It is a propensity not only to make certain theoretical moves but also to make certain executive and imaginative moves, as well as to have certain feelings.

Note that, in this quote, Ryle does not equate the relevant belief with a single disposition but rather with a vast number of different kinds of dispositions to do different things. Because of this, some philosophers talk about a 'multi-track' disposition (where the tracts consist of 'abilities, tendencies or pronenesses to do, not things of one unique kind, but things of lots of different things' (Ryle 1948: 118)) or about a single dispositional track that just happens to be very wide (Marcus 1990; Hunter 2011: 238).

We can make two observations about this approach to belief. Firstly, claims about dispositions hold merely *all else being equal*, against a background

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9   For defences, see, e.g., Ryle (1949), Price (1969), Audi (1994), and Schwitzgebel (2002). An analogy that can be helpful is that, in a similar fashion, it is appealing to think of character-traits as behavioural dispositions (see Schwitzgebel (forthcoming)).

10 The relevant dispositions can be understood in terms of the truth and falsity of conditional statements of the form "If circumstances C hold, then object O will (or is likely to) enter (or remain in) state S' (Schwitzgebel 2002: 250). This allows us to call O entering the state S the manifestation of the disposition, C the manifestation condition, and the event of C obtaining the trigger (ibid.).

of certain defeasible assumptions (Rowbottom 2007; Schwitzgebel 2010: 534). Even if the previous example's skater is disposed to warn others, she may not do so because she either wants to harm others or is too distracted by other things. Yet, despite these deviations from the typical dispositional manifestations, the skater can count as someone who believes that the ice is thin, given the obtaining excusing conditions. There must, of course, be at least some limits on what constitutes an excusing condition, or otherwise we could ascribe any beliefs we wanted to others. It is, however, equally difficult to state exactly what the limits on these excusing conditions would be.

Secondly, a distinction between two different kinds of dispositions in Ryle's example will be crucial for our purposes below. Ryle (1949: 135) distinguishes dispositions 'to make certain theoretical moves' from dispositions to make 'certain executive and imaginative moves, as well as to have certain feelings.' Let us call the former dispositions 'theoretical' and the latter 'practical'. Ryle uses the dispositions to tell oneself that the ice is thin, to object to others if they deny this, and to use the thinness of ice as a premise in deliberation as examples of the former type of dispositions, and the dispositions to skate warily on the ice, to warn others, and to dwell on the worst-case scenarios as examples of the latter type of dispositions. The former dispositions, the theoretical ones, tend to belong to the part in our mental lives that is more sensitive to evidence and argument and also more controlled, self-aware, and thoughtful. By contrast, the latter, the more practical dispositions tend to be more habitual, automatic, uncontrollable, and associative.[11]

Let us then apply this general approach to belief to moral beliefs.[12] Take a subject, call her Sarah, who believes that eating meat is wrong. According to the dispositional approaches to belief, Sarah would thus have a wide range of dispositions to act and react in different circumstances in the ways that are relevant for that belief, where those dispositions would constitute her belief that eating meat is wrong. Firstly, Sarah would have a wide range of theoretical dispositions that would include tendencies to tell herself that eating meat is wrong, to bring up the topic in discussion, to challenge those who deny that eating meat is wrong, to look for positive evidence and arguments for the wrongness of meat-eating, to use the wrongness of meat-eating as a premise in practical reasoning, and so on. As mentioned above, these theoretical dispositions are a part of Sarah's cognitive architecture that is more explicit, controlled, self-aware, and thoughtful. They also seem to

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11   For discussions of this contrast, see Gendler (2008a; 2008b), Zimmermann (2007), and Schwitzgebel (2010: 538). In addition to behaviour dispositions, the relevant dispositions also include cognitive and phenomenal dispositions (see Schwitzgebel (2002: 252)).

12   From this point onwards, the phrase 'moral beliefs' should no longer be understood necessarily to mean belief states understood in Humean terms. Rather, below I will use the phrase as a neutral label for being the state, whatever the ultimate nature of that state is, that is required for being able to sincerely assert the corresponding normative sentence (see Schroeder (2008: §5.1)).

correspond generally to Smith's characterisation of the objectivity of moral judgments.

Sarah would, however, also have a wide range of practical dispositions that would include tendencies to choose to eat vegetarian options at restaurants, to cook vegetarian dishes at home, to protest against factory farming, to feel awkward in the presence of meat-eaters, to buy lots of vegetables, and so on. And, as mentioned, many of these dispositions would be more habitual, implicit, automatic, uncontrollable, and associative. These dispositions thus seem to correspond generally to Smith's description of the practicality of moral judgments. Given that Sarah then has both all the theoretical and all the practical dispositions that we would associate with someone who believes that eating meat is wrong, we are therefore inclined to ascribe to her the belief that eating meat is wrong. According to the dispositionalist accounts, her moral belief that eating meat is wrong would then just consist of those dispositions.[13]

However, in addition to the previous kind of cases, there are also ones in which subjects have only some of the relevant dispositions. In metaethical moral psychology, one such case has been discussed extensively, the case of Huckleberry Finn. Nomy Arpaly (2015: 141–142) describes it in the following way:

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13   The previous dispositions that constitute Sarah's moral belief could be called the dispositional stereotype, which are the cluster of dispositions we are apt to associate with the moral belief in question (Schwitzgebel 2002: 251). One important practical consequence of this view is that the grounds on which we tend to ascribe beliefs to others, namely the patterns of their outward behaviour, are according to it intimately connected to the constituents of those beliefs, the behaviour dispositions. This also seems to correspond nicely to Smith's (6–7) intuitive observations concerning the practicality of moral judgments in concrete cases. These cases suggest that we tend to ascribe moral principles to others based on their observable behaviour, and so in the absence of the relevant patterns of behaviour we often begin to question what the agent's moral beliefs ultimately are.

This close connection between the grounds for ascribing moral beliefs and the moral beliefs themselves has traditionally led to two well-known objections to dispositionalism that are concerns about the practical implications of the view. Firstly, it is often pointed out that how a person with a given moral belief behaves depends significantly on her other mental states (beliefs, desires, emotions, mood and the like) and so identifying a given moral belief with a simple behaviour disposition is problematic (see Chisholm (1957)). Secondly, it has also been argued that there are cases where the connection between moral beliefs and patterns of behaviour is just too loose for the purposes of the view under consideration. These cases include actors, paralyzed persons, people who live under oppression and censorship, and moral beliefs about very distant matters (see Putnam (1963) and Strawson (1994)). In all these cases, the individuals seem able to have the relevant moral beliefs without any of the relevant patterns of behaviour being present, or vice versa. In response to these challenges, the contemporary dispositionalists have become more liberal and inclusive concerning what types of dispositions are relevant for having a given belief and about in what kind of situations these dispositions need to be manifested (see Schwitzgebel 2002: 259 and 2024: §1.3)). This paper follows this response in the way it takes the relevant dispositions to be very wide multi-track dispositions.

> To make a long story short, Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain's fictional character, often known as Huck, is a boy portrayed as an ignorant but good person. Huck, who is white, helps Jim, a black slave, escape. As they float together on a raft on the river, Huck experiences what he thinks of as pangs of conscience. He wonders if he is doing something wrong—stealing from Jim's owner, whom he calls Miss Watson. Upon deliberation, Huck is forced to conclude that helping Jim is wrong and resolves to turn him in. However, when a golden opportunity appears to turn Jim in, Huck finds himself psychologically unable to do it.

This case illustrates how sometimes subjects have conflicting sets of theoretical and practical dispositions relevant to belief.[14] Huck seems to have all the theoretical dispositions that seem constitutive of believing that helping Jim is wrong, and yet, at the same time, he also seems to have all the practical dispositions that would seem constitutive of the opposite belief, the belief that helping Jim is not wrong. He is, after all, disposed not to turn Jim in, not to alert anyone of his presence, and so on.

In the framework of dispositionalism about belief, such cases enable us to focus on the question of exactly which dispositions are constitutive of a given moral belief. One significant consequence of this question is that different answers to it seem to provide a new map to the logical space of different metaethical views. The traditional well-known metaethical views can be located from this map, but it also creates space for new views.

The first response to the previous question is the so-called *pro-judgment view* (Zimmerman 2007; Gendler 2008a and 2008b). On this view, only the theoretical dispositions constitute a belief, mainly because those dispositions, just as beliefs, are thought to belong to the part of our cognitive lives that is rational, thoughtful, and sensitive to evidence and argument (see Schwitzgebel (2010: 538)). In the previous case, this view entails that Huck's theoretical dispositions would constitute his belief that helping Jim is wrong, whereas his practical dispositions would be both irrelevant for having that belief and fail to constitute a belief that helping Jim is not wrong. In terms of traditional metaethical views, this view would most naturally correspond to different forms of externalist cognitivism to which Smith (68–76) has always objected.[15]

The second response is the so-called *anti-judgment view* (Hunter 2011). According to it, only the practical dispositions constitute beliefs. The main motivation for this view is that, often in the cases in which subjects'

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14 For Smith's own descriptions of such cases, see, e.g., (67) and Smith and Kennett (1994 and 1996). Schwitzgebel (2010: 532–533) likewise describes the cases of Juliet the implicit racist, Kaipeng the trembling Stoic and Ben the forgetful driver in which the agents' theoretical and practical dispositions come apart.

15 For objections to the pro-judgment view more generally, see Schwitzgebel (2010: 538–541).

theoretical and practical dispositions conflict, intuitively we tend to ascribe beliefs based on the practical dispositions because they seem to better match what we take the agents cognitive stance to be (Schwitzgebel 2010: 541). In the previous case, this view would entail that Huck's practical dispositions to help Jim constitute his belief that doing so is not wrong, whereas his theoretical dispositions are neither relevant for that belief nor constitute a belief that helping Jim is wrong. In terms of traditional metaethics, this view would most naturally correspond to different forms of internalist non-cognitivism and expressivism to which Smith (2001 and 2002) has always objected too.[16]

The third response we could call the *belt and suspenders view*. On this view, all the theoretical and practical dispositions together constitute a given belief, but only when they all perfectly align with each other. This view would entail that, in the case above, Sarah's coinciding theoretical and practical dispositions do successfully constitute her belief that eating meat is wrong. By contrast, because Huck's theoretical and practical dispositions are pulling in the opposite directions, Huck would on this view neither believe that helping Jim is wrong nor that it is not wrong. In terms of traditional metaethics, this view would most naturally correspond to different forms of internalist cognitivism.[17]

In the framework of dispositionalism, we can also, at this point, construct new, previously unexplored metaethical positions. For example, according to the *shifting view*, subjects like Huck are shifting between having different beliefs (Rowbottom 2007). On this view, when Huck is in reflective contexts, he has a high degree of belief that helping Jim is wrong, and yet, when he moves to a non-reflective context where action is called for, he loses this belief and perhaps even slides to believing that helping Jim is not wrong. This means that, on this view, the dispositions that are manifested in a context constitute the belief the subject holds in it.[18]

Another answer would be provided by the *contradictory view* (Gertler 2008). On this view, both theoretical and practical dispositions constitute separate beliefs of their own. According to this view, given his conflicting theoretical and practical dispositions, Huck would believe both that helping Jim is wrong and that it is not wrong. This is because both his sincere avowal

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16   For objections to the anti-judgment view more generally, see Schwitzgebel (2010: 541–543).

17   With respect to the theories of this type, Smith (118–125) objects to the non-Humean versions that seem based on 'besires' in an objectionable way. His own view too, however, is, as explained above, a version of cognitivist internalism that just promises to be compatible with Humean moral psychology. The view described in the next section will be closest to this view, although (unlike the high threshold view) it will not require that subjects who have a given moral belief have all the theoretical and practical dispositions relevant to it.

18   Schwitzgebel (2010: 543–544) objects to this view on the grounds that it makes us unable to describe an agent's overall, general attitude in the cases of the conflicted agents. For example, it leaves it open what Huck really believes when he is neither deliberating nor in a position to help Jim.

that helping Jim is wrong and his spontaneous reaction not to help him are sufficient on their own to underwrite belief.[19] Interestingly, the shifting view and the contradictory view do not have natural counterparts in the traditional metaethical debates.

This suggests that (i) dispositionalism, (ii) the cases of conflicted agents, and (iii) the question of which dispositions in them constitute beliefs together provide us with a new map of the metaethical landscape from which both the traditional metaethical views and new alternatives can be located. This map is in several ways different from the one provided by Smith's moral problem. The real question then is whether the new map is any better than the old map. Is it, for example, in any way more useful or illuminative?

The problem with the old map is that, assuming that Smith's own solution to the moral problem suffers from the issue explored in §2, we still seem to face the intractable question of whether we should reject (i) the objectivity moral judgments, (ii) their practicality, or (iii) the Humean picture of human psychology. And, 30 years on, it seems like we are no closer to a generally accepted answer to this question.

By contrast, in terms of the new map, a solution to the moral problem would consist of a definitive answer to the new fundamental metaethical question of which dispositions (theoretical, practical, both together or separately on their own, or some other alternative) constitute a given moral belief. As I suggested above, this question too can be used to distinguish between different metaethical positions, and so presumably the defenders of the traditional metaethical views would be inclined to defend different answers to this question as well.

There are, however, two reasons to believe that, in this form, this new metaethical problem will be just as intractable as Smith's moral problem. Firstly, in the more general debates about beliefs and also in the debates about implicit biases more specifically, all the previous answers to the question of which dispositions constitute a belief continue to be equally controversial. Thus, at least sociologically speaking, the debates about which dispositions constitute beliefs seem just as intractable as the old metaethical debates.

Secondly, in the traditional metaethical debates between the so-called motivational internalists and externalists, the cases in which agents' theoretical dispositions and practical dispositions come apart have been discussed intensively for quite a while now.[20] In these debates, the defenders of the different positions have different intuitions about the relevant cases, and they also give very different descriptions of them to match their theories. Because of this, there is little hope that we could come to agree on the question of which dispositions constitute moral beliefs just by consulting

19   Schwitzgebel (2010: 544) suggests that this view does not add anything of value besides confusion.

20   For an outline of these debates and references, see Björklund et al (2012).

our intuitions about the relevant test cases. This, furthermore, means that it is unlikely that we could use the new map to converge on the correct metaethical view, whatever that may be. Because of this, I am sceptical about whether the new map is any more useful than Smith's map with respect *to solving* the most fundamental metaethical problems. The next section will, however, suggest that, just maybe, the new metaethical map could turn out to be more helpful in a different way. Perhaps instead of helping us to solve Smith's moral problem, the new map will help us to dissolve many of the most fundamental metaethical problems by helping us to see why those questions cannot be answered in the first place.

4. Dissolving the Moral Problem

Dissolving the moral problem in the framework of dispositionalism about belief requires making two theoretical moves. We first need to understand the dispositions that constitute different beliefs in a much more fine-grained way, and we then need to take 'believe' to be a vague predicate that admits of so-called 'in-between' cases. This section will first outline these two moves. It will then explain how they will lead, in two ways, to the dissolution of the moral problem.

The previous section focused on two separate sets of dispositions relevant to belief, the theoretical dispositions and the practical dispositions. This discussion used examples of both kinds of dispositions, but, in a very coarse-grained fashion, it also gave the impression that the theoretical dispositions and the practical dispositions always exist separately as unified and complete sets.

We should, however, think of the relevant dispositions in a much more fine-grained way. Firstly, we should really talk about thousands of narrower, more local dispositions. For example, Sarah might have separate dispositions to make different choices in different restaurants, shops, and kitchens, different dispositions to react to people eating meat in different situations, different dispositions to make different arguments in different debates, and so on.[21] Secondly, we should not think that these dispositions are either fully theoretical or fully practical, but rather we should think that they are on a spectrum of theoreticality and practicality. This is because these dispositions can be more or less controlled/uncontrollable, self-aware/automatic, deliberative/associative, explicit/implicit, thoughtful/reactive, and action-/argumentation-orientated.

Thirdly, and most importantly, we should accept that a subject can have these dispositions in any combination whatsoever and not just as full sets of theoretical and practical dispositions. As Schwitzgebel (2010: 534) puts it, '[t]here must, indeed, be something like a continuum between full

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21   For many beliefs, the relevant dispositions would include a vast number of dispositions to take and refuse different bets in different situations (Ramsey 1931).

possession of all the relevant dispositions and possession of none of them – with a multidimensional spectrum of cases between the two extremes.' By this, Schwitzgebel means that if we take a subject who has a certain percentage of the dispositions (say 64% of them) relevant to having a given, these dispositions could be any of the hundreds of more or less theoretical and practical dispositions that are relevant for having the belief in question. These dispositions could be almost wholly from the more theoretical end of the spectrum, almost wholly from the more practical end of the spectrum, from the middle of the spectrum, or any other mix of the theoretical and practical dispositions. This follows from the Humean dictum that there are no necessary connections between distinct existences (which in this case are all the different dispositions that are relevant to having the belief in question) (Hume T: 1.3.6.1).

In order to make the second theoretical move, we can then focus on the predicate 'believe'. If we adopt the previous picture of a continuum of dispositions with a multidimensional spectrum of cases between the extremes, it will be natural to think that it is a 'vague predicate that admits of in-between cases' (Schwitzgebel 2010: 533). This entails that there is no simple answer to the question of which dispositions constitute a given belief. There will not be any specific dispositions that will be individually necessary and jointly sufficient for having that belief. Rather, the following picture emerges. If a subject such as Sarah has most of the dispositions relevant to believing that eating meat is wrong, she will definitely believe that eating meat is wrong. In other words, in that case the mix of both practical and theoretical dispositions Sarah has constitute her belief that eating meat is wrong. At the opposite end of the spectrum, if a subject has only a few of the relevant dispositions, she will definitely lack the belief that eating meat is wrong as she would not have enough of the relevant dispositions to constitute that very belief.

There is, however, a broad range of cases in-between these two ends of the spectrum, where we can in principle fully articulate in detail the subject's dispositional structure. In these cases, we could in principle list comprehensively the combination of the relevant theoretical and practical dispositions the subject has (and likewise the dispositions she lacks). Here it is, however, natural to think that at this broad middle zone of the multidimensional spectrum there is no sharp threshold at any point that would partition the spectrum into cases of believing and not believing (Schwitzgebel 2010: 535). It seems much more plausible that there is a wide zone of the spectrum in the middle that contains the cases that could be called the 'in-between' cases in which it is indeterminate whether the subject has the given belief. These are cases of vagueness in which, even if we could in principle know the subject's dispositional structure in fine detail, even that knowledge would still require us to refrain from either ascribing or denying the belief in question. In these cases where the relevant dispositions are only partially possessed, the talk about beliefs begins to break down as 'the simplifications

and assumptions inherent in it aren't entirely met' (Schwitzgebel 2010: 535). Here, there just is no fact of the matter – it's neither true nor false that the subject in question has the relevant belief.

In this section, I have thus outlined two moves that lead to a new dispositional picture of moral beliefs. This picture is based on first thinking of the dispositions that are relevant to belief in a more fine-grained way. It thus recognises that the relevant fine-grained dispositions can be more or less theoretical and also that they are distinct existences that can be had in a multitude of different combinations. We thus get a spectrum where at one end are the cases of having most of the relevant dispositions (the cases of belief), and at the other end the cases of having only few of the dispositions (the cases of disbelief). And, in the middle, we have a broad range of in-between cases, i.e., the indeterminate cases. I then want to suggest that this picture enables us to dissolve the moral problem in two ways.

Firstly, according to Smith's moral problem, if we assume the Humean picture of human psychology (and reject Smith's own solution), we face the choice between externalist cognitivism (which requires giving up the practicality of moral judgment – thesis 2 in §1 above) and internalist non-cognitivism (which requires giving up the objectivity of moral judgment – thesis 1 in §1 above). This forced choice has led many metaethicists to consider cases like Huck Finn above in which agents have all the theoretical dispositions relevant to a given moral judgment and none of the corresponding practical dispositions. This has furthermore led to extensive discussions of cases concerning amoralists, psychopaths, depressed individuals, and evil people.[22] The hope has been that, by coming to a view about whether these agents have made genuine moral judgments, we would be able to decide between externalist cognitivism and internalist non-cognitivism.

The dispositionalist picture of belief can, however, explain why an agreement cannot be reached about the previous kind of cases and hence also why the debate between the externalist cognitivists and the internalist non-cognitivists will never be able to come to a conclusion. Recall that, according to that picture, if a subject has most of the (theoretical and practical) dispositions relevant to a given moral belief those dispositions will successfully constitute the belief in question; if she only has few of them she fails to have the belief; and in between these ends of the spectrum there is a wide middle zone in which the subject is in between believing and disbelieving – where it is indeterminate whether the subject has the relevant belief. If this is the case, it seems likely that the test cases that have traditionally been used in the cognitivism versus non-cognitivism debate will fall into this middle zone. After all, in these cases, the subjects have many of the theoretical dispositions and hardly any of the practical ones (or vice versa), and so they neither have a majority of all the relevant dispositions nor lack the majority of them. This

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22   For an overview, see Björklund et al (2012).

means that the cases of Huckleberry Finn and the familiar cases of amoralists, psychopaths, depressives, and evil individuals are likely to be indeterminate cases in which the subjects are in-between having the relevant moral beliefs and not having them. In these cases, given the subjects' dispositions, there just is no fact of the matter. This would entail that the debate between the externalist cognitivists and internalist non-cognitivists is in principle unsolvable, and so the question these views are trying to answer seems to be go away – it seems to dissolve.

There is also, however, a second, deeper reason for why the dispositionalist view of moral belief dissolves the moral problem and, with it, many of the traditional metaethical questions. To see this, we need to consider the metaphysical status of beliefs in Smith's framework and compare it to the dispositional picture. Here it is helpful to consider an analogy.

If we assume the Humean picture of human psychology adopted by Smith, we can think of beliefs and desires as particular mental entities that have their own unitary existence (119).[23] To illustrate this, we can use the analogy of basic physical particles such as electrons and protons and their qualities such as charge. A single particle can have either a positive charge or a negative charge (or neither), but it is impossible for it to have both charges at the same time. Likewise, it can be thought that a single mental state can either have the mind-to-world direction of fit of beliefs or the world-to-mind direction of fit of desires, but not both directions of fit at the same time. As Smith (119) puts it, at least modally it must be possible to be in any belief-state whatsoever without at the same time being at any particular desire-like state. This is why Smith thought that there cannot be 'besires', states with both directions of fit at the same time. Within this framework, it then becomes natural to ask whether a moral judgment is a single, unitary belief-state or a single, unitary desire-state. It is this question that led to the debate between the externalist cognitivists and internalist non-cognitivists and the moral problem as Smith conceived it.

Now, since *The Moral Problem* was published, a third alternative has been explored. According to the hybrid views, we should not think of moral beliefs with the analogy of the basic particles, but rather with the analogy of whole atoms that consist of those particles in some combination. Each of the individual mental states that together constitute a given moral belief is either a belief-state with the mind-to-word direction of fit or a desire-state with the world-to-mind direction of fit, and yet the moral belief itself constituted by those states is neither a distinct unitary belief-state nor a distinct unitary desire-like state but rather a combination of such states. Thus, for example, according to Michael Ridge's (2008: 55) expressivist version of this type of a hybrid view,

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23　Hume seems to adopt this type of an atomistic picture in his account of ideas and impressions (T: 1.1.1). However, Blackburn (2008: 19–20) interestingly provides a causal, functionalist interpretation of the difference between impressions and ideas, which Hume (T: 1.1.1) took to be less vivid copies of the former.

a moral belief consists of approval/disapproval of actions (a desire-like state) insofar as they have a certain property and a belief that the actions the moral belief is about have that property.[24] The defenders of such hybrid views believe that one advantage of such ecumenical views is that they promise to explain both the objectivity and the practicality of moral judgments.

The dispositional picture of moral beliefs is, however, a more radical departure from the atomism assumed by Smith's Humean picture of human psychology. According to the new picture, a subject's moral belief is not metaphysically a unitary state but rather it consists of a multitude of more or less theoretical and practical dispositions relevant to having the belief. These constituents of the belief are individually neither beliefs nor desires because they have neither the world-to-mind nor the mind-to-word direction of fit. Rather, they are merely individual dispositions to react in different circumstances in different ways, where some of these dispositions are more controlled, self-aware, thoughtful, and more connected to deliberation and arguments, and others more habitual, automatic, uncontrollable, associative, and manifesting themselves as concrete actions.

This means that, in this framework, the question of whether a given moral belief is fundamentally a unitary belief-state like the cognitivists think, a unitary desire-like state like the non-cognitivists think, or a combination of unitary belief– and desire-states as the hybrid theorists think dissolves. None of these options accurately capture the constituents of moral beliefs given that such beliefs consist of rich combinations of different dispositions (that can still ground the objectivity and practicality aspects of moral judgments Smith was so keen preserve).[25] In this way too, the dispositionalist picture of the human psychology outlined above dissolves the traditional questions of the nature of moral judgments, which led to Smith's formulation of the moral problem and to the intractable debate between the cognitivists and non-cognitivists.

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24   According to Ridge, this is an expressivist view because the truth of the factual belief does not determine whether the moral belief in question is true. For a cognitivist version of the hybrid views according to which that is the case, see, e.g., Copp (2001).

25   Interestingly a given sufficient mix of the relevant dispositions that constitute a certain moral belief in a given case can contain either a majority of more theoretical or more practical dispositions. This means that, of some cases, traditional externalist cognitivist can be closer to the true picture, whereas of other cases traditional internalist non-cognitivism can be closer to the truth.

It could be objected at this point that the proposed view cannot make sense of the objectivity aspect of moral judgments. It could be argued that dispositions are not the kind of things that can represent objective facts and be either true or false and so, if we thought moral beliefs consisted of dispositions, they could not represent objective facts or be true or false either (see Quilty-Dunn and Mandelbaum (2018: §3.3)). The dispositionalists do not, however, deny that beliefs have propositional truth-evaluable content. Rather, they merely are giving an account of what having a belief with a certain content consists. This means that, according to dispositionalism, the content of the belief in question can still be either true or false in a robust way, which explains also why the relevant more theoretical dispositions are in part constitute of having the belief in question.

5. Conclusion and Extending the New Picture to Other Accounts of Belief

This paper has argued for the following claims. Firstly, even if the three jointly inconsistent claims of Smith's moral problem have provided a hugely influential map of the metaethical landscape, the problem itself seems just as intractable today as it did 30 years ago. Secondly, Smith's own solution to the problem is problematic because it relies on positing brute relations of coherence and incoherence between beliefs and desires. Thirdly, dispositionalism about belief and the question of which dispositions are constitutive of moral beliefs can be used to construct a new map of the metaethical logical space. As we saw, we can locate the familiar traditional metaethical views on this map, but it also creates space for new, previously unexplored positions.

Finally, the previous section suggested more radically that the new way of seeing the metaethical landscape allows us to dissolve the moral problem. To this end, we must first think of the different dispositions relevant to moral beliefs in a more fine-grained way, and we must take 'believe' to be a vague predicate that allows in-between cases in which a subject neither holds a certain moral belief nor determinately lacks it. If this broad picture is right, then, firstly, it is likely that the traditional cases that have been used in the externalist cognitivism versus internalist non-cognitivism debates belong to the category of the in-between cases. In these cases, there is thus no fact of the matter whether the agent has the relevant moral belief or not. And, more fundamentally, on this view, as moral beliefs are taken to consist of a vast number of different dispositions, the question of whether a moral belief is a unitary belief-state, a unitary desire-like state, or some combination of such states just falls away as a question to which no answer can be given.

There is, however, an objection that many would want to make at this point.[26] It could be argued that the previous way of dissolving metaethical questions assumes the dispositionalist view of belief, which admittedly is controversial. I want to conclude by suggesting that this is not quite right. I have relied on dispositionalism merely for the sake of simplicity. Similar attempts to dissolve the moral problem could also be made in the frameworks provided by the three most popular theories of belief: functionalism, representationalism, and interpretationalism as they too create room for cases of in-between believing (see Schwitzgebel (2010: 535–536)).

According to functionalists, believing that P consists of being in a state that occupies (or is apt to occupy) a certain causal-functional role.[27] Smith (113) himself seems to accept this type of a view of beliefs and desires. According to him, the constitutive functional role of belief-states is that the belief that P tends

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26   For several other objections, see footnotes 13 and 25 above.

27   See, e.g., Putnam (1967), Armstrong (1968), and Lewis (1972).

to go out of existence in the presence of perception with the content that not P (115). Yet, if we want to describe the functional role of beliefs more generally, the belief that P also tends to be 'brought about by perceiving or hearing about or inferring that P', it tends to 'lead to avowals of P', it tends to 'promote action A if it is discovered that A will achieve a desired goal if P is true', and it tends to be combined with the belief *if P then Q* to conclude that P (Schwitzgebel 2010: 535–536). In this framework, it is natural to think that subjects can be in states that only partially match the previous functional role of beliefs. If we then again take 'believe' to be a vague predicate, in the relevant cases of partial match the subject can be understood to be in-between believing and not believing. This is natural especially if, following Smith (113), we take the functional roles of beliefs to consist of causal dispositions.

According to the so-called representationalists by contrast, believing that P consists of possessing, 'in a belief-like way, an internal representational token (perhaps a sentence in the language of thought) with the content P' (Schwitzgebel 2010: 536). Yet, in a more general sense of the term, the representationalists too are arguably committed to a form of functionalism. This is because most representationalists think that what makes a given representational state the belief it is consists, not only of the further cognitive relationships the state is apt or likely to enter (as per standard functionalism), but also of the facts about how that particular state came about and of the evolutionary or developmental history of that kind of states in the organism or the species (ibid.).[28] As a consequence, in this framework too, it seems natural to think that subjects can be in states that only partially fill the relevant functional roles in the broader sense. In these cases, the subjects would again be in-between believing and not believing – in-between possessing the relevant internal representational token and not doing so.[29]

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28   See also Fodor (1968; 1987), Millikan (1984), Lycan (1986), Dretske (1988), and Nichols and Stich (2003). Some representationalists defend psychofunctional versions of representationalism (Quilty-Dunn and Mandelbaum 2018). According to these views beliefs are relations to structured mental representations where being in such a relation is determined by the holding of certain generalisations regarding belief acquisition, storage, and change. The defenders of these views have two main objections to the dispositionalist picture discussed in this paper. Firstly, they argue that the cases of in-between beliefs can be understood with the notion of fragmented beliefs where distinct fragments of conflicting beliefs can be stored simultaneously in distinct architectural locations in the same brain (ibid: 2358–2359). Secondly, they also argue that mental representations that are physically realized in the brain are required to play a role in explaining several features of beliefs such as their ability to cause behaviour and enable agents to sort things, their opacity and truth-evaluability, their relations to other propositional attitudes, belief change, and so on (ibid.: §3). Even the defenders of such views, however, grant that we 'should expect ordinary yes-or-no belief ascription to fail in a wide range of cases' (ibid.: 2360), which is sufficient for the purposes of dissolving the moral problem in the way outlined above. For the dispositionalists objections to this type of representationalism generally, see Schwitzgebel (forthcoming).

29   The representationalists often use metaphors such as the relevant representations being in 'belief boxes, 'memory stores' and 'file folders' that suggests a binary architecture, but

It is important to note that, even if this second framework too would allow us to dissolve many traditional questions in metaethical moral psychology, it would still also enable us to ask many of the traditional metaethical questions concerning the relevant representations and their content. For example, we could still have a debate about whether that content is provided by some *sui generis* non-natural facts or by some ordinary natural facts either realistically or relativistically construed. In fact, Smith himself could still argue that his analysis of the content of moral claims (see §2 above) must be correct, because only it can explain why both theoretical and practical dispositions are constitutive of the functional roles of our moral beliefs. In other words, in the representationalist framework, Smith's account of the content of our moral beliefs based on what our fully rational selves would want us to do could be used to explain why both (i) the more controlled, self-aware and thoughtful dispositions related to deliberation and rational argument and (ii) the more habitual, automatic, incontrollable, and associative dispositions more directly related to action are relevant to having a given moral belief.

Finally, according to the interpretationists, if a subject believes that P, this belief consists of exhibiting certain patterns of behaviour that, based on the interpretative tools of folk psychology and the principle of charity, can be made sense of by attributing the subject in question the belief that P (Schwitzgebel 2010: 536).[30] Yet, this framework too leaves room for the relevant cases of in-between beliefs. This is, for example, already because a given actual pattern of behaviour can more or less match the previous type of patterns, and also because the attribution of the relevant belief can more or less make sense of the subject's behaviour overall.

Schwitzgebel (2010: 536) thus more generally concludes that:

> '[o]n all of the leading contemporary approaches to belief, it's natural to suppose that there will be a wide array of in-between cases where the dispositional or functional or functional-historical role is only partially filled, the relevant patterns of behaviour, response and cognition only partly possessed.

This suggests that the arguments of §3–§4 can be adapted to these approaches to belief as well. In these frameworks too, it seems likely that the test cases used in the externalist cognitivism versus internalist non-cognitivism debate will fall under the category of the indeterminate in-between cases in which the subject neither holds nor lacks the relevant belief. And, in all these frameworks, it seems that moral beliefs do not fundamentally consist of unitary belief-states, unitary desire-states, or some combination of the two but rather of having some combination of dispositions, some more theoretical and some more practical than others, or so I have suggested.

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this is more of a feature of the metaphors than a structural consequence of the theories themselves (Schwitzgebel 2010: 536).

30   See, e.g., Davidson (1984) and Dennett (1987).

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