Imagination

What is the imagination? In a famous passage of "Imagination and Perception" Peter Strawson writes:

> The uses, and applications, of the terms 'image', 'imagine', 'imagination', and so forth make up a very diverse and scattered family. Even this image of a family seems too definite. It would be a matter of more than difficulty to identify and list the family's members, let alone their relations of parenthood and cousinhood. (Strawson 1970: 31)

Similarly, in his *Mimesis as Make-Believe*, the most influential book-length discussion on the imagination, Kendal Walton recognizes that the term 'imagination' has a use that is too broad to allow for one single characterization. Walton elaborates on several paradigmatic examples of imaginative activities including daydreams, dreams, fantasies, games of make-believe and representational works of art. He makes a number of important distinctions between *deliberate* imaginings and *spontaneous* imagining (where the first are based on an agent's decision to carry out a certain imaginative activity and the second emerge without effort or premeditation), between *solitary* imaginings and *social* imaginings (where the first are carried out by an individual alone and the second are produced collectively), and between *occurrent* imaginings and *nonoccurrent* imaginings (where only the first occupy a subject's attention while the second are held by a subject who does not focus on them). But eventually he writes:

> What is it to imagine? We have examined a number of dimensions along which imaginings can vary; shouldn't we now spell out what they have in common? – Yes, if we can. But I can't. (Walton 1990: 19)

In this entry I will shrink the existent characterisations of the imagination into a systematic novel taxonomy coherent with standard treatments in cognitive science, aesthetics and philosophy of mind. Many cognitive scientists and philosophers recognize two main varieties of imaginative abilities: the *non-propositional imagination* – imagining a tree – and the *propositional imagination* – imagining that there is a tree in the garden. Central to these accounts is the idea that mental acts have certain contents that can be thought in different ways. The ways in which these contents can be thought are called *propositional attitudes*, when the relevant content is propositional, and

modes of presentations, when the relevant content is non-propositional. (The reader familiar with the Fregean tradition should not be puzzled by this terminology since the use of the term 'modes of presentation' in this context does not coincide with the use of the term '*Sinn*' or 'Sense' in philosophy of language.) The basic assumption is that imagination can have the same contents as other mental states, such as belief, desire, perception, hallucinations and so on. What distinguishes imagination from other mental states is the attitude or the mode of presentation characterizing the way in which we think of these contents. So, for example, I can believe that there is a tree in front of me and I can imagine that there is a tree in front of me. Similarly, I can see the tree in front of me and I can imagine the tree in front of me. The difference between my believing that *p* and my seeing an object *o* on one side and my imagining that *p* and imagining *o* on the other is to be explained in terms of the ways in which I think of these contents. However, as we will see, such an explanation is not easily forthcoming. But before starting the discussion let me distinguish two main usages of the term 'imagination' that are still quite common but that should be put aside.

First, the term 'imagination' is often used as a synonym for the term 'creativity'. Yet, not all imaginative activities involve creativity and not all creative activities involve imagination. There is a notion of imagination that intersects creativity in that it shares with it one fundamental aspect, i.e. *originality*. Something is creative in some domain if it is genuinely original with respect to an established tradition in that domain (Carroll 2003; Olsen 2003). So, the *creative imagination* is an ability to produce a novel output of any kind. A more specific notion can be obtained by adding a second criterion, i.e. *value*. As Kant (2000: §46) famously remarked, nonsense can often be quite original, yet this does not make it valuable. So, for example, one might posit a novel question that nobody has ever posed before, which is valuable for, e.g., changing a traditional perspective on some issue or for enlightening a particular aspect of a problem. Gaut (2010: 151) further individuates a third criterion, what he calls "*flair by the maker*". However, the concept of flair has never been really clear – Gaut himself does not articulate it – and while according to a certain tradition in aesthetics this is one of the hallmarks of artistic creativity, the creative imagination extends over and above the arts

to contribute to all areas in which it generates new and (possibly, but not necessarily) valuable representations. (For some contemporary work on creativity see, e.g., Boden 1992; Carruthers 2002, 2007; Kaufman and Paul 2014; Krausz et al. 2009; Sternberg 1999; and Weisberg 2006.)

Second, the term 'imagination' is often used as synonymous with 'false belief' and 'misperception'. So, for example, to say that a child imagines a shadow in the corridor to be a monster is to say that she misperceives the shadow as a monster. And to say that she imagines that a monster is moving in the corridor is to say that she falsely believes that a monster is moving in the corridor. Currie and Ravenscroft (2002: 9) forcefully reject the identification of imagination and false belief by remarking that these are two distinct capacities. As they write: "There isn't a distinctive capacity to have beliefs that go wrong; there is a capacity to have beliefs, and that capacity can go wrong" (9). Similarly, one should reject the identification of imagination and misperception by noticing that there is no special capacity to misperceive reality: there is the capacity for perception, and that capacity can go wrong.

1 Non-propositional imagination

Non-propositional imagination can be thought of as a relation between a subject and a non-propositional content, which can be imagistic or non-imagistic. Imagistic imagination is often identified with *imagery*, which can be thought of as an ability to produce perception-like representations of things. Originally Aristotle described imagery — what he called *phantasia* — as "that [faculty] in virtue of which an image arises for us" (1995: iii.3.428aa1-2). He recognized the predominance of sight as the most developed among the senses and offered a pictographic notion of imagination as the faculty of visualizing or producing picture-like perceptions of things in the mind (iii.3.429a2-4). However, according to a broader characterization, imagery is an ability to produce perception-like representations of things in *any* sensory modality. So, for example, one can imagine a tiger by forming a visual image of it, but one can also imagine the sound of the ocean or the smell of an orange. Some argue that mental images are analogues of non-mental images (e.g., Kosslyn 1980,

1994; Kosslyn et al. 2006). However, no one in the contemporary debate on the nature of mental images claims that they are *literally* like pictures in the mind. So-called pictorialists suggest that mental images are picture-like only in the sense that they have intrinsically spatial representational properties similar to those of pictures. On the other hand, *descriptivists* claim that mental images are like linguistic descriptions (e.g. Dennett 1969/1981, 1979; Pylyshyn 1973, 1978, 2003). The debate has not yet reached any generally accepted resolution (cf. Kind 2005 for a review).

Without any restriction the notion of imagery, and hence that of imagistic imagination, naturally extends to the entire representational power of the mind and hence to *all* thought. Aristotle claimed that "the soul never thinks without an image" (iii.7.431a17) and the British empiricists elaborated a similar view when they suggested that all thinking involves mental images – what they called "ideas". Locke claimed that the term 'idea' stands for "whatsoever is the object of understanding when a man thinks" (2009: I.i.8). And in several places he seems to think of ideas as mental images, as when he writes: "thus it is with our ideas which are, as it were, the pictures of things" (II.xxix.8). Hume 2011 characterised imagination as an ability to *freely* combine the ideas of things that we experienced in the past in thinking and reasoning. By 'ideas' he means the faint images of the sensory impressions of real objects acquired through perceptual experience (and of emotions and other mental states we experience through reflection). But since both impressions and ideas are images, differing only in their degree of vividness, imagery does extend from perception, to memory to all other mental states. This notion of imagistic imagination is clearly too broad.

One common way to restrict the notion of imagery is to define it as an ability to produce perception-like representations of things *in the absence of external stimuli*. Thomas Aquinas describes the imagination as a creative activity forming "an image of something absent, or something perhaps never seen" (1922: I.85 *ad* 3). And Kant 1998 introduces a similar notion, what he calls *productive imagination*, as "the faculty for representing an object even without its presence in intuition" (B151), where by 'intuition' one should understand *perception*. On this view, imagination is an ability to think of real objects (things, events or states of affairs) of the physical world that are not

presently perceived by creating *new* perception-like representations. So, for example, one might think of something one has never perceived but whose existence one can infer from empirical evidence, such as the Big Bang. Without mentioning of the novel output this notion would also extend to cases of memory and more. But even if memory is excluded, cases of testimony and possibly other cases are not. For example, one might form a new mental image of an object one has never perceived through a causal chain of information going back to an individual's first perception of that object (cf. Stevenson (2003: 240)).

At the beginning of his *Fourth Meditation* Descartes famously distinguishes between the faculty of imagination as imagery and the faculty of reason or pure understanding, which can be non-imagistic (1996: 53). And in the *Sixth Meditation* he notices that while one might not be able to imagine (visually represent) a chiliagon (a thousand-sides polygon), one can understand its definition and use it in mathematical calculations (72 ff.). On this view imagery is identical to imagination, but imagination is just one subspecies of thought. Nevertheless, this notion of imagination is too broad and too narrow at the same time. It is too broad because it naturally extends to cases that we would not classify as cases of imagination. For example, it extends to cases of memory. Wherever we form a mental image, we have a case of imagery, and hence a case of imagination. But this notion is also too narrow because it excludes cases that we would classify as cases of imagining. For example, Yablo (1993: 27 n 55) notices that, *pace* Descartes, we can imagine a chiliagon without forming a mental image of it. Yablo coins the term 'objectual imagination' and defines it as denoting a relation between a subject and a particular representation of a real or imaginary entity or situation, which does not require forming a mental image. So, one can endorse the original characterisation of imagery as an ability to form mental images in any sensory modality without identifying it with the notion of imagination. Some cases of imagery can be cases of non-propositional imagining, but not all of them will be.

So, what would characterise non-propositional imagination? Gaut 2003 advances the hypothesis that to imagine a certain object x "is a matter of entertaining the concept of x, where entertaining the concept of x is a matter of thinking of x without commitment to the

existence (or non-existence) of *x*" (273). Some cases of imagery will be cases of imagination if one is not committed to the existence of the imagined objects. We can form a mental image from memory, we can form a mental image in perception, and we can form mental images when dreaming, but by definition these cases are not cases of imagining. And yet even this definition is subject to counterexamples. Sometimes we do engage in imaginative activities involving objects to the existence of which we are committed. For example, when reading Orwell's *1984* we imagine *of London* that it is the capital of a fascist state. In imagining this, we imagine about London, and we do that even if we are committed to the existence of London. The same considerations apply to our imaginative engagement with historical novels and other literary genres, such as New Journalism, where being committed to the existence of the protagonists of a certain story is fundamental for a correct understanding of the work.

On a more radical approach, White (1991: 91-92) formulates four arguments to show that imagery is not a kind of imagination. First, he notices, imagination is under voluntary control, but imagery is not under voluntary control when it occurs in mental states such as dreams, memory, illusion and hallucination. Second, imagining is something that we do even when we imagine something involuntarily, but having a mental image is not something that we do. Third, imagery can surprise us because it has an objectivity that imagination lacks: we establish the features of what we imagine. Fourth, imagery is particular and determinate while imagination can be general and indeterminate. Currie and Ravenscroft (2002: 24-27) reject each argument by pointing out that the same characteristics attributed to imagery can be attributed to certain episodes of imagining, and vice versa. First, they notice that just like some episodes of imagery are not under voluntary control, some episodes of imagining could be also involuntary. And while some episodes of imagery are involuntary, it does not follow that they could not be under voluntary control in some other context. Second, even if one agrees that imaginings are doings, it does not follow that they cannot be involuntary. And forming a mental image is something that we can do, whether voluntarily or involuntarily. Third, we can be surprised by features of what we imagine, as when one discovers that one is imagining that Sherlock Holmes has a full set of teeth without being previously

aware of it. Fourth, images are always partially indeterminate, as when I form a mental image of a tree without ascribing any particular number of leaves to it. And since mental images have a specific perception-like status, they are particular just like genuine perceptions are. Currie and Ravenscroft conclude that this only leads to the conclusion that there are two kinds of imagining: particular imaginings and general imaginings. Forming mental images, i.e. *visualising*, they suggest, is a kind of particular imagining.

Before concluding this section let us briefly focus on the recently introduced notion of *experiential imagination* as an ability to think of oneself *as if* undergoing a certain perceptual experience of an object. Vendler 1979 introduces a specific notion of *de se* imagining that he calls *subjective imagining* as opposed to *objective imagining*. Subjective imagining would consist "in the representation of the experiences I would have if I were in some situation or another" or "what it would be like to be in a certain situation" (161). Objective imagining, on the other hand, would consist in forming a representation of oneself from a certain perspective. For example, I can imagine myself swimming in the ocean subjectively, by representing the experience of feeling the cold temperature of the water, its salty taste, the current and so forth. Or I can imagine myself swimming in the ocean objectively, by picturing myself in the water, as if I was watching myself swimming just like I could watch somebody else doing the same thing.

Walton (1990: 28-35) introduces a notion of *de se* imagining that he characterizes as "imagining *doing* or *experiencing* something (or *being* a certain way) as opposed to imagining merely *that* one does or experiences something or possesses a certain property" (29, author's original emphasis). For example, I can imagine that there is a tree in front of me (propositional imagination), I can imagine a tree (objectual imagination), but I can also imagine *seeing* a tree in front of me (experiential imagination). According to Walton, the latter is always a case where one cannot fail to be aware of the fact that one is imagining about oneself. But the relevant notion of the self involved in this kind of imagining needs not be very thick. According to Walton, imagining *de se* is not a variety of *de re* imagining, as it would be for Lewis (1983: 156). Instead, it is a sort of "bare Cartesian I" (Walton (1990: 32)), which does figure in the content of the imagining.

Furthermore, such self-imaginings are crucial to an account of how we learn about our own feelings and our own selves and to an account of how we gain insight into others: "It is when I imagine *myself* in another's shoes (…) that my imagination helps me to understand *him*. And when I imagine this I also learn about myself." (34). In this way, Walton's version of experiential imagination encompasses also what he calls *quasi-emotion*, i.e. imagining *feeling* in certain ways (see Meskin and Weinberg 2003 for criticisms). In his 1997 he relates this notion to simulation theory, which is a theory about how to understand other people's minds (e.g. mind-reading, empathy) by modelling their mental attitudes (e.g. emotions, but also beliefs, desires and more). I will come back to this at the end of the next section.

Finally, Martin (2002: 402 ff.) argues that all sensory imagining is imagining sensing, and in particular that visualizing is imagining seeing. In other words, sensory-like imaging an object involves, e.g., imagining *seeing, hearing, touching* the object rather than merely thinking about it. On this view, a mental state of imagining takes as its object another mental state, i.e. a sensory experience (see Peacocke 1985 for a similar view). Currie and Ravenscroft (2002: 28) notice that in some circumstances we do mistake visualizing for genuine seeing, but this is difficult to explain on the view that seeing and visualizing have different contents. Our limited capacity to discriminate between seeing and visualizing is much easier to explain if one recognizes that they do have the same contents.

2 Propositional imagination

Propositional imagination can be thought of as a relation between a subject and a propositional content. Roughly stated, propositional imagination can be characterized as an ability to recognize and respond to non-actual scenarios, to ponder and evaluate different alternatives, to make assumptions and infer certain consequences, to manipulate symbols and representations of a real or imaginary state of affairs. This notion of imagination has become central in contemporary inquiries into counterfactual reasoning and modal judgment. So, for example, Williamson 2005, 2007 suggests that imagination plays a central role in our abilities to predict what would happen (or what would have happened) if things had been different from the way

they actually are (or were). And Yablo 1993 argues that imagination (or *conceivability*) is the only serious basis for claims of metaphysical possibility (see Chalmers 1996, 2002, the contributions in Gendler and Hawthorne 2002, and Kripke 1980 for further discussion on the relation between conceivability and metaphysical possibility). But these accounts do not try to explain what the imagination is or consists in. Rather, they assume a primitive notion of imagination (without elucidating it) with the purpose of explaining other abilities.

Several contemporary theories of the propositional imagination have investigated its nature and its cognitive mechanisms by building on a quite natural comparison with belief. The central hypothesis is that belief and propositional imagination involve distinct but structurally similar psychological mechanisms acting on similar propositional contents. In cognitive science this is called the *single code hypothesis* for both imagining and belief (cf., e.g., Leslie 1987; Nichols 2006b, 2004a; and Nichols and Stich 2000). The idea is that psychological mechanisms that can take inputs from imagining and from believing will process isomorphic inputs from both imagining and believing in very similar ways. In a nutshell, a psychological mechanism taking inputs both from imagination and from belief should generate similar outputs.

So, for example, empirical evidence shows that the affective mechanisms taking inputs from imagining and from believing generate similar affective outputs (Lang 1984; and Harris 2000). For instance, in one study subjects were presented with an imaginary scenario involving an encounter with a snake where they showed physiological signs associated with fear (Lang et al., 1983). Similarly, when we imaginatively engage with fiction we have affective responses that are similar to those we would have if we genuinely believed the propositional content of those imaginings. This phenomenon, which is commonly called the *paradox of fiction*, has been recently explained in terms of the single code hypothesis. To pity someone one has to know that he/she exists. Yet we pity Desdemona even though we know that she does not exist. This is easily explained once we consider that the affective mechanisms can take both belief inputs and imagining inputs to generate its affective outputs (Currie 1997; Meskin and Weinberg 2003).

Similarly, the single code hypothesis would offer a solution to the

puzzle of imaginative resistance, the fact that even though, following an author's prescription, we can imagine that, say, within a certain society people commit female infanticide, we could never imagine that this is morally right. Nichols (2006b: 463-464) explains this discrepancy by suggesting that this is probably due to the fact that the relevant input coming from imagination enters our moral response mechanisms, and it is treated in the same way as any isomorphic input coming from belief. He also suggests that although imaginative resistance is usually restricted to cases involving moral and emotional features (cf. Moran 1994), we seem to have similar difficulties in imagining mathematical impossibilities, e.g. $2 \neq 2$, and that this might be explained by arguing that the relevant input from imagination enters our normal inferential mechanisms just like an isomorphic input from belief. Since we would normally reject the belief that $2 \neq 2$, so we would also reject the proposition that $2 \neq 2$ from imagination.

Belief and imagination typically share certain inferential mechanisms. In particular, they share the inferential mechanisms of argument schemata. For example, if we believe that it is raining, and also believe that if it is raining the streets will be wet, we will infer that the streets will be wet (by *modus ponens*). Similarly, if we imagine that it is raining, and also imagine that if it is raining the streets will be wet, we will also infer that the streets will be wet. Usually the kind of inferences that we make depend on a background set of propositions – or *background knowledge* – but their operations depend on contingent facts that can vary from context to context. If I believe that the last train is leaving at 11:30 p.m., I might make different inferences depending on whether my current interest is in going back home for the night or staying out with my friends. If my interest is in going back home, I might infer that I will need to be at the station by 11:25 at the latest. Similarly, if I imagine that the last train is leaving at 11:30 p.m. and I also imagine that I want to be back home for the night, I will also infer that I will need to be at the station by 11:25.

One major difference between belief and imagining consists in the fact that while we are not free to believe what we want, we ourselves can usually determine what we imagine. To believe a certain proposition *p* is to hold *p* as true at the actual world, and whether the actual world makes *p* true or false is not up to us. On the contrary,

to imagine a certain proposition p is to hold p as true in some other possible (or even impossible) world, which is distinct from the actual world in some relevant aspect. Since which possible worlds would make p true is up to us, imagination does not have to conform to the actual world. Some imaginative practices, however, do impose certain constraints on what can or cannot be imagined. For example, when generating a literary work of fiction the author builds a new fictional story upon some shared background knowledge of the actual world, and in this sense the actual world can constrain our imagining.

Evans 1982 and Walton 1973, 1990 think of fictions as sophisticated games of make-believe. Walton 1973 originally introduces a fundamental distinction between purely imaginative activities and the sort of imaginative activities involved in games of make-believe. When we engage in a purely imaginative activity we can imagine whatever we want. In fact, we can even decide not to draw certain inferences. But when we engage in a game of make-believe, our imagining is constrained by the actual world. Evans individuates a special *incorporation principle* to describe the sort of inferential mechanisms at work within games of make-believe: "If B is true, and there is no set $A1$ … An of make-believe truths such that the counterfactual 'If $A1$ … An were true, B would not be true' is true, then B is make-believedly true" (1982: 354). Basically, this principle permits the incorporation of any truth into the inferential mechanisms of make-believe, if this is not ruled out by the initial pretence. A classical example of a game of make-believe is the mud-pie game where children pretend that globs of mud are pies. Within this pretence, children make-believedly prepare, bake and cut pies. And when talking within this pretence they say things like 'this pie has raisins in it' when the glob of mud has pebbles in it, and 'this pie is baking in the oven now' when a glob of mud is in a black box that, within the pretence, is imagined to be an oven. By the incorporation principle, a child might infer that a pie is burnt if she has forgotten a glob of mud in the box for too long.

This is compatible with the recognition that the facts that will be relevant to produce further inferences in imagination can be different from those that might be relevant to produce further inferences in belief. Walton (1990: 174-ff.) notices that works of fiction often

shift our concerns in surprising ways, as when we do not even think of how Othello, "a Moorish general and hardly an intellectual", could have talked in verse. And Nichols (464) notices that when we enjoy black comedy we have affective responses that we would not have if the facts and events represented in the fiction were taken to be real. He mentions the end of Kubrick's *Dr. Strangelove* when all human life is about to be destroyed by the nuclear bomb. We find these events amusing in the context of the fiction, but surely we would not react in the same way if we were to take them as genuine facts about the imminent destruction of the entire human kind.

Nichols (471) notices more inferential asymmetries between belief and imagination when they combine with desires. He illustrates the point by considering two distinct scenarios. First, you are told that everyone outside is dead and then you are asked about what Utilitarianism would say about the importance of our interests. You believe the messenger. This belief elicits a permanent desire for the health of your family and friends and the combination of the newly acquired belief and this permanent desire of yours determines the inference that they are also dead. You do not even think about answering the question. In the second scenario you are told to imagine that everyone outside is dead and then you are asked about what Utilitarianism would say about the importance of our interests. In this case you do not think about your beloved ones, you do not process any inference about their death, you simply try to figure out an answer to the question. Since according to this view desire takes imagining and belief as inputs, depending on the nature of the input one desire might be elicited while another might be shut down.

But can we say anything more about the nature of propositional imagination? According to one contemporary approach imagining that *p* is a matter of *entertaining* a certain proposition *p*, where 'entertaining *p*' means having *p* in mind without any commitment to its truth or falsity, or *supposing* that such and such is the case without any *alethic commitments* (e.g., Denham (2000: 202-4); Gaut (2003: 272); Lovibond (1983: 198); Plantinga (1974: 161-2); Scruton (1974: 97-8); and Wolterstorff (1980: 233-4)). In contrast, believing that *p* involves a fundamental commitment to its truth.

Walton (1990: 19-21) offers two main arguments against the identification of imagining and entertaining based on his distinction

between occurrent and non-occurrent mental events. Entertaining and the equivalent state referred to by expressions like 'attending to' and 'considering' are naturally construed as occurrent mental states. Walton's first argument consists in noticing that an interpretation of the expression 'nonoccurrently imagining that *p*' in terms of nonoccurrently entertaining *p* would allow *much too much*. There are too many propositions that we might nonoccurrently be aware of. For example, for many years one might have been nonoccurrently aware of the proposition that Saint Anselm was born in August, but this does not mean that one has nonoccurrently *imagined* that proposition for all that time. Restricting the notion of nonoccurrently entertaining a proposition to cases of nonoccurrently imagining a proposition requires appealing to the notion of imagination itself. Walton's second argument consists in noticing that the notion of entertaining a proposition cannot be used to characterise occurrent imagining either. If one imagines the negation of a proposition, one plausibly entertains both the proposition and its negation. In Walton's words, "[o]ccurrent imagining, as we ordinarily understand it … involves more than just entertaining or considering or having in mind the propositions imagined" (20).

White (1990: 141-142) defines supposing and imagining as two distinct abilities, where to suppose that *p* is to put forward a hypothesis, while to imagine that *p* is to conjure up a certain possibility. He makes three different considerations. First, he argues that two different kinds of reasons explain our inability to imagine that *p* and to suppose that *p*. When we say that one cannot imagine that *p* we refer to a certain inability to conjure up a certain possibility. When we say that one cannot suppose that *p* we refer to one's lack of justification for committing oneself to a certain hypothesis. Second, one can fail or succeed in trying to imagine something, but one cannot fail or succeed in trying to suppose something. Third, when we ask somebody to suppose that *p* we invite one to consider the implications or the consequences of *p*, while when we ask somebody to imagine that *p* we invite the audience to engage in a free imaginative activity.

Gendler (2000: 80-81) presents an argument against the identification of supposition and imagination by noticing that while we have no trouble in supposing morally deviant situations, we resist imagining them. For example, while we can suppose that female infanticide

is right, we resist imagining it. She argues that "[t]he source of this resistance can be traced to the way in which imagination requires a sort of participation that mere hypothetical reasoning does not" (80). Similarly, Moran 1994 claims that cases of imaginative resistance consist in "rejecting a point of view, refusing to enter into it" (105). However, while Gendler thinks that imagination and supposition are two distinct abilities, Moran distinguishes between two sorts of imaginative activities: *hypothetical* imagining and *dramatic* imagining. The first, which consists in imagining the truth of a proposition, is identical to supposition, which is now conceptualised as a sub-variety of the broader notion of imagination. The second, instead, requires a sort of "dramatic rehearsal" of emotions and feelings. As Moran writes: "imagination with respect to the cruel, the embarrassing, or the arousing involves something more like a point of view, a total perspective on the situation, rather than just the truth of a specifiable proposition" (105).

In conclusion, I will mention that Currie and Ravenscroft 2002 offer a further solution to the problem of imaginative resistance by recognizing a specific notion of imagination encompassing a variety of propositional imaginings over and above mere hypothetical thinking. This, which they call the *recreative imagination*, can be characterized as an ability to think about the world from a perspective that is different from the one that experience presents. This notion originates within simulation theory, which (as we anticipated above) is a theory about how to understand other people's minds by modelling their mental attitudes. (Among upholders of simulation theory are, e.g., Gordon and Barker 1994, Currie 1995b, and Harris 2000. Among their critics are, most prominently, Leslie 1987, and Nichols and Stich 2000). So, for example, one might obtain an insight into what other people will do by imagining the things they believe and then seeing what, within that imaginative process, one might be inclined to decide (Gordon 1986). Naturally we can imagine not only what other people believe, but also what they desire, what they feel, what they hope for, what they fear etc. So, upholders of this theoretical framework argue that we should recognize the existence of a number of imaginative counterparts of several mental states, including those that do not necessarily take propositions as their objects. In this way, simulation theory enriches the architecture of the

imagination with a number of new mental states, including desire-like imagining (Currie 1995a,b, 2002, 2010; Currie and Ravenscroft 2002; Doggett and Egan 2007, 2011) and emotion-like imagining (Doggett and Egan 2012), but possibly more. Currie and Ravenscroft argue that supposition is identical to one sort of imagining having belief as its counterpart – or *belief-like* imagining. And they explain our resistance to deviant alien moralities by appealing to desire-like imaginings. This proposal has generated a rich and interesting debate in recent years, but it is still very controversial (Nichols and Stich 2000; Nichols 2004b; Carruthers 2003; and Kind 2011).[1]

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