# RATIONALITY, NORMATIVITY, AND EMOTIONS: AN ASSESSMENT OF MAX WEBER'S TYPOLOGY OF SOCIAL ACTION

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## I. Introduction[1]

Social scientists have given different answers to the question of how many types of social actions[2] there are. Weber[3] for instance described four types of social action: purposive rationality (pure rationality), value rationality, traditions/habits, and affective actions. More recently, Elster[4] identified three types of actions: interest, reason (morality) and passion; and opposes emotions and rationality by saying that emotions tend to subvert rationality[5]; and Boudon[6] believed that various kinds of rationality (instrumental/utilitarian, cognitive, axiological), but also moral sentiments[7] play competing and complementary explanatory roles in social explanation. Weber, Elster and Boudon, each in their own terminology, identified different types of social actions by distinguishing between rationality, normativity and affectivity. By analytical reduction one can say that these thinkers identified three types of social actions: rational, normative and affective actions which in their work represent distinct explanations, that can oppose, substitute or complement. By critically discussing Weber's typology and by elaborating on it, I will challenge these views, and defend that rational, normative and affective actions are not three distinct

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[2] For the article's purpose, social actions are defined as intentional actions targeting other individuals (Weber M., *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, 5. Auflage*, Tübingen, Mohr Siebeck, 2009, [1922]).

[3] *Id.*

[4] Elster J., *Alchemies of the mind : rationality and the emotions*, Cambridge, U.K. ; New York, Cambridge University Press, 1999.

[5] Elster J., « Emotional choice and rational choice », in P. Goldie (éd.), *The Oxford handbook of philosophy of emotion*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010.

[6] Boudon R., *Raison, bonnes raisons*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2003 ; Boudon R., *Essais sur la théorie générale de la rationalité*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2007.

[7] Boudon R., « Une théorie judicatoire des sentiments moraux », in *L'Année sociologique*, vol. 54, n° 2, 2004, p. 327-357.

types of social action: they constitute one type of social action that admits sub-categories depending on the kind of normative reasoning (consequentialism, non-consequentialism) that social agents use.

To this end, the article is divided into four sections. In the first one I explain why Weber's typology of social actions serves as the framework for the argument and is relevant for social theory today. In the second section, I present the methodology Weber developed in *Economy and Society* in order to prepare the ground for my arguments, and to explain how my thesis differ from his. In the third section, by considering Weber's ideas but also findings in experimental economics, I discuss the relationships of rationality with consequentialism and non-consequentialism in order to establish that rational action out of logical impossibility is normativity-dependent. In the third section, I discuss Weber's conception of affective actions and show that rationality is never devoid of affective states (desires, wishes, preferences, emotions, etc.); and by focusing specifically on emotions, I argue that emotions can be rational phenomena governing rational action and normative reasoning. As such, emotional actions do not seem to be a type of action sharply distinguishable from social actions based on rationality and normativity: rationality, normativity and emotions seem to constitute a single type of social action.

## II. Weber's framework

Weber's typology of social actions will serve as a framework[8] for my argument for five reasons. First, he put rationality, normativity, tradition/habits and affective states side by side and argued that these types constitute *more or less* mutually distinct categories. I say "more or less" because the categories he constructed were not mutually exclusive. As I will argue throughout this paper, these category errors seem to be due to the conceptual impossibility of cleanly separating rationality, normativity and emotions. I will not directly address "traditional actions" or "habits", for I consider habits and traditions to be normativity-dependent. Indeed, social agents evaluate habits as good or bad and they often try to avoid bad habits and to reinforce good habits. They also evaluate traditions as

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[8] It is important to highlight that the few pages of *Economy and Society*—an unfinished and posthumously published book—in which Weber sets out his theory of social actions do not contain well-formed arguments, but rather work notes that have been developed to varying degrees and that are not devoid of contradictions. While it is hard to identify a coherent theory of social action, Weber's unfinished ideas provide a basis for thinking about contemporary problems.

being good or bad and, accordingly, as being worthy of respect or not. With these kinds of evaluations, it seems impossible to exclude "traditional action" from "value rationality". I therefore consider that, among the various kinds of values and norms that exist, some are related to habits and traditions. Consequently, I will address here "purposive rationality", "value rationality" and "affective action", and will argue that they are not three different types of actions, but rather constitute only one type of action that brings together affectivity, rationality and normativity.

Second, the social sciences have inherited these distinctions from Weber, and many scholars still recognize them as partly valid[9]. By returning to the source of this heritage, my discussion of Weber's typology will also challenge its contemporary understanding.

Third, Weber's conception of purposive rational actions is considered by some scholars[10] to be the kind of rationality that we find in rational choice theory. Therefore, discussing Weber will allow me discuss notions of rationality found in economics, and especially in experimental economics in order to develop the argument that rationality seems to always imply normativity in a sense that I will specify. Fourth, Weber's contrast between purposive and value rationalities is in contemporary terminology a contrast between a rationality that involves consequentialism and a rationality that involves non-consequentialism. Thus, it seems natural to use Weber in order to show that rationality and these two kinds of normative reasoning are related. Fifth, Weber's understanding of affective action will help me demonstrate that rationality encompasses affective states, and by specifically discussing emotions I will show that emotions can be rational phenomena that are connected to values and normative reasonings. Thus, my discussion of We-

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[9] Typically, in analytical sociology, the distinction between purposive-rationality and value-rationality is recognized by Boudon (*Raison, bonnes raisons*, *op. cit.* ; *Essais sur la théorie générale de la rationalité*, *op. cit.*), Hedström & Swedberg (« Rational Choice, Empirical Research, and the Sociological Tradition », in *European Sociological Review*, vol. 12, nº 2, 1996, p. 127-146) and Granovetter (« A Theoretical Agenda for Economic Sociology », in M. Guillen *et al.* (éd.), *Economic Sociology at the Millenium,* New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 2001), for instance. But in this tradition, emotions are introduced through other authors: Elster (*Alchemies of the mind : rationality and the emotions*, *op. cit.*) uses Aristotle and psychologist Nico Frijda to do it, and Boudon (« Une théorie judicatoire des sentiments moraux », *op. cit.*) uses Adam Smith.

[10] See for instance Boudon (*Raison, bonnes raisons, op. cit.* ; *Essais sur la théorie générale de la rationalité, op. cit.*) and Demeulenaere (*Homo oeconomicus : Enquête sur la constitution d'un paradigme*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2003).

ber's ideas serves the larger purpose of emphasizing some of the fundamental links between rationality, normativity and emotions which, I argue, constitute together a type of social action.

Finally let me add, that my assessment of Weber's theses and the formulation of my own theses will rely on conceptual analyses informed by empirical findings. As such, the paper adopts a philosophical analytical stance (conceptual analysis) and mobilizes insights from meta-ethics, economics, sociology and psychology. Conceptual analysis backed-up by empirical interdisciplinary research will therefore prove useful, on the one hand, for identifying and clarifying conceptual problems that are lodged at the heart of Max Weber's typology of social action and, on the other hand, for formulating my own theses.

### III. Weber's methodology

Before assessing and elaborating on Weber's typology of social action, it is important to present the methodology he developed in *Economy and Society* in order to prepare the ground for my arguments. From Weber's methodological remarks, it is clear that each type of social action has the same epistemic value: the sociological explanation of a course of action can rely on any of the four categories constructed (purposively rational, value rational, affective, traditional actions), which can also be combined in social explanations. Nonetheless, from a methodological point of view priority is given to purposive rationality which stands as the paradigmatic example of meaningful intentional action:

> For a scientific approach that constructs *types*, all irrational, affectively conditioned, meaningful contexts for behavior that influence action are best studied and represented as "diversionary elements" with respect to a constructed, purely purposively rational course for such action. For example: explanation of the course taken by a stock exchange panic will first establish what *would* have happened if action had *not* been influenced by irrational emotions, following which these irrational components are introduced as "disturbances". [...] The construction of rigorously purposive-rational action therefore in these cases furthers the self-evident clarity of a sociology whose lucidity is founded on rationality. In this way, a *type* is presented ("ideal type") in relation to which real and concrete action, influenced by all manner of irrationalities (affect, mistakes), can be understood as a "deviation" from action directed by purely

rational behavior[11].

A course of action has to be firstly explained by comparing it to what would have hypo-thetically happened if agents had behaved according to the purposive rationality model. If the real course of action does not conform to this model, then other explanations should be taken into account, which as irrational behaviors (affect, errors) consist in *deviation* from the model of pure rationality.

This is presented as a method that has instrumental value for scientific knowledge, and it should not be understood as stating that *in reality* purposive rational actions are pre-dominant over other motives of action. Indeed, as Weber writes,

> *To this extent*, and only for the purpose of methodic convenience here, is the method of a sociology of *Verstehen* "rationalistic". This procedure should not be understood as a reflection of sociology's rationalistic prejudice, but only as a means, a method. It should not, for instance, be reinterpreted as a belief in the real predominance of the rational life. It suggests absolutely nothing about the extent to which, in reality, *actual* action might or might not be determined by a rational evaluation of ends[12].

One should therefore not infer from the methodological priority given to purposive ra-tionality that this kind of rationality dominates in reality. Nor should one conflate the ideal types of social actions, which are theoretical explanatory models, with empirical courses of action which are to be explained. The ideal types as theoretical approximations of em-pirical courses of action remain to a certain degree "unrealistic":

> Those ideal-typical constructions of social action made, for example, in eco-nomic theory are in this instance "unrealistic" insofar as they ask: How *would* someone behave given ideal, and hence purely economically oriented, purpos-ive rationality? The question is posed in this way to assist understanding of action that is not purely economically determined but that is in actuality also influenced by traditional constraints, emotions, mistakes, and the influence of

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[11] Weber M., *Economy and Society*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts ; London, England, 2019 [1922], p. 82.

[12] *Id.*

noneconomic aims or considerations, so that we might (1) be able to under-
stand *the degree to which* it is actually *jointly* influenced in the given instance
by economic, purposively rational motivations, or tends to be so when viewed
as an average, or also (2) precisely because of the *distance* separating the ac-
tual course of events from their ideal typical course, because it aids in the un-
derstanding of *real* motivation[13].

Thus, Weber distinguishes between theoretical models of motivation (ideal types) and
real motivations as they occur in social reality. So one can think that purposive rationality
is a theoretical model that has no counterpart in real social life. Nonetheless, this conclu-
sion should be resisted since Weber also writes:

Ideal typical constructions of this kind are, for instance, those concepts and
"laws" developed in pure economic theory. They represent the course that a
particular sort of human action *would* follow *if* its purposive rationality were
rigorously formulated, its execution undisturbed by error and affect, and *if*,
moreover, it were quite unambiguously oriented to one (economic) objective.
Only in rare cases, such as the stock exchange, does action in reality follow this
course, and then only as an approximation to that defined by the ideal type[14].

The last sentence is particularly important since it states that there would be rare in-
stances of behaviors that conform to a certain degree to the model of pure purposive ra-
tionality. One instance of such behaviors would consist in what can be observed on the
stock exchange. In that sense, there would be in the empirical world courses of action that
approximate pure purposive rationality. Accordingly, Weber believed that real social ac-
tions correspond to a certain degree to what theoretical models presume. Or to say it in a
different way, each theoretical construct corresponds to real motivations to a *certain de-
gree*, even if those real motivations are considered to be more complex than the theoreti-
cal constructs:

Action, especially social action, is very rarely oriented *solely* to the one *or* the
other type. Similarly, these types of orientation are in no way exhaustive with
respect to types of action, but are instead conceptually pure types created for

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[13] *Ibid.*, p. 97-98.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 85.

> sociological ends, to which real action more or less conforms, or from which it is more often combined in reality. Only their outcome can determine their utility for *us*[15].

Interestingly, this last citation also introduces the idea that the different types of social action would usually be combined in reality, and that a real course of action would rarely conform to only one ideal type.

So what can be drawn from this presentation of Weber's methodology? We can see that these methodological remarks presuppose an opposition between rationality and sensibility: emotional actions are irrational actions that consist in deviations from pure rational actions. On the contrary, I will argue in section V that this opposition is misleading, since emotions can be rational phenomena. I will also argue that there is no such thing as a purely rational type of action, since rational actions seem to always include affective and normative elements. Therefore, there seems to be no good methodological reason to give explanatory priority to purposive rationality, and as I will argue throughout this article, one should postulate that rational actions are motivated by affective states in relationship to normativity. This leads to the main epistemological thesis of this paper: social explanations that rely on a rationalistic approach should recognize that rational actions always incorporate affective and normative elements: rationality, affectivity and normativity are intimately intertwined in social action. In that sense, social explanation cannot separate the rational, affective and normative components of social actions and construe, on this basis, three different types of social action as Weber, and other authors after him, like Boudon or Elster, did. This thesis is not equivalent to Weber's that in reality rationality, normativity, and affectivity (and traditions) are most of the time combined, since this last thesis means that each type of social action can be combined with another one *and* that each type of social action can also in certain rare circumstances occur separately. My thesis is distinct in the sense that it considers that rationality, normativity and affectivity are necessarily combined together in social action, and that there are not three distinct types of social action, but only one which necessarily combines these three elements. But then what are the relationships between rationality, normativity and affectivity? In the next

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[15] *Ibid.*, p. 103.

section, I examine relationships between rationality and normativity that are relevant for my argument, and I will discuss affectivity in subsequent sections.

## IV. Rationality and normativity

The notion of rationality admits various conceptions[16]: one can speak of instrumental, purposive, utilitarian, economic, axiological, cognitive, procedural, situational rationality, etc. But an important feature of rationality is that this notion is intrinsically *normative*[17]. Having a "normative meaning" rationality opposes irrationality, a term that applies to an agent who displays a flaw in thinking (e.g. having unjustified beliefs) or in achieving an action (e.g. acting against one's best judgement)[18]. Then, irrationality means that some standards of rationality were violated. These standards signify that values and norms are at stake. My analysis will develop a variant of the thesis that rationality has a normative meaning by showing that rationality is normativity-dependent because it necessarily incorporates various axiological and deontic notions related to consequentialism and deontology[19]. The idea is to argue that the Weberian contrast between rational actions that would be normativity-free (purposive rationality) and rational actions that would be normativity-dependent (value-rationality) does not hold. Therefore, I discuss, first, rationality and consequentialism, and second, rationality and non-consequentialism.

## IV.1 Rationality and consequentialism

Rationality, defined as consequentialist action—that is as a rational action that aims at bringing out an outcome that has (alleged) good consequences for the agent or the

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[16] Demeulenaere P., *Les normes sociales entre accords et désaccords*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2003 ; Goldthorpe J. H., « Rational Action Theory for Sociology », in *The British Journal of Sociology*, vol. 49, nº 2, 1998, p. 167-192 ; Zafirovski M., « What is Really Rational Choice? Beyond the Utilitarian Concept of Rationality », in *Current Sociology*, vol. 47, nº 1, 1999, p. 47-113.

[17] De Sousa R., *The rationality of emotion*, Cambridge, Massachusetts ; London, England, The MIT Press, 1987 ; Demeulenaere P., *Les normes sociales entre accords et désaccords*, *op. cit.*

[18] de Sousa R., *The rationality of emotion*, *op. cit.*

[19] As a reminder, *consequentialist* normative theories can be defined as theories that demand that agents' actions be directed to the promotion of the best possible consequences or ends; *deontological* normative theories, or to say it another way non-consequentialism, require agents to always *respect* certain rules of actions (keeping one's promises, not lying, not humiliating others, etc.); that is, to respect them absolutely, whatever the consequences (Ogien R., « La philosophie morale a-t-elle besoin des sciences sociales ? », in *L'Année sociologique*, vol. 54, nº 2, 2004, p. 589-606).

world[20]—, corresponds in Weber's typology to "purposive rationality" (*Zweckrationalität*). But it is also a kind of rational action that can be found in economics. I will first discuss Weber's idea, and then discuss rationality in economics with the help of recent findings in experimental economics (EE).

### IV.1.1 Weber's Zweckrationalität

Weber[21] explains that "purposive rationality" is a type of rationality that is normativity-independent. He contrasts it with "axiological rationality" which would be normativity-dependent, and defines "purposive rationality" as follows:

> As with any form of action, social action can be determined [...] (1) by *purposive rationality*: through expectations of the behaviour of external objects and other people, and employing these expectations as a "condition" or "means" for one's own rational, aspired to and weighted goals, defined as success[22].

> Whoever acts in a purposively rational manner orients their action to the purpose, means, and associated consequences of an act, and so rationally *weighs* the relation of means to ends, that of the ends to the associated consequences, and that of the various possible ends to each other; hence, action that is *neither* affective (especially not emotional) *nor* traditional[23].

Purposive rational actions are intentional actions where agents *aspire* to achieve a *goal*; they have *chosen* their goal among a set of goals; they use *means* that will allow them to achieve their purpose with *success*; and they have consciously evaluated the *consequences* that will follow from their actions. *Zweckrationalität*[24] captures two fundamental features of rational action: a goal is pursued, and means are chosen in order to bring about the goal. Thus this notion makes reference to *teleological* and *instrumental* features of rational

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[20] Boudon R., *Raison, bonnes raisons*, *op. cit.*

[21] Weber M., *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, 5. Auflage, op. cit.*

[22] Weber M., *Economy and Society, op. cit.*, p. 101. I modified the translation.

[23] *Ibid.*, p. 102-103.

[24] Traditionally, two expressions translate the German word *Zweckrationalität*: "purposive rationality" and "instrumental rationality". The reasons for this choice are not obvious, but they are unfortunately misleading, both in terms of theorizing and in terms of fidelity to Weber's view.

action that are intrinsic to the definition of such actions, which always implies goals and means[25].

But it also involves "normativity"[26]. Indeed, agents are said to select the *right* means in order to have *success* in achieving the goal that they have selected. In this way, *norms* are stated regarding the choice of means that should be appropriate if one wants to succeed in achieving the goal. Agents also make *evaluations* about the anticipated consequences of their actions[27], with the *best* anticipated consequences being chosen over consequences that are deemed to be not as good. Thus, a conception of a *good* that the action is supposed to bring about is involved: *values* as the aim of rational actions are tacitly stated. The consequence is that, contrary to what Weber said, the model is not devoid of normativity: values and norms are already posited, and as we can see, the kind of normative reasoning that purposive rationality implies is consequentialism. The implication is that "purposive rationality" does not constitute a normativity-independent category of rationality: there seems to be no such thing as a logic of pure rationality that would be outside the realm of normativity, and that would be distinguishable from "value rationality."

### IV.1.2 Zweckrationalität and economic rationality

Since *Zweckrationalität* is identified by Weber and some of his commentators[28] as the kind of rationality found in economics, this previous proposition can be further demonstrated by discussing rationality in economics[29]. This will allow me to further develop the idea that rationality is normativity-dependent.

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[25] De Sousa R., *The rationality of emotion*, *op. cit.*

[26] Demeulenaere P., *Les normes sociales entre accords et désaccords*, *op. cit.*

[27] Habermas J., *Théorie de l'agir communicationnel, tome 1 : Rationalité de l'agir et rationalisation de la société*, trad. J.-M. Ferry, Paris, Fayard, 1987.

[28] Boudon R., *Raison, bonnes raisons*, *op. cit.* ; Boudon R., *Essais sur la théorie générale de la rationalité*, *op. cit.* ; Demeulenaere P., *Homo oeconomicus : Enquête sur la constitution d'un paradigme*, *op. cit.*

[29] Weber (*Economy and Society*, *op. cit.*) in different places in *Economy and Society* defines rational economic action as a kind of purposive rational action (see for instance, pages 85 and 107 and in particular chapter 2 "Basic Sociological Categories of Economic Action"). The conception of economic action of Weber is very complex and it would exceed the scope of this article to present it in its full complexity. It suffices then to say that economic action in Weber's view is rational, consequentialist, future-oriented, and can be motivated by economic needs (Weber M., *Grundriss zu den Vorlesungen über Allgemeine (« theoretische ») Nationalökonomie*, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) Tübingen, Tübingen, 1990 [1898]), self-interest, or the pursuit of utility (Weber M., *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, 5. Auflage*, *op. cit.*).

### IV.1.3 The conventional model of Homo Oeconomicus

"Conventional economics" (CE)[30] states that agents are rational, calculating, egoistic and self-interested and act according to their best interests, even at the expense of other individuals. Agents maximize their utility by evaluating the costs and the benefits attached to the outcome of their actions and choose the best outcome according to preferences that are considered transitive. Agents think in consequentialist terms and are future-oriented. This model has been criticized for several decades[31]. Rather than commenting on these well-known criticisms, I will use recent findings in experimental economics (EE) which take a critical stance towards CE. My focus will be on the normative concepts included in economics (conventional and experimental). I will show that economic rationality is not normativity-independent—not in the sense that the theory says what agents should do if they were rational[32], but in the sense that these *concepts are by definition normative concepts that, out of logical impossibility, cannot be excluded from the normative domain*[33].

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[30] Bowles (« Policies Designed for Self-Interested Citizens May Undermine "The Moral Sentiments": Evidence from Economic Experiments », in *Science*, vol. 320, nº 5883, 2008, p. 1605-1609) uses this expression to qualify economics that rely on the old picture of *Homo Oeconomicus* that experimental economists have falsified.

[31] See for instance Boudon R., *Raison, bonnes raisons*, op. cit. ; Demeulenaere P., *Homo oeconomicus : Enquête sur la constitution d'un paradigme*, op. cit. ; Elster J., *Sour grapes : studies in the subversion of rationality*, Cambridge [Cambridgeshire] ; New York ; Paris, Cambridge University Press ; Editions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 1983 ; Elster J., *Alchemies of the mind : rationality and the emotions*, op. cit. ; Kahneman D. & Tverski A., « Prospect theory: an analysis of decision under risk », in P. K. Moser (éd.), *Rationality in action*, Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 1990 ; Simon H., « A behavioral model of rational choice », in *The Quarterly journal of economics*, vol. 69, nº 1, 1955, p. 99-118 ; Tverski A. et Kahneman D., « Judgment under uncertainty: heuristics and biases », in P. K. Moser (éd.), *Rationality in action*, Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 1990 ; Zafirovski M., « What is Really Rational Choice? Beyond the Utilitarian Concept of Rationality », *op. cit.*

[32] Elster J., *L'Irrationalité : Traité critique de l'homme économique, Vol. II*, Paris, Éditions du Seuil, 2010.

[33] As Sandel (« Market Reasoning as Moral Reasoning: Why Economists Should Re-engage with Political Philosophy », in *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, vol. 27, nº 4, 2013, p. 122) would put it, but for different reasons, CE (Sandel does not comment on EE) is not a "value-neutral science of human behavior and social choice."

## IV.1.4 The logic of interest vs the logic of morality

Experimental and anthropological economists' findings have transformed the conventional model of *Homo Oeconomicus.* Laboratory and field studies show that many behaviours across different cultures violate the hypothesis of egoism[34]. The canonical example is the experimental version of the ultimatum game. In this game, two agents—a "proposer" and a "responder"—are given a certain amount of money. The proposer chooses how to divide the money. If the responder accepts the division, both players get the share that the proposer offered. If the responder rejects it, neither of them gets anything. The game is played anonymously; a player's reputation is not endangered. In such a game, economic theory predicts that any kind of offer, even a very unequal one, will always be accepted: "rational selfish responders will accept any offer since some money is better than none, and, knowing this, proposers should make the smallest possible offer"[35]. However, the way people behave in the laboratory does not line up with this prediction; individuals from many societies "frequently reject low offers, and proposers, who seem to know this, typically propose a nearly equal division of the pot" [36]. This behavior and other such behavior observed in various other economic games show that the postulate of egoism enters into conflict with empirical observations: people care not only about the outcome of an economic game, but also about the process through which the outcome is reached[37] ; they care not only about what they personally gain or lose, but also about what other agents gain or lose and the nature of their intentions[38]. People thus make value judgments about the outcomes and the processes of social interaction (for instance, in situations of bargaining, coercion, voluntary transfer or luck), and they manifest "strong reciprocity", a behavioural "predisposition to cooperate with others, and to punish (at per-

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[34] Henrich J. *et al.* (éd.), *Foundations of Human Sociality: Economic Experiments and Ethnographic Evidence from Fifteen Small-Scale Societies*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2004.

[35] *Ibid.*, p. 2, Chapter 1.

[36] *Id.,* Chapter 1.

[37] Gintis H. *et al.* (éd.), *Moral sentiments and material interests : the foundations of cooperation in economic life*, Cambridge, The MIT Press, 2005 ; Henrich J. *et al.* (éd.), *Foundations of Human Sociality: Economic Experiments and Ethnographic Evidence from Fifteen Small-Scale Societies, op. cit.*

[38] Gintis H. *et al.* (éd.), *Moral sentiments and material interests : the foundations of cooperation in economic life, op. cit.*

sonal costs, if necessary) those who violate the norms of cooperation even when it is implausible to expect that these costs will be recovered at a later date"[39]. Thus, these objections show that in many situations economic agents are concerned with norms of justice and fairness, and that they are ready to enforce them by punishing free-riders or individuals who do not act "ethically", even when they themselves will not benefit from these punishments.

How can we interpret these results in terms of rationality and normativity? These experiments can be interpreted as showing that "moral values" (fairness, justice, equality, reciprocity, generosity) cohabit with "material interests" (wealth, profit and economic gain). In addition, they show that egoism does not always motivate economic behavior, and that altruism is also a tendency that agents can manifest through their behaviors[40]. For instance, agents can be benevolent or generous[41], and they can also manifest a tendency for "altruistic punishment"[42]; that is, a tendency to punish, without reaping any benefit for oneself (and sometimes at personal cost), people who act immorally. But these criticisms can give the impression that egoism is *opposed* to moral behaviors manifested in altruism and strong reciprocity, and that individuals behave according to two different kinds of logic: the logic of "interest" *versus* the logic of "morality" where the logic of interest is not concerned with values, whereas the logic of morality is[43].

This contrast is seized in EE by the distinction between "material interests" and "moral sentiments"[44]. This translates as a difference of behavioral logic between "economic in-

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[39] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

[40] Fehr E. & Fischbacher U., « The nature of human altruism », in *Nature*, vol. 425, n° 6960, 2003, p. 785-791.

[41] Bowles S., « Policies Designed for Self-Interested Citizens May Undermine "The Moral Sentiments": Evidence from Economic Experiments », *op. cit.*

[42] Fehr E. & Gächter S., « Altruistic punishment in humans », in *Nature*, vol. 415, 2002, p. 137-140

[43] Among others, see Elster (*Alchemies of the mind : rationality and the emotions, op. cit.*) who opposes interest and reason (i.e. morality) or Boudon (*Le juste et le vrai : Études sur l'objectivité des valeurs et de la connaissance*, Paris, Fayard, 1995) who opposes utilitarian rationality (interest) to axiological rationality (morality).

[44] Gintis H. *et al.* (éd.), *Moral sentiments and material interests : the foundations of cooperation in economic life*, *op. cit.*

centives" (self-interest) and "moral values" (people act "altruistically" or in other "spirited-public ways")[45]. But as Bowles[46] observes, economic incentives and moral motives are "not separable" as their *effects* are not simply summative and independent: there are interactions between them. Therefore, the logic of interest and the logic of morality can complement or substitute each other. The behavioral effects of these motivations are then mutually dependent[47].

However, these theses rest on the assumption that *material interest* is connected to self-interest, egoism and various economic incentives related to economic costs and benefits, whereas *moral sentiments* are connected to values (ethical, other-regarding, social preferences) that motivate pro-social behaviors[48]. Even if both logics are presented as not separable, the contrast entails the idea that values are restricted to the ethical domain and do not extend to the economic one. Yet, there exists plurality of values in societies[49], and value is a term that is not exclusive to the ethical domain[50]. Indeed, many types of values exist that belong to different domains: ethical (fairness, justice), aesthetic (beauty, elegance), religious (sacredness, holiness)[51], vital (health, life), cognitive (knowledge, truth)[52], economical (wealth, poverty), etc.

In fact, what these studies show is that economic agents make their choices by weighing and pursuing different kinds of values (egoism, altruism, fairness, wealth, etc.) belonging to different domains (ethics, economics, etc.). This accounts for the fact that economic rationality, when considered a subspecies of "purposive rationality", is a *consequentialist* theory that involves certain kinds of *goods*: rational agents evaluate the outcome of their

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[45] Bowles S., « Policies Designed for Self-Interested Citizens May Undermine "The Moral Sentiments": Evidence from Economic Experiments », *op. cit.*, p. 1605.

[46] *Ibid.*, p. 1606.

[47] Bowles S. & Hwang S. H., « Social preferences and public economics: Mechanism design when social preferences depend on incentives », in *Journal of Public Economics*, vol. 92, nº 8, 2008, p. 1811-1820.

[48] *Ibid.*, p. 1813.

[49] Boltanski L. & Thévenot L., *De la justification : les économies de la grandeur*, Paris, Gallimard, 2005 ; Pharo P., *Morale et Sociologie. Le sens et les valeurs entre nature et culture*, Paris, Gallimard, 2004.

[50] Pharo P., *Morale et Sociologie. Le sens et les valeurs entre nature et culture*, *op. cit.*

[51] Weber M., *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, 5. Auflage*, *op. cit.*

[52] Mulligan K., « Emotions and value », in P. Goldie (éd.), *The Oxford handbook of philosophie of emotion*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010.

actions and pursue *economic goods* as well as *moral good*s. Interestingly, the mutual dependencies between the logic of interest and the logic of morality (i.e. the inseparability thesis) can be interpreted as reflecting conflicting or concordant values. Thus, setting economic motives (egoism, acquisition of wealth, etc.) against moral values (altruism, justice, etc.), as is quite often done in social sciences, obscures the fact that values are not restricted to the moral domain, and that just like any other kinds of values, they can conflict or be concordant. This shows that rationality in old and new economic models is normativity-dependent.

## IV.1.5 The logical structure of the normative domain

The plurality of conflicting or concordant values signifies then that the shut out from the axiological domain of the "logic of self-interest" would be arbitrary. This arbitrariness can be further demonstrated by an examination of the *logical structure of the axiological domain*.

The contrast asserted between the logic of self-interest and the logic of morality can be thought of (for the sake of simplicity) as an opposition between egoism and altruism. Yet, these two notions are opposing axiological concepts, with egoism considered a "disvalue" and altruism a "value".

Indeed, the domain of axiology is *logically* divided between "positive" and "negative" values[53]. "Positive" and "negative" values form opposing pairs, such as good/bad, better/worse, beautiful/ugly, right/wrong, honorable/dishonorable, and utility/disutility. Among the values, a further distinction can be made between "thin" and "thick" values[54]. Thin values, like "good/bad" or "best/worst", are *general* evaluative concepts that are descriptively poor; thick values, like beautiful/ugly, courageous/cowardly, treacherous/honest, are *specific* concepts that have both *evaluative* and *factual* contents and that are accordingly descriptively richer than "thin values" [55]. Thin and thick values are hierarchized: if a thing falls under a thick concept, it will also fall under a thin concept, so that

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[53] Scheler M., *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik*, Hamburg, Felix Meiner Verlag, 2014, p. 113.

[54] Mulligan K. & Scherer K. R., « Toward a working definition of emotion », in *Emotion Review*, vol. 4, n° 4, 2012, p. 345-357 ; Tappolet C., *Émotions et valeurs*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 2000.

[55] See Williams (*Ethics and the limits of philosophy*, Abindgon, Routledge, 2006), to whom the distinction between thick and thin is attributed, and also Putnam (*The Collapse of the Fact/Value Dichotomy and other Essays*,

it will be good or bad[56]. Thus, if an act is judged cruel, it will also be judged bad, and if an act is judged kind, it will also be judged good.

For readers who would be reluctant to admit that the domain of axiology includes values and disvalues, it is important to note that if the axiological domain is restricted only to good or moral values (goodness, honesty, respect, liberty, etc.), a major conceptual problem arises, for these notions do not stand alone semantically: they can only be defined by taking into account their "bad" counterparts (badness, treachery, disrespect, serfdom, etc.): "semantic is inseparable from syntactic"[57]. Indeed, "to fully understand the meaning of a [concept]", we must consider the "syntactic context within which it is structurally embedded"; that is "the way it is semiotically contrasted in our minds with other [concepts]"[58]. In fact, the mastering of "positive" concepts requires the mastering of their "negative" counterparts: one cannot understand concepts like goodness, respect or honesty without understanding what concepts like badness, disrespect or dishonesty mean[59]. In that sense, the semantics of axiological concepts cannot be arbitrarily detached from the "syntactic" pairs of those concepts.

These various dimensions of axiology help demonstrate that ER is not normativity-free. Indeed, egoism *is* an *axiological* concept that is necessarily related to altruism: they are thick concepts that describe opposite actions or predispositions; they have intrinsically opposing thin values, since altruism and egoism are ordinarily taken as, respectively, good and bad *per se*; and their definitions are mutually contradictory, since the concept of altruism is the negation of the concept of egoism, and vice versa. Nevertheless, while egoism is ordinarily considered, in common sense terms, to be something intrinsically bad, this does not mean that people cannot, depending on the situation, consider egoism to be good for instrumental reasons. Thus egoism, as a trait that consists in manifesting different self-centred and other-disregarding behavioural dispositions that lead one to neglect other

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Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts ; London, England, 2002) for further developments on the entanglement of facts and values in his discussion of thin and thick ethical concepts.

[56] Tappolet C., *Émotions et valeurs*, *op. cit.*

[57] Zerubavel E., *Social mindscapes: an invitation to cognitive sociology*, Cambridge, Massachusetts London, Harvard University Press, 1997, p. 73.

[58] *Id.*

[59] This does not mean that any individual who uses those notions is able to provide a sophisticated definition of them. Intuitive understandings are sufficient for "mastering" the meaning of words and for using them correctly in a conversation.

people or to consider them as instruments for one's ends, seems to be "bad" by definition[60]. But when egoism is believed to bring about good things (e.g., egoism for the common good), it can be considered to have a positive instrumental value that is derived from the final value (e.g. an improvement in the well-being of a society) that is pursued[61].

The above description of the structure of the axiological domain shows that it is logically, semantically and syntactically impossible to extract egoism from axiology and to cut it off from altruism. Therefore, my comments on Weber's purposive rationality and on economic rationality show that consequentialist rationality does not stand outside the domain of axiology. The logical implication is that consequentialist rationality is a variety of "value-rationality" implying consequentialism as a kind of normative theory.

## IV.2 Rationality and non-consequentialism

Rational action, defined as non-consequentialism, corresponds in Weber's typology to "value rationality" (*Wertrationalität*). I will now discuss Weber's ideas on this kind of rationality and raise several conceptual issues that I will attempt to clarify.

### IV.2.1 Weber's Wertrationalität

The most important excerpts in *Economy and Society* where Weber discusses *Wertrationalität* are the following:

> As with any form of action, social action can be determined […] by (2) *value rationality*: through conscious belief in the unconditional and *intrinsic* value—whether this is understood as ethical, aesthetic, religious, or however construed—of a specific form of particular comportment purely for itself, unrelated to its success […][62].

> Whoever acts in a *purely* value rational manner acts without regard to the fore-

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[60] Baier K., « Egoism », in P. Singer (éd.), *A companion to ethics*, Malden, Oxford, Carlton, Blackwell Publishing, 1993.

[61] On the contrast between different kinds of derivative (instrumental, contributive, etc.) and final values, see for instance Tappolet (*Émotions et valeurs*, *op. cit.*), and for bad means used for a good end see for instance Weber (*Wissenschaft als Beruf 1917/1919, Politik als Beruf 1919*, J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck) Tübingen, Tübingen, 1994).

[62] Weber M., *Economy and Society*, *op. cit.*, p. 101. I modified the translation.

seeable consequences of action in the service of convictions, following the apparent binding of duty, honour, beauty, religious pronouncement, piety, or the importance of a "cause" of whatever kind. Value rational action is in our sense always action made at the "bidding" or "demands" that the actor believes to be imposed on him or herself[63].

From the perspective of purposive rationality, however, value rationality must always be *irrational*, the more so when action is governed by absolute values. For the more that action elevates such absolute values, the less it reflects on the consequence of such action, and the more unconditional do considerations of inner disposition, beauty, the absolute good, and absolute duty become[64].

Weber explains that value-rational agents act in accordance with values to which they strongly adhere. They act without taking into account the predictable consequences of their actions; they follow their convictions and perform actions that are commanded by duty, dignity, beauty, religious directives, piety or the importance (the value) of a cause. Therefore, agents whose behaviours are *wertrational* act in conformity to a rule or a requisite to which they commit themselves. This type of action is determined by beliefs about the intrinsic value of personal behaviour and involves a conscious and coherent formulation of the end that the action targets. Agents act with the intention of achieving the relevant action for its own sake and not in order to attain something else: the action has its own value, and is not performed in order to reach another good.

It is surprising that Weber uses the word *Wert* (value), since his focus is mainly on deontology; that is, duties and obligations. But he seems to be saying two things that are not incompatible: either agents act according to duty (this is their only aim) or they act so as to actualize an ideal (piety, beauty) for its own sake. Nevertheless, both cases are similar, for in both agents act in non-consequentialist terms: they do not evaluate the consequences of their actions *for them or for others* beyond the anticipation of the results of their actions.

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[63] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

[64] *Ibid.*, p. 103.

As we can see, this definition includes both norms (duties and obligations) *and* values (dignity, beauty), and not merely values, as the expression "value-rationality" would suggest. This terminology is confusing, since the expression *Wertrationalität* (as well as its translations "value-rationality" and "axiological rationality") obscures the fact that (1) the domain of normativity is constituted both of axiology (values) *and* deontology (norms), and (2) Weber is more interested in norms (duties, obligations) than in values[65]. The definition is also bizarre in that agents are depicted as targeting

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[65] To prevent various misunderstandings, it is useful to present a series of contrasts between values and norms that helps distinguish them and show some of their most interesting relationships. Firstly the domain of normativity is divided in two sub-domains: axiology and deontology. Axiology is the domain of values like good, bad, beautiful and ugly (Tappolet C., *Émotions et valeurs*, *op. cit.*). Deontology is the realm of norms; that is, of obligations, prohibitions and permissions (*Id.*). As already said, the notion of values is understood to have a wide meaning that includes the domains of ethics, aesthetics, politics, religion, law, economics, etc. Norms also concern these domains: there are, for example, moral, aesthetical, political, religious, legal, economic norms (Demeulenaere P., *Les normes sociales entre accords et désaccords*, *op. cit.*). By virtue of the polar logical structure of the axiological domain, values can be "positive" or "negative" (Scheler M., *Der Formalismus in der Ethik und die materiale Wertethik*, *op. cit.*)or also "neutral" (Simmel G., *Philosophie de l'argent*, trad. S. Cornille, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1987). Indeed, they are paired and opposed like in the following pairs: good/bad, right/wrong, courageous/cowardly, etc. Likewise, the deontological domain exhibits polar oppositions: there are "positive" norms (affirmation)—one should—and "negative" norms (negation)—one should not (Lauria F., *The Logic of the Liver : a deontic view of the intentionality of desire*, Geneva, University of Geneva, 2014 ; Massin O., « Desires, Values, and Norms », in F. Lauria et J. A. Deonna (éd.), *The Nature of Desire*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2017, p. 165-200).

Taking into consideration our ordinary linguistic practices, values correspond to evaluative concepts and can figure in evaluative judgments, whereas norms correspond to deontic concepts—should, ought, permission, obligation, prohibition, rights and duties—that appear in deontic judgments (Ogien R., *Le rasoir de Kant et autres essais de philosophie pratique*, Paris, Tel Aviv, L'éclat, 2003). These can be expressed in sentences like: something ought (or ought not) to be done, ought (or ought not) be thought, ought (or ought not) be. The concept "ought", from which diverse declensions (it is forbidden, permitted, obligatory) derive, can be considered the most basic deontic concept (Lauria F., *The Logic of the Liver: a deontic view of the intentionality of desire*, *op. cit.*) and thus constitutive of norms (Opp K.-D., « Social networks and the emergence of protest norms », in M. Hechter et K.-D. Opp (éd.), *Social norms*, New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 2005, p. 234-273).

An important feature of values is that they have degrees and are comparative (Tappolet C., *Émotions et valeurs*, *op. cit.*): Max can be more or less courageous; there are injustices that are bigger than others. By contrast, norms do not have degrees: one conforms or does not conform to an obligation (Ogien R., *Le rasoir de Kant et autres essais de philosophie pratique*, *op. cit.*). This does not mean that duties cannot be hierarchized according to their importance. But this hierarchy seems to depend on the valuations of individuals who will say, for instance, that the duty of not killing is more important than the duty of not lying, and depend *in fine* on a hierarchy of values; in this example, the value of life ranks higher than the value of truth. But norms have degrees in another sense, for they have degrees of universalism. Indeed, "you ought to respect human beings" is of a higher degree of universalism than "you ought to respect every woman", which is of a higher degree than "you ought to respect your mother" Thus, norms can be ranked on a scale according to their universalism or relativism.

a goal that they have consciously and coherently worked out. This description implies that agents reason about different goals and means-ends relations. A further implication is that if ends are objects of choice, and if means are used in order to achieve goals, there are, in this respect, no differences between *Wertrationalität* and *Zweckrationalität*: instrumentality and teleology appear in both definitions. This contradiction makes it impossible to distinguish, according to these criteria, the two types of rationality. As I have already noted, one cannot understand actions without reference to teleology and instrumentality: actions are always performed by using means in order to achieve a goal. But to say that teleology is a necessary component of actions does not necessarily signify that consequentialism is always operative. Indeed, non-consequentialism can also be a goal for the agent: if dishonesty is always forbidden, when Polly is tempted to cheat, she may choose not to do it and to act honestly in a non-consequentialist way—that is, by choosing to respect that categorical imperative. Thus, her act has two ends: to act honestly and not to cheat[66]. That is why it is important to distinguish between acts that target ends—*teleology*—and the kind of *normative reasoning* that is used when acting—*consequentialism* or *non-consequentialism*. In fact, the true contrast between *Zweck* and *Wert* rationality lies in this distinction between the two kinds of normative reasoning: *consequentialism* and *non-*

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Finally, values and norms stand in different hierarchical relationships. Indeed, norms seem to derive from values. For instance, the imperative that commands one to respect other people seems to derive from the value that people attach to respect. If it were not the case, this command would be meaningless. This is something that we can see when one asks "why-questions" about the goodness or the rightness of a norm. Indeed, to the question "why should I respect other people", a common answer would be because "respect matters". In that sense, norms do not only derive from values, but they are also justified and explained by values: the norm that you ought to respect other people can be justified by stating that the norm is good/right/appropriate, for it aims at enforcing or establishing respect; and respect also seems to explain why this norm exists: the norm has the function of ensuring respect, which in turn explains the *raison d'être* of the norm. This last point leads to an observation rarely made: norms have the function of promoting values in the world. Roughly speaking, norms are instruments that aim at bringing about states of affairs that realize values. Thus the norm "you ought to respect other people" seems to try to prevent "disrespect" (which seems clear when one formulates the logically derived interdict: "you ought not disrespect other people") and to establish "respect". Then, the norm seems to have the functions of eliminating disrespect and promoting respect among human beings.

[66] Studies in EE that investigate non-consequentialist behaviors in relationship to the ideal of honesty and economic decision making, can be found in Gibson R., Tanner C. & Wagner A., « Protected values and economic decision-making », in T. Brosch et D. Sander (éd.), *Handbook of Value: Perspectives from Economics, Neuroscience, Philosophy, Psychology and Sociology*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2016, p. 223-241. This kind of study shows that some experimental economists have moved away from only studying consequentialist behaviors.

*consequentialism*. Thus, rational action that implies teleology and instrumentality can rely both on *consequentialism* or *non-consequentialism* depending on the agents' normative reasoning[67].

### IV.2.2 Emotions, normativity and rationality

The previous sections have demonstrated that rational actions are normativity-dependent and can imply consequentialist and non-consequentialist types of reasoning.

In the next sections I will show, first, that rational action involves affective states by discussing Weber's "affective actions" and second, by focusing on emotions (a specific variety of affective states) that emotions relate to normativity and rational actions. This is the next and final step to demonstrate that rationality, normativity and emotions are a single type of action that have two different sub-types corresponding to the kind of ethics that the action involves.

### V. Weber's affective actions

The third type of social action that Weber[68] mentions in his work is "affective action" (*affektuelles Handeln*) that he presents as follow:

> As with any form of action, social action can be determined […] by […] *affect*, especially *emotion*: through actual affects and emotional states [*Affekte und Gefühlslagen*][69].

> Rigorously affectual comportment likewise lies at the boundary, and often beyond, of what is consciously ''meaningfully'' oriented; it can be uninhibited reaction to some exceptional stimulus. It is *sublimated* when affectually determined action involves the *conscious* release of feeling, in which case it usually, but not always, finds itself on its way to "value rationalization", or to purposive action[70].

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[67] In fact, Weber in *Politic as a vocation* (*Wissenschaft als Beruf 1917/1919, Politik als Beruf 1919, op. cit.*) also distinguishes between two kinds of normative reasoning : the ethics of responsibility (consequentialism), and the ethics of conviction (non-consequentialism).

[68] Weber M., *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, 5. Auflage, op. cit.*

[69] Weber M., *Economy and Society, op. cit.*, p. 101. I modified the translation.

[70] *Ibid.*, p. 102.

Affectual and value-rational orientation of action differ in their conscious elaboration of the ultimate details of action and *consistent* planful orientation with respect to these details. Otherwise, they share in common the idea that the meaning of action is not contained in its eventual success but in the particular form taken by the action itself. He who acts according to emotion seeks instant revenge, instant enjoyment, instant dedication, instant contemplative bliss, or seeks to satisfy through abreaction current emotions (no matter how great or sublime they might be)[71].

Weber considers that affective actions are not rational for they do not involve, or do so only minimally (they lie at the boundary of conscious intentional behaviour), the conscious elaboration of goals and action planning. But he also[72] writes that affective states are understandable and provide intentions to act. Therefore, two problems arise when we compare "affective actions" to "purposive rationality". First, if affective actions imply (even if minimally) the elaboration of a goal and action planning, and if they are *intentional actions that aim to bring about a goal,* then affective actions involve teleological features of rational actions. Second, Weber[73] claims that his "purposive rationality" model is *purely rational*: it does not consist of affective states which are conceived as deviations of rational behaviour[74]. But the model is contradictory as it includes different conations which can be considered affective states. In Weber's definition, agents "aspire" to realize the chosen end, which means that *desires* or *wishes* are stated. *Preferences* are also included, since agents make a choice from a set of goals and they choose a goal because it promotes the best consequences: goals are then hierarchized on a preference scale that helps to establish which goals are *better than* the others. In addition, Weber writes about "purposive rationality":

Alternatively, the individual can deal with competing and conflicting aims [by] taking "dictates" and "demands" simply as given subjective feeling of need arranged on a scale that is consciously *balanced* according to their

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[71] *Id.*

[72] Weber M., *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft, 5. Auflage*, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

[73] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

[74] As a reminder, Weber also writes that purposive rational action "is *neither* affective (especially not emotional) *nor* traditional" (Weber M., *Economy and Society*, *op. cit.*, p. 102-103).

urgency, orienting action so that they will, as far as is possible, be satisfied in this sequence (the principle of "marginal utility")[75].

In this last extract, Weber talks about economic rational action which is, in his view, motivated by *felt needs* that are characterized by their urgency as he writes in his *Grundriss zu den Vorlesungen über Allgemeine ("theoretische") Nationalökonomie*"[76].

Therefore Weber's model respects in fact "Hume's dictum" that "beliefs alone can never provide us with motivation"[77] indicating more generally that pure rational actions devoid of conations do not seem to exist. Yet, desires[78], wishes[79], preferences[80] and needs can be said to belong to the affective domain (just like emotions, moods, sentiments, visceral feelings, etc.). Indeed, *occurrent* conations are phenomenally conscious mental episodes that are *felt* and have *intensities*—they can be felt strongly or weakly[81] and they can motivate and comprise evaluations of their objects. The implications are that "purposive rational actions" and "affective actions" are not mutually exclusive categories. These defects are particularly interesting in that they more broadly establish that rationality and affective states are intimately intertwined and cannot be sharply separated; they are mutually dependent.

The next sections will focus specifically on emotions. §5.2 provides a short working definition of emotion, and shows how emotions relate to values, rationality, and how they ground conations. §5.3 explains that emotions can ground normative judgments as well as imply consequentialist and non-consequentialist reasoning that relate to

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[75] *Ibid.*, p. 103.

[76] Weber M., *Grundriss zu den Vorlesungen über Allgemeine (« theoretische ») Nationalökonomie*, *op. cit.*, p. 30-31.

[77] Sher G., *In praise of blame*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 99.

[78] Frijda N. H., *The Emotions*, Cambridge ; New York ; Paris, Cambridge University Press ; Editions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 1986 ; Deonna J. & Teroni F., *The emotions: a philosophical introduction*, Abingdon, Routledge, 2012.

[79] Deonna J. & Teroni F., *The emotions : a philosophical introduction*, *op. cit.*

[80] Scherer K. R., « What are emotions? And how can they be measured? », in *Social science information*, vol. 44, n° 4, 2005, p. 695-729.

[81] For discussions about the phenomenology of desire in particular, see the edited volume by Lauria & Deonna (*The Nature of Desire*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2017) and especially the chapters by Döring & Eker, Friederich, and Massin.

rational actions. The main point is to argue that emotions, being connected to normativity and to rationality, unite these dimensions of social action into one type of action that has two different sub-types: consequentialism and non-consequentialism.

## V.1 Emotions

What are emotions? Emotions are dynamic processes that affect the functioning of whole organism[82] and are made up of several components: cognition (appraisal), expression (facial, corporal, vocal), motivation (cognitive and action tendencies), subjective feeling, neurophysiology (corporal symptoms)[83], regulation of the emotion (moderation, amplification, suppression)[84], and language (semiotization, verbalisation, argumentation)[85]. Emotions are also characterised by their varying intensity and duration[86]. Here, I will concentrate on the characteristics that are relevant to my theses. In particular, I will show that emotions have a distinctive feature in that they connect individuals to values[87] in different ways and that they can be rational[88].

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[82] Frijda N. H., *The emotions*, *op. cit.*

[83] Sander D., Grandjean D. & Scherer K. R., « A system approach to appraisal mechanisms in emotion », in *Neural Networks*, vol. 18, 2005, p. 317-352 ; Scherer K. R., « What are emotions? And how can they be measured? », *op. cit.*

[84] Fontaine J. J. R., Scherer K. R. & Soriano C. (éd.), *Components of Emotional Meaning: a Sourcebook*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2013 ; Hochschild A., *The managed heart: commercialization of human feeling, twentieth anniversary edition with a new afterword*, Berkley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press, 2003.

[85] Fontaine J. J. R., Scherer K. R. & Soriano C. (éd.), *Components of Emotional Meaning: a Sourcebook*, *op. cit.* ; Micheli R., *Les émotions dans les discours: modèle d'analyse, perspectives empiriques*, De Boeck, Louvain-la-Neuve, 2014.

[86] Frijda N. H., *The Laws of Emotion*, Mahwah, New Jersey, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2007

[87] Nussbaum M. C., *Upheavals of Thought: the Intelligence of Emotions*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2001 ; de Sousa R., *The rationality of emotion*, *op. cit.*

[88] De Sousa R., *The rationality of emotion*, *op. cit.* ; Solomon R. C., *Not passion's slave: emotions and choice*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2003.

### V.1.1 Emotions and values

Emotions are provoked by the cognitive evaluation of objects or of situations[89], and each type of emotion corresponds to an evaluative mode[90] which consists in a "*seeing as*"[91]. Indignation amounts to evaluating a situation that is *seen as* representing an unjustified wrong (e.g. iniquitous payments of business executives), contempt amounts to evaluating a person who is *seen as* unworthy of her social status (such as when executives are deemed to be dishonest or criminal). Thus, *each type* of *emotion* is identified by a *type* of *value* called "formal object"[92]: e.g. the formal object of fear is danger, of anger, offense, of gratitude, benevolence, etc.

Interestingly, a relationship exists between the *polarity* of the axiological domain (i.e. "positive" and "negative" values) and emotions. Indeed, emotions that are painful are in many cases connected to disvalues (e.g. indignation is connected to a wrong), whereas emotions that are pleasant are very often connected to positive values (e.g. gratitude is connected to benevolence)[93].

There is also another relationship between emotions and *plurality of values*. Formal objects are "affective" values that are related to emotion-types; they contrast with "substantive" values that do not directly correspond to emotional attitudes[94]. In the first category of "affective" values, we find terms like danger (fear), offense (anger) or benevolence (gratitude). The second category of values or "substantial" values includes values like beauty, courage, honor, or justice[95]. One should remark that emotional attitudes seem to be linked to substantial values that exemplify the relevant affective value. Indeed, indig-

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[89] Tappolet C., *Émotions et valeurs*, *op. cit.* ; Sander D., Grandjean D. & Scherer K. R., « A system approach to appraisal mechanisms in emotion », *op. cit.* ; Frijda N. H., *The emotions*, *op. cit.* ; Frijda N. H., *The laws of emotion*, *op. cit.* ; Scherer K. R., « What are emotions? And how can they be measured? », *op. cit.* To say that emotions are caused by a cognitive evaluation does not mean that emotions are propositional attitudes. Indeed, cognition also includes perceptions, and perceptions, that are not propositional attitudes, can serve as the cognitive base of emotions (see for instance Deonna J. & Teroni F., *The emotions : a philosophical introduction, op. cit.*).

[90] Deonna J. & Teroni F., *The emotions : a philosophical introduction, op. cit.*

[91] Nussbaum M. C., *Upheavals of Thought: the Intelligence of Emotions*, *op. cit.*

[92] de Sousa R., *The rationality of emotion*, *op. cit.* ; Teroni F., « Emotions and formal objects », in *Dialectica*, vol. 61, n° 3, 2007, p. 395-415.

[93] Tappolet C., *Émotions et valeurs*, *op. cit.*

[94] *Id.*

[95] *Ibid.*, p. 25.

nation as a reaction to unjustified wrongs (formal object) can target acts of cruelty, illegitimate violence, and treachery (substantial values). The same can be said of admiration, which, as a reaction to excellence (formal object), can be felt towards actions that are courageous, benevolent or virtuous (substantial values). This means that emotions are connected through their formal objects to the various kinds of positive and negative values that constitute the axiological domain.

But for an emotion to arise, the person must have certain concerns[96] that are understood as affective sensitivities to values[97] which can be socially shared[98] and constitutive of the ethics of a society. *Each type of emotion* corresponds to a *type of concern*. Thus, it is because certain conceptions of what is deemed right are valued in a society that a member will be outraged by what is seen as an unjustified wrong, or that certain definitions of "virtue" (probity, honesty) are valued that a member is contemptuous of the person who exemplifies "vices" (dishonesty, greed).

### V.1.2 Emotions, rational action and target-values

In addition, there is a general consensus in affective sciences to say that emotions have intimate relationships with rationality[99]. To substantiate this claim one can say that emotions are rooted in cognitive bases (beliefs, knowledge, etc.)[100] from which emotions derive their rationality[101]. For example, if the belief that serves as the cognitive base of an emotion is false and/or unjustified, this belief is normatively *irrational*, and the emotion caused by the belief is, then, also *irrational*[102]. In the opposite case of a sound and justified belief the emotion will be normatively rational. In this sense, emotions are not always

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[96] Frijda N. H., *The laws of emotion*, *op. cit.* ; Roberts R. C., *Emotions : an essay in aid of moral psychology*, Cambridge, UK ; New York, Cambridge University Press, 2003.

[97] Mulligan K & Scherer K. R., « Toward a working definition of emotion », *op. cit.*

[98] Salmela M., « Shared emotions », in *Philosophical explorations*, vol. 15, n° 1, 2012, p. 1-14.

[99] Bandes S. A., « Repelant Crimes and Rational Deliberation: Emotion and the Death Penalty », in *Vermont Law Review*, vol. 33, 2009, p. 489-518 ; Barbalet J. M., *Emotion, social theory and social structure : a macrosociological approach*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001 ; Lerner J. S. *et al.*, « Emotion and decision making », in *Annual Review of Psychology*, n° 66, 2015, p. 799-823 ; de Sousa R., *The rationality of emotion*, *op. cit.*

[100] Deonna J. & Teroni F., *The emotions : a philosophical introduction*, *op. cit.* ; Mulligan K. & Scherer K. R., « Toward a working definition of emotion », *op. cit.*

[101] De Sousa R., *The rationality of emotion*, *op. cit.*

[102] Elster J., « Rationality, emotions, and social norms », in *Synthese*, vol. 98, n° 1, 1994, p. 21-49 ; de Sousa R., *The rationality of emotion*, *op. cit.*

irrational or factors of irrationality. Emotions also motivate rational action via their action tendencies. *Indeed, each type of emotion possesses its own action tendencies and motivates types of action*[103]: indignation the punishment of the culprit[104]; contempt the ostracism of the contemptuous[105]. These tendencies can generate intentions to act and therefore determine the goals of the actors[106]: emotional actions are intentional actions[107]. Emotions also focus the attention on relevant information[108] and exercise control precedence over the course of action in order to carry out the goals of the action tendency[109]. Emotions help to *choose* the *means* deemed to be *efficient* for achieving the determined *goal*[110]. Indignation can therefore generate the intention to punish the guilty individual through a fine, and contempt can generate the intention to exclude the despised person through a prison sentence. Indeed, emotions provide reasons to act and motivate rational actions[111] which aim to promote *target-values*: indignation aims to re-establish justice, contempt to re-establish integrity. Emotions then play a dominating role in choice and decision-making[112].

Aside from generating intentions, emotions work as the "conative base" of other conations by motivating them[113]. Thus desires, wishes[114] and preferences[115] can be grounded

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[103] Frijda N. H., *The emotions*, *op. cit.* ; Frijda N. H., *The laws of emotion*, *op. cit.*

[104] Elster J., *Explaining social behavior : more nuts and bolts for the social sciences*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2007 ; Ranulf S., *The jealousy of the gods and criminal law at Athens, Vol. 1 & 2*, London, Williams & Norgate ; Lavin & Munsksgaard, 1933-34.

[105] Elster J., *Explaining social behavior : more nuts and bolts for the social sciences*, *op. cit.* ; Fisher A. H. & Roseman I. J., « Beat them or ban them: the characteristics and social functions of anger and contempt », in *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, vol. 93, n° 1, 2007, p. 103-115.

[106] Frijda N. H., *The laws of emotion*, *op. cit.*

[107] *Id.* ; Solomon R. C., *Not passion's slave: emotions and choice*, *op. cit.*

[108] Frijda N. H., *The emotions*, *op. cit.* ; de Sousa R., *The rationality of emotion*, *op. cit.*

[109] Frijda N. H., *The laws of emotion*, *op. cit.*

[110] Frijda N. H. & Mesquita B., « Beliefs through Emotions », in N. H. Frijda, A. S. R. Manstead et S. Bem (éd.), *Emotions and beliefs*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 45-77.

[111] Elster J., *Alchemies of the mind : rationality and the emotions*, *op. cit.*

[112] Elster J., « Emotional choice and rational choice », *op. cit.* ; Lerner J. S. *et al.*, « Emotion and decision making », *op. cit.*

[113] Deonna J. & Teroni F., *The emotions : a philosophical introduction*, *op. cit.*

[114] *Id.* ; Elster J., *L'irrationalité : Traité critique de l'homme économique, Vol. II*, *op. cit.* ; Roberts R. C., *Emotions : an essay in aid of moral psychology*, *op. cit.*

[115] Elster J., *Alchemies of the mind : rationality and the emotions*, *op. cit.* ; Elster J., « Emotional choice and rational choice », *op. cit.* See also Fehr & Fischbacher (« Why Social Preferences Matter - The Impact of Non-Selfish

in the action tendencies of emotions. Through their action tendencies, types of emotions generate and provide the identity of these wants. For instance, indignation can prompt a desire to punish the wrongdoer, a wish that the wrong will never happen again, and a preference for a just world over an unjust world. Thus, by tracing back the origins of wants in the action tendencies of emotion-types, an emotional model of action can explain why types of intentions, desires, and preferences that are felt obtain, and why they motivate types of rational action related to types of values. But if emotions can motivate rational actions aimed at promoting values, how does this relate to consequentialism and non-consequentialism?

## V.2 Emotions, (non-)consequentialism and rational action

To answer this question, one has to note that emotions are also related to rationality because they influence how people think[116] in generating cognitive activity. In particular, emotions motivate *normative judgements* that are *intrinsic* to the *types of emotion* experienced[117]. For example, during an episode of indignation, a person tends to judge that a situation is *unjust* and *ought* to be *prevented* and that the *wrongdoer ought* to be punished in order to re-establish *justice*; during an episode of contempt, a person tends to judge that the despised person is *unworthy*, and therefore *ought to* be *ostracised* to re-establish *probity*[118]. This means that the constitutive normative judgements of emotions can be value judgements that attribute (dis)values to things, *and* deontic judgments that state rules aiming at realizing target-values. Emotions seem therefore to have the power of governing rule following: for instance, rules about making reparations seem to depend on guilt or rules about punishment and desert seem to depend on anger[119]. But the rules do

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Motives on Competition, Cooperation and Incentives », in *The Economic Journal*, vol. 112, nᵒ 478, 2002, p. C1-C33) for the roles played by some emotions (anger, envy, notably) in the formation of social preferences in EE.

[116] Elster J., *Alchemies of the mind : rationality and the emotions*, *op. cit.* ; Frijda N. H., Manstead A. S. R. & Bem S. (éd.), *Emotions and beliefs : how feelings influence thought*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000.

[117] Nussbaum M. C., *Upheavals of Thought: the Intelligence of Emotions*, *op. cit.* ; Solomon R. C., *Not passion's slave: emotions and choice*, *op. cit.* ; Prinz J., « The emotional basis of moral judgments », in *Philosophical Explorations*, vol. 9, nᵒ 1, 2006, p. 29-43 ; Deonna J. & Teroni F., *The emotions : a philosophical introduction*, *op. cit.*

[118] Minner F., « L'indignation, le mépris et le pardon dans l'émergence du "cadre légal" d'"Occupy Geneva" », in *Revue européenne des sciences sociales*, vol. 56, nᵒ 2, 2018, p. 133-159.

[119] Gill M. B. & Nichols S., « Sentimentalist Pluralism: Moral Psychology and Philosophical Ethics », in *Philosophical Issues*, vol. 18, nᵒ 1, 2008, p. 143-163.

not stand alone because they have an aim: to promote a value. Interestingly, the rule stated can correspond to categorical imperatives or non-categorical imperatives, and the targeted value can correspond to an "absolute and inviolable[120]" value that is pursued whatever the consequences, or it can correspond to a value *simpliciter* that is pursued because of the consequences it promotes. Therefore, emotions, as different experimental researchers have observed, can motivate both consequentialist and deontological reasoning [121]. As such, emotions are parts of the system of normative reasoning[122] and seem to be essential components of rational actions involving consequentialism and non-consequentialism.

To illustrate this point, rather than taking the example of a laboratory experiment, I will use a sociological study which I conducted on the political collective Occupy Geneva where I observed a collective moral dilemma[123]. This study is interesting because the dilemma was not a laboratory construct of the researcher, but corresponded to a real collective dilemma which emerged in this social group. This dilemma is furthermore relevant as it opposed consequentialist and non-consequentialist reasoning and was motivated by two different emotions: contempt vs pity. The case depicted is therefore interesting because it shows in the natural (non-laboratory) setting of a small-scale society that elements of consequentialism and non-consequentialism can be brought together in emotional reasoning and lead people to act rationally in diverging ways. But before continuing the argument, I need to first introduce the political collective Occupy Geneva and the methodology used in this study.

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[120] "Absolute and inviolable" values are called "sacred values" by Tetlock (« Thinking the unthinkable: sacred values and taboo cognitions », in *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, vol. 7, n° 7, 2003, p. 320-324) who explains that people who treat a value as "sacred" are not prone to accept a trade-off between this value and another value that they do not consider absolute and inviolable. Since the adjective "sacred" has religious connotations I will just use the adjective "absolute" to qualify these kinds of values.

[121] e.g. Gill M. B. & Nichols S., « Sentimentalist Pluralism: Moral Psychology and Philosophical Ethics », *op. cit.* ; Baron J., Gürçay B. & Luce M. F., « Correlations of trait and state emotions with utilitarian moral judgements », in *Cognition and Emotion*, vol. 32, n° 1, 2018, p. 116-129 ; Choe S. Y. & Min K. H., « Who makes utilitarian judgments? The influences of emotions on utilitarian judgments », in *Judgment and Decision Making*, vol. 6, n° 7, 2011, p. 580-592.

[122] Nussbaum M. C., *Upheavals of Thought: the Intelligence of Emotions*, *op. cit.*

[123] Minner F., « L'indignation, le mépris et le pardon dans l'émergence du "cadre légal" d'"Occupy Geneva" », *op. cit.*

Occupy Geneva came into existence on the 15th of October 2011 in Geneva in Switzer-land and dissolved around May-June 2012. This political collective had been created spon-taneously by inhabitants of Geneva following a worldwide demonstration against the stock market that the Occupy movement (Occupy Wall Street, Occupy Madrid, etc.) had organized. The collective Occupy Geneva joined this movement, in which groups of people "occupied" symbolic public spaces in many cities and countries all over the world from Spring 2011 onwards to denounce "democratic deficiencies" and "unjust" economic rela-tionships. It is difficult to estimate precisely the number of members of the collective, but it is likely that 70 to 80 people resided in the camp they settled and that the collective had about 350 supporters. Nonetheless, the arrival of winter, continual conflicts, and demoti-vation led to a decrease in participation. By the time the camp was shut down, fewer than 10 people across two tents remained. Members who took part in the general assemblies (GA) or the working groups (like those against economic injustices or standing for alter-natives to capitalism) were not necessarily living in the camp, with some residing in it occasionally. After one week of existence and many conflicts, the members decided to adopt a charter of good conduct in order to regulate their interactions in the camp and the GAs. One month later, the same problems continued and new ones appeared. Thus, the members decided to amend their first charter, leading to the creation of a second char-ter[124]. Finally, shortly before the shutting down of the camp, a third charter that only con-cerned the GA had been established. It is this third charter that is the object of the study that I report. This study aimed at explaining the emergence of norms to punish, exclude and reintegrate members that were said to be "problematic" by showing how various emotions (indignation, contempt, forgiveness, pity, etc.) felt by the members contributed to the collective design and adoption of these norms. As for the methodology, the data were collected during a participatory observation that lasted roughly seven and a half months (that is the duration of the existence of the collective) which included observa-tions of general assemblies, working group meetings, and collective actions in the public space. In addition, after the dissolution of the collective Occupy Geneva, I conducted 20 semi-structured interviews about the various versions of the charter of good conduct with

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[124] Minner F., « From indignation to norms against unjustified violence in Occupy Geneva: a case study for the problem of the emergence of norms », *Social Science Information*, nº 54, 2015, p. 497-524.

central members of the collective, among which the three members who conceived the third charter.

In this collective, the issue of excluding non-cooperative members, who acted aggressively against other members, became a pressing topic and lead to heated debates. While social exclusion was supported by many members, a few of them were convinced that it was a bad thing *per se* and were against excluding anybody even if they had behaved immorally towards other members; this resulted in a conflict between those who were for exclusion and those who were against it. I observed that those supporting it were motivated by contempt, whereas those opposing it were motivated by pity. For sake of simplicity, this dilemma and the debates that took place can be schematized by opposing two members: member A who argues for social exclusion, and member B who does not.

Member A evaluates strongly non-cooperative members as bad people whose behaviours exemplified various vices (being violent, egoistic, etc.) and feels contempt. A argues that to exclude them would have good consequences for the group, because it would restore probity and social cooperation. Furthermore, for member A, social exclusion is not immoral when it is justified: the excluded members are responsible for their misdeeds and deserve to be excluded. Member A states a non-categorical imperative grounded in the action tendency of contempt: if non-cooperative members are bad persons, then they should be excluded, because it would have good consequences for everyone if they are no longer in the group. The excluded members' suffering because of the exclusion is admitted because it is deserved: they acted intentionally and knew that they were transgressing the values and rules of the collective. Member A, holding these kinds of consequentialist beliefs, argues that she is prone to exclude members who are strongly non-cooperative, and to trade-off their wellbeing against their suffering for the greater good of the collective.

Contrary to member A, member B argues that social exclusion is bad *per se* because people who are excluded *always* suffer from it. B sees exclusion as a disvalue which should not be traded-off against social integration that she relates to an absolute and inviolable value: the wellbeing of others. Therefore, B argues that to exclude non-cooperative members, even if this seems justified because they are responsible for their misdeeds, consists in inflicting suffering on them and in violating the absolute value of another's wellbeing.

The belief that the persons excluded suffer leads B to feel pity[125]. Motivated by pity's action tendency, which consists in alleviating another persons' distress[126] in order to restore their wellbeing, B states the rule that they should not be excluded. Thus, B is *strictly* against social exclusion and for social integration: she states the categorical imperative that to exclude people is strictly forbidden and justifies this interdict by saying that exclusion violates the absolute value of someone else's wellbeing. B adds that the consequences for the other members and the functioning of the group if those strongly non-cooperative members are still in the group do not matter, since the imperative of observing social integration in order not to put another's wellbeing in danger does not admit exceptions. Therefore, B, motivated by pity, follows a categorical rule that aims at protecting the wellbeing of the excluded whatever the consequences for the collective.

This example of a social dilemma nourishing a social conflict is informative since it shows that emotions can ground consequentialist and non-consequentialist reasoning. This means that emotions can lead people to argue and act in opposite ways, by following categorical or non-categorical rules which rationally promote respectively absolute or non-absolute values. That is why we can say that the alleged Weberian distinctions between purposive rational action, value rational action and affective actions do not seem to hold. On the contrary, rationality, normativity and emotions seem to constitute a single type of action that possesses two sub-types depending on the kind of normative reasoning (consequentialist and non-consequentialist) that social agents use when they reason and act.

## Conclusion

In this article, I have defended the thesis that purposive rational action, value rational action and emotional action are not three separate types of action that compete, oppose or substitute for each other. On the contrary, they constitute one type of action that is divided into two sub-types according to the kind of normative reasoning that is at stake (consequentialism, deontology). To defend this view, I have examined the relationship of

[125] Pity is often defined as a reaction to the undeserved suffering of someone else (e.g. Elster J., *Explaining social behavior : more nuts and bolts for the social sciences, op. cit.*), but in fact people who unconditionally care for the wellbeing of others can feel pity towards individual who deserves their misfortune.

[126] On pity's action tendency see for instance Elster (*ibid.*).

rationality to normativity. By discussing the relationships between rational actions and (non-)consequentialist reasoning, I have demonstrated that rationality is normativity-dependent. Therefore, there seems to be no good reason to maintain the opposition between a type of rational action devoid of normativity and a type of rational action that is imbued with normativity. In the next step, I argued for the unity of rationality, normativity and emotions by showing that pure rationality does not exist: affective states (desires, preferences, wishes, etc.) are always implied in a model of rationality. By specifically discussing emotions, I have shown that they can be conceived as rational and can give rise to rational actions. In addition, emotions are specific in that they connect agents to normativity (values and norms); they are also implied in normative reasoning (consequentialism and non-consequentialism) and rational actions that are conducted according to these types of reason. Rationality, normativity and emotions then constitute one single type of action that divides into two sub-types, according to the kind of normative reasoning that social agents employ when they act. In view of these arguments, it would seem incoherent to suppose that rational action, normative action and affective action are three different types of social actions, thus contradicting Weber and the tradition he inspired. In that sense, social explanations that rely on a rationalistic approach should recognize that rational action always incorporates affective and normative elements.