Chapter 1
Introduction: Institutions, Emotions, and Group Agents—Contributions to Social Ontology

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Social ontology is the philosophical study of the basic constitution and structure of the social world. Social ontology investigates the kinds of entities that make up the social world, its deontological structure, its relations to physical nature and mental attitudes. Social ontology thus engages a wide array of domains in philosophy and neighboring disciplines. Social and political philosophy, ethics, philosophy of mind, and metaphysics contribute to research in social ontology. Also, current social ontology is no pure armchair business. Sociology, legal theory, political science, and economics provide insights into social structures and functions that cannot be ignored by social ontology. Similarly, social psychology, history and linguistics can teach us relevant lessons about the mechanisms of establishing and overthrowing social power.

The contributions gathered in this volume present the state of the art in some selected areas of current social ontology. They are focused on the role of collective intentional states in creating social facts, and on the nature of intentional properties of groups that allow characterizing them as responsible agents, or perhaps even as persons. Many of the chapters are inspired by contemporary action theory, emotion theory, and theories of collective intentionality. Another group of chapters revisits early phenomenological approaches to social ontology, and accounts of sociality that draw on the Hegelian idea of recognition. The variety of philosophical traditions mirrored in this collection provides readers with a rich and multifaceted survey

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of present research in social ontology. Dependent on the authors' backgrounds, some relevant topics and themes appear and reappear under different angles and in different clothing throughout the volume.

The collection is divided into three parts. The first part contains contributions that discuss themes highlighted in John Searle's work on the ontology of social institutions and facts. John Searle is one of the main protagonists of contemporary philosophical reflections on social reality. His theory (Searle 1995, 2010) provides a conceptual framework for fruitful explorations of a wide variety of finer grained issues. The chapters in this part address, among others, questions concerning the relation between intentions and the deontic powers of institutions, the role of disagreement, and the nature of collective intentionality. While the contributions to Part I roughly pertain to matters of generating and establishing social facts, Part II focuses on joint and collective emotions and mutual recognition. Part III explores the scope and limits of group agency, or group personhood, especially the capacity for responsible agency.

1   Intentionality and Institutions

Searle's basic idea, as developed in his 1995 book, is that institutional facts are typically status functions which involve constitutive rules. An object (X) has a status (Y) if it is collectively accepted that "X counts as Y in context C". Searle's formula for the constitutive rule of the institutional world attempts to bridge the gap between fact and norm by accounting for the relation between the properties of natural objects and minds, on the one hand, and the "deontic powers" deriving as functions from the statuses conferred by collective intentionality on objects, on the other hand. In his 2010 book, Searle has generalized his earlier account in a way that places declarations at the center stage of the creation of institutional reality. A status and the deontic powers deriving from it exists because the status is "declared" to exist; in this theory, the older XYC-formula appears as a special case.

Searle's account has proven to be very successful in current social ontology; however, Searle has met with severe criticism. The opening chapter of the collection, Chap. 2, *Document Acts* by Barry Smith, challenges the consistency of Searle's earlier framework by addressing the problem of how to accommodate an important class of multiply interconnected quasi-abstract entities. Smith points out that the entities targeted in the interlocking manifestations of "document acts", as for instance structured investment vehicles or mortgage securitization, are too abstract in nature to pass for real objects within Searle's professed naturalistic framework. "Document acts" are defined as individual and collective intentional acts that involve all kinds of doings related to documents, as for example issuing a property deed, identifying a person by checking her passport, or electronically paying a bill. Document acts are similar to speech acts in their capacity to state and create facts, and in their having definable conditions of satisfaction. They transcend, however, the capacities of speech acts in creating and maintaining entities of tantalizing

complexity. The problem of Searle's theory with entities of this kind as identified by Smith lies in the tension between Searle's alleged strict naturalism, according to which all that exists "consist[s] entirely of physical particles in fields of force", and the claim that the social entity of a status Y comes to exist upon the we-intentional declaration that status Y exist. Whereas this tension is relatively innocuous for a status immediately connected to physical things and states, including the powers and activities of human beings (for example Y: x, z [being married]), it seems fatal in the case of statuses anchored in physical reality in much more intricate ways, such as mortgage securitization. The complex of interrelations manifest in phenomena of this kind is arguably more than a mere pattern of human activities, or a product of "massive fantasy". Smith attempts to show a way out of the dilemma by suggesting that Searle accept in his ontology quasi-abstract entities that, in virtue of their being brought into being by declaration, are "fully a part of the historical world of what happens and is the case", although they lie outside the province of what is described by physics. He considers document act theory as an important device in accounting for the reality of the "historical world" because it explains how relevant portions of the history of institutional quasi-abstract entities are "encapsulated".

The next two chapters in Part I, Chap. 3 (*Searlean Reflections on Sacred Mountains*) and Chap. 4 (*Social Objects without Intentions*), question Searle's intentionalist model of the social world. Their authors, Filip Bueken and Brian Epstein, both challenge the claim that social objects depend on intentions, but they do so in two different ways. Bueken's argument draws on the opacity of social institutions, i.e. on the possibility that institutions appear indistinct from natural facts. He claims that some undoubtedly institutional facts, such as the sacredness of a mountain, might be both unintended and unrecognized as such. In spite of its considerable deontic powers, the "covert" institution of the sacredness of a mountain may be taken as a natural fact, explicable by a "natural etiology", such as the birth of a god on the peak of the mountain. Hence, and in contradiction to what Searle claims, the existence of deontic powers does not seem to require a status Y assigned to X by the members of the relevant community who collectively intend and accept it. Nevertheless, Bueken thinks that Searle's account can accommodate sacredness as a *covert* institutional fact for the creation and maintenance of which shared practices of the members of a collective are responsible, and this in spite of their ignorance about its institutional nature. He argues that uncovering the institutional nature of sacredness need not necessarily disintegrate the powers related to it, even if it leads to a critical re-examination of the relevant practices. A community that shifts towards intentionally recognizing sacredness as an institutional fact thereby accepts its deontic role as deriving from the collectively assigned status. This understanding might, under certain conditions, even increase the force of the deontic powers and make it easier to accept changes or modifications of the institution in question. Emphasizing the possibility of "covert" institutional facts whose deontic role does not derive from institutional status, Bueken seems to suggest a "light" version of a Searlian intentionalist account, which allows deontic powers to result from beliefs about "natural" facts and shared practices emerging from them.

Epstein's approach, in contrast, is more radical. He argues that the role of intentions in accounting for the "anchoring" of social entities is systematically overestimated. By "anchoring", he means the process that makes an object (X) a social object (Y). In Searle's social ontology, he identifies the process of collectively intending or recognizing the constitutive rule "*X* counts as *Y* in *C*" as "anchoring" the "ground" of *Y*. After a comparison between Searle's constitutive rule and the traditional notion of convention, Epstein discusses a continuum of possible "anchors" for conventions, ranging from the most stringently to the least intentional, i.e. from explicit collective agreement to mere patterns or regularities in practices. He then attempts to show that the complexity of the institution of money, one of Searle's favorite examples of a social fact, does hardly allow for a single intentionalist account of how it is anchored. Expressing similar worries with regard to anchoring other deontic powers in collective acceptance, Epstein casts doubts on the soundness of treating social ontology as a kind of subfield of collective intentionality.

The following chapter (Chap. 5), Jennifer Hudin's The *Logical Form of Totalitarianism*, neatly connects to Bueken's and Epstein's foregoing discussions on the primacy of intentional acceptance or shared practices in establishing social facts. Hudin distinguishes a "vertical" from a "horizontal" account of social structures, the former of which is centered on the capacity of cooperation and summarized in the term "practice", whereas the latter centered on deontic and representative capacities. Hudin then outlines how Searle's formula—(Collective Acceptance) "*X* counts as *Y* in context *C*"—exploits the illocutionary nature of declarations to import "deonticity" into his account of social reality. She restates Bueken's and Epstein's worries by drawing attention to a "split of deonticity" between social authorization, i.e. a linguistic codification of status function, and social expectation, i.e. the non-linguistic perception of social roles. Social expectation, for example of how a wife or a mother is to behave, arguably exhibits deontic power without involving declarative acts of collective acceptance. In order to account for the deontology of social expectation, Hudin suggests focusing on the perception inspired conception of collective recognition rather than on collective acceptance. She underlines the advantages of this conceptual shift by discussing the question of how and why collectives maintain totalitarian regimes. Her account draws on the idea that institutional reality is grounded initially in collective perception, and secondarily in acts of participatory acceptance that maintain their existence without entailing complicity (in the sense of willing cooperation). She proposes, moreover, to distinguish between "happy" and "unhappy" acceptance: the former involves the emotional component of "social bonding" which is absent in the latter. Social bonding is supposed to create a "we" liable to turn social identification into a self-empowering experience by expanding each individual's sense of what one can do and be. With these conceptual tools in place, Hudin shows how to refine Searle's account in a way that meets the challenges of "split deonticity".

The idea that the deontic is a multi-faceted phenomenon the nature of which is not easily explicable by a single model or formula is also central in Rodrigo Sánchez Brigido's chapter on *Groups, Normativity and Disagreement* (Chap. 6).

Addressing the problem of how to explain the genesis of institutional duties, the author argues that a single-type explanation, e.g. in terms of Margaret Gilbert's theory of "joint commitment", is not adequate because normative relations among members of groups seem to appear for a variety of reasons. Accordingly, a variety of explanatory models of "groups with normative unity" (GNU) seems to be required, too. One of the models Sánchez Brigido proposes attempts to account for cases of conforming to membership duties because of considerations pertaining to the value of the joint activity in which individuals engage. Another model that the author suggests draws on classical accounts of agreement. The concept of agreement, according to him, is more flexible and hence more suitable to adapt to the variety of normative unity in groups than the concept of joint commitment. In particular, he intends to show how an agreement-based account can explain why members might disagree on the content of the obligations to which they wish to conform. To this purpose, he discusses the role of intentions and the relevance of a framework of agreement practices in building normative unity.

Seumas Miller's chapter (Chap. 7), *Joint Actions*, *Social Institutions and Collective Goods*: *A Teleological Account*, gives an alternative account of the deontic powers of social institutions that draws on the notion of joint action. Miller accounts for the creation and reproduction of social institutions in terms of organizations or systems of organizations that provide collective goods by means of joint activity. His teleological and normative theory of joint action is based on his individualist Collective End Theory (CET) that is relational in the sense of explaining common goal directed activity in terms of individual attitudes and actions and the relations between them. In this chapter, particular emphasis is placed on the question of whether organizations are normative entities, and on the relations between organizations and rights. Miller defines organizations in terms of an embodied formal structure of interlocking roles and a multi-layered structure of joint actions, and distinguishes them by their typical activities and ends. While this definition of an organization does not include any reference to a normative dimension, Miller maintains that most organizations do as a matter of contingent fact possess a normative dimension by virtue of particular (im)moral ends they serve and particular (im)moral activities they undertake. Further normative dimensions ensue from social norms governing the constitutive organizational roles, especially when hierarchical role structures are involved. Miller holds that organizations with such normative dimensions are social institutions and then addresses the issue of the specifically moral dimension of social institutions. In the second part of the chapter, he explains how the moral categories that are deeply implicated in social institutions—human rights and duties, contract-based rights and obligations, rights and duties derived from the production and 'consumption' of collective goods—are to be accounted for in the framework of an individualist theory, e.g. in terms of aggregated rights and joint rights. Miller's joint action based account of institutions challenges the Searlian picture of institutional deonticity that derives from assigned status: it allows the joint moral rights involved in collective goods to be based in aggregated pre-institutional needs-based and non-needs-based human rights.

Part I closes with a methodological study of the central condition highlighted in all recent accounts of social reality and labeled "Collective Intentionality" by John Searle. In Chap. 8, *Three Types of Heterotropic Intentionality*: *A Taxonomy in Social Ontology*, Francesca De Vecchi suggests analyzing the socially relevant types of intentionality by means of a phenomenologically inspired finer grained taxonomy. Instead of distinguishing between solitary and collective intentionality, she proposes to draw a basic distinction between heterotropic and non-heterotropic intentionality. Heterotropic intentionality is explained as existentially dependent on at least two intentional subjects, and is supposed to manifest in three types: collective intentionality, intersubjective intentionality, and social intentionality. Roughly, the type "collective intentionality" corresponds to what in philosophy is often discussed as "shared" intentional states and attitudes, the type "intersubjective intentionality" is social cognition, and "social intentionality" is what phenomenologists have frequently called "social acts". De Vecchi points out the different conditions of satisfaction these intentionality types have, as well as the relations they bear to each other. Moreover, she attempts to show how collective, intersubjective, and social intentionality contribute to create social entities.

2   Shared Emotions and Recognition

Part II addresses the increasing interest in the nature and role of shared affectivity. Collective emotions, shared feelings, and common moods are an interesting topic by themselves, but they seem to be particularly relevant to social ontology as a background capacity for social action and joint commitments. Shared affectivity is closely related to what has been referred to as "recognition", a notion that links an epistemic ability to affective capacities, such as mutual respect and the desire to be accepted. An important application of accounting for shared affectivity and recognition is the question to what extent groups can be genuine subjects of affective states and attitudes of recognition. This question is not of merely academic interest but pertains to practical issues involving the moral character of groups and group responsibility. An affective capacity that traditionally occupies a central place in discussions of these issues is empathy, that is, the faculty to feel how others feel.

Ronald de Sousa's chapter (Chap. 9), *Emergence and Empathy*, opens the discussion on shared affectivity by examining to what extent empathy corresponds to the image commonly held of it. De Sousa critically examines two claims about empathy: first, that empathy is an emotion, and second, that it is indispensable for moral motivation. He relates these claims to the problem of collective feeling by considering how shared experiences in general might emerge from interactions between individuals. Due to their complex patterns of causation, collective experiences consciously emerge on a level that neither allows determining a single mechanism of causation nor predicting the nature of the resulting experience on the basis of the properties of its constituents. This suggests a component view of collective experiences according to which various types of intentional as well as lower-level

sub-personal physiological and psychological states are causally relevant components of what is experienced as, say, a collective emotion. Due to the intersubjective interactions involved, the individual emotions of the participants in a collective emotion depend in part on the collective context in which they appear. This picture of collective emotions as emerging from the concurrence of a variety of individual phenomena has consequences for the role and relevance of empathy. It follows from this conception that claims about specific relations of justification between individual emotions and shared emotion are implausible. Therefore, empathy cannot be ascribed a special role in explaining the *sui generis* collective emotion that emerges. A fortiori, then, it seems impossible to determine whether empathy has a particular function for the moral motivation of groups and in what exactly this function would consist. And since the phenomena constitutive of a collective emotion need not themselves be emotions, empathy, even if considered a relevant ingredient in collective moral emotions, need not be construed in terms of a compassionate emotion. Rather, empathy appears to be an emotionally neutral ability of getting acquainted with the emotional states of others, conceivable in terms of either simple affective contagion or more sophisticated capacities for emotional understanding that might even presuppose the ability to regard someone as "one of us".

The following chapter (Chap. 10), *The Functions of Collective Emotions in Social Groups* by Mikko Salmela, focuses on the functions of collective emotions in the emergence, maintenance, and development of social groups. Salmela evaluates the merits of different theories in accounting for these functions, among them aggregative theories, ritualistic theories, and intergroup emotions theory, as well as Margaret Gilbert's plural subject view and Hans Bernhard Schmid's phenomenological account of collective affectivity. In spite of the many insights provided by these theories, Salmela finds them wanting for a number of reasons, and he suggests a refined approach that is based on the idea of a continuum of collectivity. Emotions seem to be shareable to a lesser or greater degree, resulting in different kinds of collective emotions with different functions in social groups. Salmela suggests that more strongly shared collective emotions serve the emergence, maintenance, and development of social groups more effectively than less strongly shared collective emotions. In order to account for the different kinds and functions of collective emotions, he examines "modes" or degrees of sharing for both emotional content and affective experience. One question considered is how the essential axiological "concern" of an emotion is to be shared, given that affective appraisal of values is usually so fast and modular that collective acceptance of the values in question is impossible. Salmela proposes to account for shared concerns in terms of convergent individual emotions of similar concern, which provides a rational impetus to synchronization of experience. The degree of synchronization achieved bears on the strength of solidarity and commitment among the group members. According to Salmela, moderately collective emotions are experienced as emotions of a group member, but they are still normatively weak because this role is self-appointed and maintained through a private identification or commitment. In strongly collective emotions, however, group membership is immediately felt as shared without implying an act of personal identification. The members of a winning

team rejoice in "our winning the championship" or in "our accomplishment". Their feeling responds to prescriptive emotion norms within the group emerging from their collective commitment to their shared concern.

Chap. 11, *Feelings of Being-Together and Caring-With* by Andrés Sánchez Guerrero, takes up the question of how collective affectivity relates to central group concerns. Against the background of Bennett Helm's account of emotions as "felt evaluations" and Heideggerian accounts of ways of being-in-the-world, Sánchez Guerrero investigates the role feelings play with regard to group membership. He suggests explaining the force of the shared evaluative perspective to determine group relevant concerns by the affective attitudes of "caring-with" and "feelings of being-together". Denoting an emotional attitude "about things" that may become the shared concerns relevant for group-belongingness, the term "caring-with" applies to situations in which the involved individuals feel together that the object or occurrence in question matters to their group. Sánchez Guerrero relates this idea to Heidegger's analysis of human intentionality as a shareable orientedness towards an entity, which is embedded in our common care-defined way of being. He contrasts "caring-with" to this shared experiential background of "being-affectively-attuned-to-the-world-in-one-mode-or-another", suggesting that experiences of "caring-with" are marked by a distinct phenomenal character of togetherness describable in terms of a "felt conviction" that the involved individuals jointly care about something. In contrast, "feelings of being-together" are taken to constitute the affective background that prepares the pre-thematic understanding of a concrete situation as one that leads to caring about something as members of a group. Sánchez Guerrero identifies these feelings as a subclass of what Matthew Ratcliffe calls "existential feelings" and whose role is to ground our intentional experiences of being collectively affected. Sánchez Guerrero interprets them as 'sedimented' dynamic structures of experience that prepare us to understand certain circumstances as situations in which we pursue something together in an emotionally motivated way.

A similar picture of the inner structure of we-intentionality is offered in Chap. 12 by Emanuele Caminada, *Joining the Background*: *Habitual Sentiments Behind We-Intentionality*. The author attempts to acquaint his readers with the early phenomenological account of we-intentionality proposed by Gerda Walther. He shows how Walther conceives of we-intentionality as embedded in a network of intentional habits that shape individual minds. Her claim is that the core of community, or "We", is pre-reflexive and non-thematic and resides in a concrete intentional background founded in a particular structure of affective intentionality. Consisting in a web of conscious and unconscious habitual sentiments of joining, this structure is called "habitual joining" and provides the non-reducible basic "us-background" of community. As such, it is a necessary condition for states and attitudes of "we-intentionality". Accordingly, the latter cannot be understood in terms of the properties of a super-individual subject, and neither in terms of a shared common habit. Rather, it ought to be conceived as a multipolar web of intentional relations involving habits of several kinds. Caminada suggests that the value of

Walther's account for the current debate is to be seen in the fact that habitual joining explains how individual subjects and community reciprocally form each other.

Focusing on recognition, the closing chapters of Part II neatly connect to the foregoing considerations on shared affectivity and its relationship to group ethos and group concerns. In his chapter *Collective Intentionality and Recognition from Others* (Chap. 13), Arto Laitinen examines whether and how a group's status functions, goals and beliefs depend on recognition from outside the relevant group. To this effect, the author outlines different normatively loaded senses in which the term "recognition" is used. His main concern is with uses of "recognition" that refer to "recognitive" attitudes, e.g. having respect for persons because of recognizing them as being persons, feeling esteem for persons because of recognizing them as having merits, feeling concern for beings because of recognizing them as being vulnerable. Other relevant senses of "recognition" pertain to acknowledging the validity of normative entities, and to accepting institutions by those kinds of "taking and treating" which collectively bring institutions into existence and sustain their existence. Drawing on these senses of the term, Laitinen explains that being recognized matters to people because it is constitutive of personhood, it is intertwined with one's self-relation, it affects agentic capacities, and it is required for deontic statuses and powers. The relevance of recognition for analyses of collective intentionality and group behavior is commonly discussed in the context of how intersubjective attitudes contribute to the creation of groups and the constitution of group attitudes. Laitinen takes a different route. Focusing on groups as intentional subjects and the way their self-understanding is determined by "recognitive" attitudes, he suggests that both a group's implicit self-relation— the "attitudinal climate" among group members—and its explicit self-relation—the group's explicit "realm of concern", its "intentional horizon", and its "ethos"— depend in relevant ways on recognition from outside.

In his chapter *The Conditions of Collectivity*: *Joint Commitment and the Shared Norms of Membership* (Chap. 14), Titus Stahl addresses the theme of recognition from a different angle. Attempting to show that strong collective intentionality depends on the practical acceptance of shared norms and on the establishment of authority relations through mutual recognition, he focuses on those senses of "recognition" that pertain to acknowledging the validity of normative entities and accepting institutions. Stahl challenges the view that collective intentionality is a primitive capacity in the sense of being the absolute prerequisite of sociality. He argues that joint commitment, the core of Margaret Gilbert's account of collective intentionality, can reach beyond individual commitment only on condition of already socially shared "principles of membership". These principles are required to ensure the connection between a shared content and the force of individual commitments. Stahl argues that even if the existence of a set of interpersonal individual commitments between group members is constitutive of the existence and force of a joint commitment of the group, the content of the individual commitments need to be separate from that of the joint commitment supervening on their structure. This content independence implies a relation between the joint commitment of a group and the individual commitments of its members that arguably cannot be given *a priori*.

Drawing on Robert Brandom's theory of language and mind, Stahl points out that the relevant relation needs to be understood as socially created, implying a background of constitutive rules that specify an inferential connection between some normative standards and a collective state or attitude. If a group displays a structure of mutually interlocking commitments to evaluating each other according to such norms, it can count as a plural subject with a strongly collective state or attitude having commitments of its own. Since the individual preconditions of joint commitments are embedded in a structure of pragmatic authority ascription to each other, collective intentionality appears as an achievement of recognitive communities.

3 Collective Reasons and Group Agency

The question of whether and how groups can be proper agents of their own, and perhaps even persons, is a key topic in current social ontology. Christian List and Philip Pettit have recently rekindled this debate, in particular in their Group Agency (2011). Many of the key contributors to the analysis of collective intentionality have developed accounts of group agency, even though their concern is usually not so much with irreducible group agents, but rather with the question of what it means for individuals to act together, as a group. The opening chapter of Part III of this volume, Chap. 15, is Michael Bratman's *Acting over Time*, *Acting Together*. Bratman compares shared acting to individual acting over time. He starts from the observation that human agency involves the practical capacities both for temporally extended and for shared intentional activity. Both of these capacities require that thought and action be tied together in distinctive ways. In individual temporally extended acting, past, present, and future thought need to be tied to action, whereas in shared activity the thoughts and actions of individual participants need to be tied together in specific ways. Considering conceptual, metaphysical, and normative concerns with regard to the nature of these ties, Bratman's conjecture is that the human capacities for planning agency, a distinctive kind of goal-directed agency, constitute a fundamental common ground for both capacities. His idea draws on the theoretical and practical fecundity of planning structures, stating that the proper exercise of these planning capacities, given relevant contents of the plans, relevant contexts, and relevant interrelations with past, future, and other agents, will yield phenomena of temporally extended or shared intentional activity. The aim of this plan-theoretical account is to understand the metaphysics of "small scale" shared intentional activity as a construct of metaphysical resources already in play in the case of individual planning agency. Bratman thus tries to avoid introducing basic new metaphysical resources, such as Searle's we-intentions or Gilbert's joint commitments. Once individual planning agency is in place, Bratman claims, the step to small scale sociality need not involve a fundamental discontinuity. The basic normative pressures of consistency, coherence, and stability central to individual planning agency already involve the norms of social rationality that are characteristic of shared intentionality. The possibility of intentional and normative

resource identity between individual and shared agency, together with the fact that shared intentionality is typically limited in being partial, transitory and cross-cutting, is taken to challenge ontological claims about group subjects. For even given that a shared action is explained by a shared intention, on some notions of agency being the agent of the shared action can come apart from being the subject of the shared intention.

The following chapter (Chap. 16) *How Where We Stand Constrains Where I Stand*: *Applying Bratman's Account of Self-Governance to Collective Action* takes up and critically assesses some ideas of Bratman's "planning theory of agency". Joseph Kisolo-Ssonko sets out to elucidate the relation between individual autonomy and the constraints that collective intentions allegedly exert on individuals by showing how elements of Bratman's account of the normative force of individual intentions explain the normative interplay between individual and collective intentionality. His particular interest is to carve up the "fuzzy" idea of individual agentive identity by reference to Bratman's point that constraint by one's own intentions does not conflict with autonomy, but is really fundamental to being an autonomous agent. The argument involves a conception of self-governance according to which previous intentions scaffold one's practical life by constraining the valid choices available. By providing a "where I stand" from where one's actions can be governed, these intentions structure future rational deliberation, enabling a subject to consider her actions to be those of a single unified agent. Kisolo-Ssonko holds that an individual's reason for seeing him- or herself as constrained by the intentions of a collective of which he or she is a member is similar to being bound by his or her own intentions. Whereas it is similar in its quality of securing a unitary standpoint with regard to authentic agency, it is different in that securing this standpoint is not an *a priori* necessity for the individual, but becomes a necessity only after the fact of social interaction. This follows from a two-part transcendental argument that starts with people's experience of feeling themselves to be part of collective actions. The argument proceeds by presenting (i) the existence of a collective capable of governing its own actions as necessary for individuals to have this experience, and (ii) the constraint of individuals by collective intentions as conceptually necessary for the existence of the collective as an agent. From this, Kisolo-Ssonko concludes that collective intentions must constrain individuals. In the framework of self-governance, however, this constraint does not in principle endanger personal autonomy, but rather interlocks individual agentive identity with the agentive identity of the collective.

In the following chapter (Chap. 17), *Team Reasoning and Shared Intention*, Abraham Roth addresses the problem of authority and autonomy that emerges from the interplay between participatory intentions in shared activity. In particular, Roth's reflections center on the settling condition that constrains intentions to what one takes to be up to oneself to decide. Applied to collective or shared activity, the settling condition yields a dilemma: having a participatory intention to be A-ing together with other individuals seems to presume having the authority to settle "A-ing-only-in-the-context-where-you-join-in". Yet any such authority exercised by an individual would compromise the autonomy minimally required for the

active participation of other individuals. Examining the possibility to resolve this dilemma in the framework of game-theoretical considerations on team reasoning, Roth identifies a profound problem in any such approach. Whereas accounts of team reasoning explain the ranking of outcomes, they cannot explain how this ranking converts to intending one's part. Without one believing that one has the authority to bring about the collective goal, one is not rationally required to intend one's part. Against the background of this problem, Roth argues that if the settling aspect of participatory intention is to be handled within an account of team reasoning, the latter must be fundamentally distinct from individual instrumental reasoning in that it invokes a notion of a rational yet non-evidential warrant for belief. In particular, it requires that a team reasoner's belief or expectation that other participants are also team reasoners is rational, but not acquired in the way that rational belief should be acquired, that is, on the basis of evidence. For acquiring this kind of belief on the basis of conclusive evidence would dispense with the need of team reasoning. Roth thus concludes that the manifest rationality of team reasoning is demonstration enough of a non-evidential yet defeasible entitlement to think that fellow participants are team reasoners.

Juliette Gloor's *Collective Intentionality and Practical Reason* (Chap. 18) takes up the line of Roth's reflections, advancing a similarly skeptical view with regard to the suitability of an instrumentalist conception of rationality for accounts of shared agency. Gloor is less concerned, however, with the puzzle posed by the settling condition of participatory intentions than with the issues of unified action and self-governance addressed in the chapters of Bratman and Kisolo-Ssonko (Chaps. 15 and 16). Her focus is on the question of how the normative power of practical rationality contributes to form unified rational selves, subjects of both individual and shared actions. The main problem the instrumentalist conception of rationality poses to explaining rational selfhood is taken to be its individualistic implication about motivation. This implication becomes manifest in the claim that agents can be motivated solely by their own desires. Accordingly, Gloor's reflections center on the relations between desire and reason in motivating action, and more particularly on the question of how these relations are constitutive of the sort of normativity characteristic of collective intentionality. These issues invoke the debate on practical reason between instrumentalists and Kantians: whereas the latter reproach to the former reason internalism—manifest in their identifying reasons with desires—, the former reproach to the latter reason externalism—manifest in their identifying reasons with desire-independent principles. Roughly, reason internalism is supposed to disable instrumentalism from explaining the normative or binding power of reason, while reason externalism seems to disable Kantianism from explaining the motivating power of reason. In the framework of Christine Korsgaard's Kantian inspired account of agency, Gloor suggests reconciling these positions by adopting the view that a practical reason is a conjunction of an incentive and a value-based principle of choice. This construal of reason-desire-dependency favors a "mattering-relation" over an "instrumentalist-relation" as the primary self-relation of an agent. In contrast to the "instrumentalist-relation" which concerns the question of what means are sufficient to realize an end, the "mattering-relation" concerns the question

of what the appropriate means are to realize the end. Agentive self-relation so conceived pertains not only to unified subjects of individual action but likewise to unified subjects of shared action, since shareability of ends seems to presuppose the principled choice of a maxim about the appropriateness of means to an end.

Sara Rachel Chant argues in her paper (Chap. 19) that some responsibility is collective in a "real" sense if it cannot be reduced to the responsibilities of each individual in a group. "Real" collective responsibility presupposes situational features (threats, some degree of coercion) that mitigate the responsibilities of the participating individuals, but fail to mitigate the responsibility of the group as a whole. Chant discusses a series of received attempts to analyze "real" collective responsibility, and she offers an account that uses game theoretic conceptual tools. Real collective responsibility occurs in situations in which there is a morally objectionable Nash-equilibrium that is such that it excuses, to some degree, each participant's respective choice, given his or her reasonable expectations concerning the other participant's choices. In such situations, an element of "coercion" that mitigates each individual's responsibility comes from the group as a whole; thus the group bears moral responsibility for the outcome in a way the individual participants do not. The participants are fully responsible—collectively, but not distributively.

The concluding chapters in the volume challenge the irreducibility of collective properties and group agency, arguing against the need of stipulating an ontological support different from individuals to account for group decisions and responsibility. The first chapter of this group, Chap. 20, *Are Individualist Accounts of Collective Responsibility Morally Deficient*? by András Szigeti, challenges Philip Pettit's claim that attributing responsibility to human individuals only would leave a "deficit in the accounting books". Claims of this kind make individualism about groups appear more than merely methodologically contestable: they make it appear morally deficient. Szigeti counters that the collectivist arguments for claims of this kind are wanting, and consequent worries with regard to the moral insensitivity of individualism can be dispelled. As he claims, collectivist arguments in favor of group responsibility often rely on paradoxes of judgment aggregation that seem to show that a collective can be responsible even when no individual is. Szigeti argues that cases of alleged group responsibility, contrary to what judgment aggregation paradoxes suggest, can be handled by individualist analyses without leaving a responsibility deficit. To this effect, he proposes to examine the relation between moral responsibility and the sources of harm. Harm suffered, so he claims, does either result from culpable wrongdoing or it does not. If harm suffered does not result from culpable wrongdoing, then nobody is morally responsible for it. Individualism does not deny, however, that in these cases, e.g. when harm is the outcome of certain institutional structures, redressing harm might be a moral duty. Therefore, the charge of moral insensitivity against individualist accounts can be rejected. If, on the other hand, the source of harm is culpable wrongdoing, then such harm is due to culpable wrongdoing of individuals. In these cases, harm is to be redressed by holding the culpable individuals responsible. Szigeti expands his defense of individualism in the last part of the paper by showing how collectivist talk about moral responsibility can be used for ethically questionable purposes as well,

e.g. for attributing rights to collectives that ought to be prerogatives of individuals only. Therefore, he concludes, collectivists cannot claim the moral high ground over individualists.

Christian List's and Philip Pettit's account of group agency is the target of another critical chapter written by Vuko Andric, Chap. 21, and titled *Can Groups Be Autonomous Rational Agents*? *A Challenge to the List-Pettit-Theory*. Andric is doubtful whether the List-Pettit theory is able to provide a convincing account of the rationality and autonomy of groups, an account that would justify considering them as agents in their own right. His worry is that the List-Pettit-theory implies an absurd claim, namely that "instrument-user-units", for example the unit formed by a car and its driver, are rational agents over and above those parts of them which are intentional, i.e. the users of the instrument. The *reductio ad absurdum* of the List-Pettit-theory is based on an analogy between groups and the complex entities of instrument-user-units. According to the List-Pettit-theory, the rationality and agential autonomy of a group entity is explicable by the interplay of its members' attitudes and its organizational structure. Andric claims that this *explicans* is analogous to the interplay of the user's attitudes and the constitution of the instrument used in an instrument-user-unit. Therefore, List and Pettit would be committed to say that the networking between the beliefs and desires of Mike driving his Ferrari and the technical properties of the Ferrari give rise to the rationality and agential autonomy of the Mike-and-his-Ferrari-unit, or so Andric claims. The absurdity of this view is, according to Andric, a reason to reject the theory.

In the last chapter of the collection, Chap. 22, *Direct and Indirect Common Belief*, Emiliano Lorini and Andreas Herzig analyze two social phenomena which are supposed to rely on distinct forms of agents' cognitive capabilities. After offering an example that illustrates the envisaged difference between "direct common belief" and "indirect common belief", the authors proceed to give first informal definitions thereof. In the second part of their chapter, they use the framework of public announcement logic (PAL) to provide a more formal analysis. Starting from the example of Giovanni and Maria who commonly believe that they both have Italian citizenship, Lorini and Herzig follow David Lewis in adopting an iterative analysis of common belief: *n* people have a common belief that *p* if and only if n people believe that *p*, *n* people believe that *n* people believe that p, and so on *ad infinitum*. The distinction between direct and indirect instances of common belief, then, relates to the way a common belief is generated. According to the authors' definitions, a common belief that *p* is direct when it is an immediate consequence of an event *F* that is manifest to all those sharing the prior mutual belief that perceiving *F* entails the truth of *p*. Thus, Giovanni and Maria's common belief that they both have Italian citizenship is direct if it is generated by the event of a third person telling them so and their prior mutual belief that hearing a statement to that effect entails their both being Italian citizens. In contrast, a common belief that *p* is indirect when it is determined by what may be called a "shared inference", i.e. an inference that is "constructive" in the sense that it does not presuppose the prior mutual belief that perceiving *F* entails the truth of *p*. Therefore, in order to arrive at the common belief

that *p*, the parties have to go through processes of shared inferences accounted for by the definitions the authors offer. Lorini and Herzig suggest that the importance of the distinction between direct and indirect common belief for social ontology lies in the fact that forming indirect common beliefs is cognitively more demanding than forming direct common beliefs. This seems to amount to the suggestion that even complex common capacities are properly explained by the performances of individuals in relation, i.e. need not give rise to postulating ontological collective subjects.

Social ontology has an impressive line of ancestors. As a distinctive area of systematic and cooperative specialization, however, it is a comparatively recent addition to international philosophical research. We hope that this volume will spur further interest in this rapidly evolving field of inquiry. The variety of the styles, methods, and arguments used in the contributions to this volume illustrate vividly the breadth of the current debate. At the same time, they contribute, from their respective perspectives, to deepen our understanding of three interrelated core topics in social ontology, namely, the constitution and structure of institutions, the role of shared evaluative attitudes, and the nature and role of group agents.

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