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## Descartes on Will and Suspension of Judgment: Affectivity of the Reasons for Doubt

In this paper, I join the so-called voluntarism debate on Descartes's theory of will and judgment, arguing for an *indirect doxastic voluntarism* reading of Descartes, as opposed to a classic, or *direct doxastic voluntarism*. More specifically, I examine the question whether Descartes thinks the will can have a direct and full control over one's suspension of judgment.

Descartes was a doxastic voluntarist, maintaining that the will has some kind of control over one's doxastic states, such as belief and doubt (e.g. AT VII, 22 & 59–60; CSM II, 15 & 41).<sup>1</sup> According to a long-held reading, the control that the will has over doxastic states in Descartes's theory is *direct*; the doxastic states are affected by the mere act of will. This reading, called direct doxastic voluntarism (DDV) or direct voluntarism (DV) for short, states that we are capable of assenting, rejecting and suspending a judgment based only on our will to do so. Thus, these actions would be utterly and merely volitional. DV can be divided into two further positions, *direct positive voluntarism* (+DV) and *direct negative voluntarism* (-DV). Direct positive voluntarism deals with the act of forming judgments, maintaining that one can accept or deny a proposition wilfully and either merely believe or not believe something voluntarily. Direct negative voluntarism deals with the suspension of judgment, maintaining that it can likewise be accomplished by a simple act of will (cf. e.g. Newman 2008, 343; Vitz 2010, 107–108 & 2015a, 73–74; Schüssler 2013, 148–150).

However, I support an alternate account of Descartes's voluntarism, which is called indirect doxastic voluntarism (IDV) or indirect voluntarism (IV) for short. By this account, the will is capable of affecting a doxastic state indirectly by making one concentrate on

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1 When referring to Descartes, I use the standard style of reference, where AT stands for the 12-volume edition of original texts by Adam and Tannery, CSM stands for the 2-volume English translations by Cottingham, Stoothoff and Murdoch, and CSMK stands for the translations of correspondence (in the third volume of the latter edition) by Cottingham, Stoothoff, Murdoch and Kenny.

essential tasks for forming that state, such as gathering up and paying attention to *strong reasons* and *evidence*. IV is also possible to divide into *indirect positive voluntarism* (+IV) and *indirect negative voluntarism* (-IV). Per indirect positive voluntarism the will needs to pay attention to *reasons for accepting or denying* some proposition. Likewise, by indirect negative voluntarism, in order to suspend judgment the will needs to direct this attention to the *reasons for doubt*. By attending to these reasons, the will also comes face-to-face with its own freedom (AT VIII 6; CSM I, 194. Cf. AT VII, 57; CSM II, 40). This feeling of freedom can be described as *affectivity* of the reasons for belief (assent) and doubt (suspension).

My main goal in this paper is to defend indirect voluntarism over direct voluntarism, especially concentrating on voluntarism concerning suspension of judgment (-IV). Even though indirect voluntarism has gained some attention in the literature (e.g. Kenny 1998; Cottingham 1988 & 2002; Della Rocca 2006; Newman 2008), the systematic defense it deserves has not been attempted yet. My own reading is intended to fill this gap.<sup>2</sup> I put forward three kinds of evidence for indirect voluntarism: 1) All the textual evidence that seems to support DV can just as easily be read to support IV. 2) IV is a philosophically and psychologically more convincing account of the judgment-forming process in humans than DV. 3) -IV is a more coherent and less conflicting reading of the general suspension of judgment by the Method of Doubt in the *First Meditation*.

The paper is divided into four parts. In Part 1, I start with a short introduction to Descartes's account on judgments and beliefs and especially on the role of the will in forming them. In Parts 2 and 3, I introduce direct and indirect voluntarism and bring forward the textual and non-textual evidence supporting them. Finally, in Part 4, I compare Descartes's theory of will and judgment with the suspension of judgment in the *First Meditation*, defending indirect (negative) voluntarism and laying out the evidence for my own reading.

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2 However, DV does not need to hold that the will can directly suspend from judging or deny *any proposition*. Many readings consider that *clear and distinct* perceptions are utterly irresistible for the will. When confronted by a clear and distinct perception, the will would always accept it. Cf. e.g. Frankfurt (2008, chapter 11), Kenny (1998, 150–159), Curley (1975, 177), Williams (2015, 165–167), Wilson (1978, chapter 3), Rosenthal (1986, 431), Newman (2008, 338–342) and Carriero (2009, chapter 4). However, Descartes's stance on this is quite ambiguous (cf. especially the Letter to [Mesland], 9 February 1645: AT IV, 173–175; CSMK, 244–246). Because of this, not all commentators take the irresistibility of clear and distinct perception at face value and some view Descartes as retaining the will's independent power of choice even in these cases. Indeed, there's an interesting debate going on in the current literature about this topic. Cf. esp. Alanen (2003, chapter 7; 2013), Newman (2008), Shapiro (2008), Carriero (2009, chapter 4), Schüssler (2013) and Wee (2014). Even though this debate is certainly important, in this paper I will mostly stick to the voluntarism debate on perceptions that are not clear and distinct. However, even when it comes to clear and distinct perception, Descartes seems to maintain IV: clear and distinct perception is evidence that is *so strong* that the will has no choice but to accept it. Despite this, Descartes seems to want to preserve the freedom to suspend judgment on them at least in an absolute or ideal sense (cf. Schüssler 2013, 163).

# 1. Will in Descartes's *Theory of Judgment*

To get a better understanding of Descartes's doxastic voluntarism it is necessary to first lay out the role of the will as Descartes sees it. According to Descartes, thinking (*cogitatio*) is divided into two modes: *perceptio* (perception) and *volitio* (will). Descartes also calls *perceptio* understanding (*intellectus*). In the *Principles of Philosophy* (1644, henceforth the *Principia*) he further explains the topic as follows:

All the modes of thinking that we experience within ourselves can be brought under two general headings: perception [*perceptio*], or the operation of the intellect [*operatio intellectus*], and volition [*volitio*], or the operation of the will [*operatio voluntatis*]. Sensory perception, imagination and pure understanding are simply various modes of perception; desire, aversion, assertion, denial and doubt are various modes of willing (*Principia* I, §XXXII: AT VIII A, 17; CSM I, 204).

For Descartes then, the will is a faculty, moreover a *free* faculty:

[T]he will simply consists in our ability to do [*facere*] or not to do [*non facere*] something (that is, to affirm or deny, to pursue or avoid); or rather, it consists simply of the fact that when the intellect puts something forward for affirmation or denial or for pursuit or avoidance, our inclinations are such that we do not feel we are determined by an external force"<sup>3</sup> (Med. IV, 8.: AT VII, 57; CSM II, 40).<sup>4</sup>

Beliefs and opinions, on the other hand, are judgments. In the famous example of the *Second Meditation*, Descartes's meditator examines first a piece of wax and then people walking outside the window:

We say that we see the wax itself, if it is there before us, not that we judge it to be there from its colour or shape; and this might lead me to conclude without more ado that knowledge of the wax comes from what the eye sees, and not from the scrutiny

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3 This quote is particularly relevant to another discussion on Descartes's understanding of the will. Does Descartes follow earlier (direct) voluntarists like Duns Scotus, Occam and Suárez and consider the will's freedom to be essentially indifference (hence, the two-way power to do otherwise), like the first part of the quote suggests, or spontaneity (hence, being self-caused and undetermined by anything external), like the latter part suggests? See e.g. Ragland (2006), Alanen (2013), Schüssler (2013), Cunning (2014) and Wee (2014). I will mostly skip this discussion here. However, I view that Descartes holds both to be part of the will's freedom. In the case of clear and distinct perceptions, the will experiences spontaneous freedom, as it feels strongly inclined towards them. When perception is not clear and distinct, one can reach a state of equilibrium related to the reasons for assent and non-assent. In such a state, the will experiences indifferent freedom, as neither side is stronger or more inclined than the other (AT VII, 22 & 57–58; CSM II, 15 & 40).

4 When referring to Descartes's work *Meditations on First Philosophy* (1641–1642, henceforth *Meditations*) I also add the number of Meditation (Med.) and paragraph (p.) of the text I am referring to.

of the mind alone. But then if I look out of the window and see men crossing the square, as I just happen to have done, I normally say that I see the men themselves, just as I say that I see the wax. Yet do I see any more than hats and coats which could conceal automatons? I *judge* that they are men. And so something which I thought I was seeing with my eyes is in fact grasped solely by the faculty of judgment which is in my mind (Med. II, 13.: AT VII, 32; CSM II, 21. Emphasis in the original).

This was clearly a difficult part for the authors of the *Sixth Objections*, and so Descartes had to explain it further in his *Replies*:

For example, when I see a stick [...] rays of light are reflected off the stick and set up certain movements in the optic nerve, in the brain, as I have explained at some length in the *Optics* [1637]. This movement in the brain, which is common to us and the brutes, is the first grade of sensory response. This leads to the second grade, which extends to the mere perception of the colour and light reflected from the stick [...] Nothing more that this should be referred to the sensory faculty, if we wish to distinguish it carefully from the intellect. But suppose that, as a result of being affected by this sensation of colour, I judge that a stick, located outside me, is coloured; and suppose that on the basis of the extension of the colour and its boundaries together with its position in relation to the parts of the brain, I make a rational calculation about the size, shape and distance of the stick; although such reasoning is commonly assigned to the senses (which is why I have here referred to the third grade of sensory response), it is clear that it depends solely on the intellect (AT VII, 437–438; CSM II, 295).

Descartes thus differentiates between sensing as a bodily function (first grade) and sensing as a representation (second grade), viewing the latter as the mental part of sensation. Besides these, he further differentiates a third grade, which is related to the understanding, being judgments about the mental representation.

However, Descartes does not base judgment solely on understanding. In *Notes on a Certain Broadsheet* (1648), he heavily criticises Regius for dividing understanding into perceiving and judging.

I saw that over and above perception, which is a prerequisite of judgment, we need affirmation and negation to determine the form of the judgment, and also that we are often free to withhold our assent, even if we perceive the matter in question. Hence I assigned the act of judging itself, which consists simply in assenting (i.e. in affirmation or denial) to the determination of the will rather than to the perception of the intellect (AT VIIIIB, 363; CSM I, 307).

Judgments are not mere acts of understanding but come about by the cooperation of understanding and the will. To be precise, making a judgment is an act of the will.

Allow me to elucidate this with an example. When I happen to turn my attention from writing this paper and look outside the balcony window, I gain a sense impression of a tree growing next to the railway track. I see that the tree exists and that it has certain qualities, such as size, figure and the colour of its leaves (or that it is completely leafless, like now). My belief of the existence of the tree is a judgment, which is formed when a sense impression of a tree is conveyed to my understanding and I accept it to be real and existing by my will. Because my will is free and has the independent freedom of choice, I may voluntarily also deny said proposition as false (the tree does not exist) or alternatively suspend my judgment on the existence of the tree altogether. If I for example consider that my perception of the tree is too dim and obscure, I can decline the judgment that the tree exists (it merely is a telephone pole which I mistake for a tree). Alternatively, if I consider that I might presently only be dreaming of seeing a tree (and even of writing the paper, perhaps), I can wilfully suspend judgment on whether the tree exists or not. As Descartes describes in the *Principia* (I, §VI): “[W]e [...] experience within us the kind of freedom [*libertatem esse experimur*] which enables us always to refrain [*abstinere*] from believing things which are not completely certain and thoroughly examined. Hence we are able to take precautions against going wrong on any occasion” (AT VIII 6; CSM I, 194).<sup>5</sup>

Belief then follows from accepting or alternatively denying a given proposition. It should also be noted that acceptance does not simply mean shrugging one’s shoulder regarding the proposition in question. Accepting a proposition conveyed to the understanding means that one *truly believes* in it (cf. e.g. Williams 2015, 161). However, a question follows: if my beliefs come from judgments and my judgments are formed by my will, which for Descartes is free (no outside force can make me accept the existence of the tree), does this mean that according to Descartes I can wilfully believe whatever I want? Even if I very well knew I am not dreaming in this instance (say, I perform a test by pinching myself), can I nevertheless suspend my judgment on the tree’s existence? Better yet, to have an even more radical example, can I believe that there is a warm summer in Finland, even if all my senses tell me that it is winter?

## 2. Direct Voluntarism

Do I then have direct, easy and unproblematic voluntary access to my beliefs? Even so direct, easy and unproblematic that I am capable of believing in any proposition I can think of? As an example, let’s say that I find the winter period in Finland completely hostile and in order to improve my mood, I decide to believe it is in fact summer. Even though all the

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5 For a more detailed description of the role of willing and judging in Descartes’s philosophy, see e.g. Kenny (1998), Rosenthal (1986), Della Rocca (2006), Newman (2008), Shapiro (2008), Kambouchner (2008) & Naaman-Zauderer (2010). Schüssler (2013) pays close attention to the role of doxastic voluntarism in late-scholastic discussions, especially among the Jesuits, which also motivated Descartes’s stance on the issue.

evidence I can gather alludes to a freezing cold winter in Finland, can I nevertheless believe that it is summer?<sup>6</sup>

According to direct positive voluntarism, Descartes would answer affirmatively. My will has a direct, uncomplex relation to my doxastic states, and even though all the evidence my understanding gathers points towards winter, my will has an independent ability to either accept or deny this proposition. If I end up denying the winter proposition, I can perform another direct act of the will to accept another, in this case the summer proposition. The evidence supporting this might not be as strong, but according to +DV my will has a direct and independent power to both accept and deny propositions, thus I can just as easily accept that it is summer (cf. Curley 1975; Grant 1976).

Direct negative voluntarism works the same way for suspension of judgment. When the meditator states in the beginning of the *First Meditation* that earlier acquired knowledge is full of falsehoods and because of this decides to overthrow everything previously learned (Med I., 1.: AT VII, 17–18; CSM II, 12.), according to -DV, general overthrow of all opinions would already follow from this mere decision. In this so-called *provisional suspension of judgment*, the meditator would suspend her judgment on earlier beliefs and opinions merely because she *decides* to suspend them. The resolution to overthrow all beliefs is already in itself the act of overthrowing. No further steps would be required. Suspension of judgment is utterly voluntary and one can suspend a judgment by merely deciding so. Because of this, the provisional suspension of judgment by which the *First Meditation* begins would be *distinct* from the following skeptical scenarios (madness, dream, deceiving God, origin by faith or chance, malicious demon). Suspension of judgment would then occur even before consideration of these scenarios (cf. Frankfurt 2008, 24–31).

This reading can be supported by the *Fourth Meditation*, where Descartes's meditator states: "If [...] I simply refrain from making a judgment in cases where I do not perceive the truth with sufficient clarity and distinctness, then it is clear that I am behaving correctly and avoiding error". This seems to indicate complete affective control over our doxastic states and an ability to suspend judgment merely by an act of will. The same seems to be suggested by the comment of God-given "freedom to assent or not to assent" in those cases where there is no clear and distinct perception (Med. IV, 12. & 15.: AT VII, 59–61; CSM II, 41–42). Another way to support the reading is to look at the use of the *Method of Doubt*. In the *First Meditation*, the meditator concludes that "[I]n [the] future I must withhold my assent from these former beliefs just as carefully as I would from obvious falsehoods, if I want to discover any certainty". Later on, she adds: "In view of this, I think it will be a good plan to turn my will in completely the opposite direction and deceive myself, by pretending for a time that these former opinions are utterly false and imaginary" (Med. I, 10–11.: AT VII, 21–22; CSM II, 15. Cf. e.g. Della Rocca 2006, 148; Newman 2008, 344). Likewise, in the letter to Clerselier (12 January 1646), Descartes states:

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6 The inspiration for this example comes from an article by Brian Grant titled "Descartes, Belief and the Will" (1976).

[S]ince making or not making a judgment is an act of will [*action de la volonté*] [...] it is evident that it is something in our power. For, in order to get rid of every kind of preconceived opinion, all we need to do is resolve not to affirm or deny [*ne rien assurer ou nier*] anything which we have previously affirmed or denied until we have examined it afresh (AT IXA, 204; CSM II, 270).<sup>7</sup>

Based on these remarks, many commentators have taken the will to have a direct effect on the suspension of judgment. For instance, Janet Broughton considers Descartes as meaning that “it is here and now within my power to suspend judgment about the truth of anything I believed” (Broughton 2002, 58). Harry G. Frankfurt likewise views that the suspension of judgment “results directly from a decision or an act of will”. A person suspends judgment merely by resolving that his judgments are suspended (Frankfurt 2008, 25). Even Michael Della Rocca, though inclining more towards indirect voluntarism, agrees that “[d]irect control is what Descartes’ talk in *Meditation IV* of ‘the freedom to assent or not to assent’ most naturally suggests...” (Della Rocca 2006, 148).<sup>8</sup>

It is useful to notice that this view of Descartes’s theory of judgment and will is upheld not only by contemporary scholars. Already in the *Fifth Objections*, Gassendi asks: “[W]hy did you not make a simple and brief statement to the effect that you were regarding your previous knowledge as uncertain so that you could later single out what you found to be true?” (AT VII, 257; CSM II, 180). In other words, if suspending judgment is indeed this easy, why doesn’t Descartes simply state the suspension without further decorum? Why should one even bother with the skeptical scenarios when the suspension can be accomplished directly, with a single strike of the will?

Descartes however denies Gassendi’s statement that the suspension can be accomplished in a superficial way:

Is it really so easy to free ourselves from all the errors which we have soaked up since our infancy? Can we really be too careful in carrying out a project which everyone agrees should be performed? But not doubt you wanted to point out that

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7 This letter, and the “Author’s and Translator’s notes concerning the Fifth Set of Objections” (*Avertissement de l’auteur touchant les cinquièmes objections & Avertissement du traducteur touchant les cinquièmes objections*) preceding it, were published as part of the first edition of the *Meditations’s* translation into French (1647). The letter along with the author’s note are translated in CSM as the *Appendix to the Fifth Set of Objections and Replies*.

8 Other readings supporting +DV have been offered by e.g. Wilson (1978, 144–146), Williams (2015, 161–163) and less evidently MacArthur (2003, 166). In recent literature, Vitz (2010; 2015a, chapter 6) has most prominently defended -DV. Schüssler on the other hand views Descartes holding both direct and indirect (negative) voluntarism. When it comes to clear and distinct perception, Descartes is on the side of -IV (though is keen on preserving the possibility of direct suspension of judgment, at least ideally). With perceptions that are not clear and distinct Descartes would hold -DV, except with entrenched and habitual opinions, which can only be dislodged indirectly (Schüssler 2013, 173). My reading differs from Schüssler in that I view Descartes holding indirect voluntarism for both habitual/ deeply ingrained and newly made fresh beliefs.

most people, although verbally admitting that we should escape from preconceived opinions, never do so in fact, because they do not spend any care or effort on the task... (AT VII, 348; CSM II, 242).

Yet this does not have to be a problem for -DV. Frankfurt emphasises the following example when defending reading of the suspension of judgment as “an uncomplicated act of will” (Frankfurt 2008, 26): Mr. X decides to stop smoking at noon of the 1<sup>st</sup> of January. This is an uncomplicated act of will, which can be done very easily by Mr. X. Yet, based only on this, can we say that Mr. X really did stop smoking at noon of the 1<sup>st</sup> of January? If Mr. X smoked a cigarette at 12:30 of the same day, the answer would obviously be no. But if by the end of December the next year Mr. X had not smoked one cigarette, we could be able to say yes – Mr. X did indeed stop smoking. Frankfurt sees the meditator to be in a similar position to Mr. X. She can make the decision to suspend her judgment on all beliefs (and by Frankfurt’s account, this decision is something she can do very easily and without effort), but if she would immediately go to accept another belief, she wouldn’t have suspended her judgment after all (Frankfurt 2008, 29–30).

This example can be supported by the *Objections and Replies*. In the already mentioned letter to Clerselier Descartes comments:

[N]o matter how much we have resolved to assert or deny anything, we easily forget our resolution afterwards if we have not strongly impressed it on our memory [*fortement imprimée en sa memoire*]; and this is why I suggested that we should think about it very carefully [*pensait avec soin*] (AT IXA, 204; CSM II, 270).

This seems to also be implied by the following comment at the end of the *Fourth Meditation*:

[E]ven if I have no power to avoid error in the first way [...], which requires a clear perception of everything I have to deliberate on, I can avoid error in the second way, which depends merely on my *remembering* [*recorder*] to withhold judgment on any occasion when the truth of the matter is not clear. Admittedly, I am aware of a certain weakness in me, in that I am unable to keep my attention fixed on one and the same item of knowledge at all time; but by attentive and repeated meditation I am nevertheless able to make myself remember it as often as the need arises, and thus get into the habit of avoiding error (Med. IV, 16.: AT VII, 61–62; CSM II, 43. Emphasis added).

The skeptical scenarios then do help with the suspension of judgment, but only by reinforcing the resolution to suspend judgment and thus helping to steer clear of forming new beliefs (cf. Frankfurt 2008, 29–30; Broughton 2002, 58). I will henceforth be referring to this as the *memory-argument*.

Frankfurt also suggests that the *Seventh Objections and Replies* provides another supportive paragraph for his reading:

Suppose he [Bourdin, the author of the *Seventh Objections*] had a basket full of apples and, being worried that some of the apples were rotten, wanted to take out the rotten ones to prevent the rot spreading. How would he proceed? Would he not begin by tipping [*rejiceret*] the whole lot out of the basket? And would not the next step to be to cast his eye over each apple in turn, and pick up and put back in the basket only those he saw to be sound, leaving the others? In just the same way, those who have never philosophized correctly have various opinions in the minds which they have begun to store up since childhood, and which they therefore have reason to believe may in many cases be false (AT VII, 481; CSM II, 324).

This *basket-of-apples* analogy suggests that Descartes's project of overthrowing his opinions has two phases. In Phase 1, the "basket" is tipped over and judgment is suspended on all earlier beliefs. In Phase 2, the earlier beliefs are closely examined to see which of them can be reinstated. According to Frankfurt, the skeptical scenarios would belong to Phase 2, being used to examine the earlier beliefs and opinions. If doubt can be cast, e.g. on the reliability of sensory perceptions, this belief would not be reinstated but left suspended. By Frankfurt's account, this analogy suggests that "emptying one's mind is a rather headlong and indiscriminate affair", while evaluating the former opinions requires careful argumentation (Frankfurt 2008, 27–28). Suspension of judgment would therefore be an easy task and could be done with a simple and direct act of willing the suspension.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. Indirect Voluntarism

Is the act of the will truly this simple? If I now used all of my energy for wanting it to be summer in Finland instead of winter, would my belief actually change? No matter how much I try, I don't seem to be able to affect my belief in winter in any way. To be sure, I don't even know what mental apparatus to use. Should I imagine daisies? By imagining daisies, I might momentarily come to the conclusion it is now summer, the sun is shining and the grass outside is blooming with daisies. But once my thoughts get distracted, or if I just happen to look outside the window, I once again can only assert: "By Plato's beard, it's a cold winter!". If the directly voluntaristic reading is accurate, Descartes seems to hold a view that is quite problematic both philosophically and psychologically.

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9 Broughton also views that the meditator can suspend her judgment merely by deciding to not accept or deny, and that the only obstacle for this action lies in the difficulty of remembering the resolution, instead of in any difficulty or inability while trying it (Broughton 2002, 58). However, she disagrees with Frankfurt that suspension of judgment would occur before considering the skeptical scenarios (*ibid*, 55, note 20). More on this below, in note 15.

However, it seems that DV simplifies Descartes's account in an unwarranted way. Indeed, the opposing theory, indirect voluntarism, has in recent discussions gained growing support.<sup>10</sup> IV denies directly voluntaristic affective control over doxastic states and views this to be indirect. The will can affect belief-forming in a *mediate* or indirect way by affecting the essential tasks required for forming doxastic states, such as directing the attention towards additional evidence for the desired state – to be more precise, by attending to the *reasons* to assent or suspend. Per indirect positive voluntarism, accepting a proposition requires one to attend to the reasons for accepting, while denying that proposition requires one to attend to the reasons for denying it. Likewise, per indirect negative voluntarism, doubting the proposition at hand requires one to attend to the reasons for doubt (reasons that question said proposition), while suspension of judgment requires one also to attend to the reasons for suspending judgment (cf. e.g. Newman 2008, 343; Vitz 2010, 107–108 & 2015a, 73–74; Schüssler 2013). By considering these reasons, one likewise gets to feel the *freedom of will*, thus feeling the *affectivity* of the reasons for making a free choice.

Like direct voluntaristic readings, readings supporting IV can refer to both the use of the *Method of Doubt* in the *First Meditation* and to the role of the will in the *Fourth*. Right at the beginning of the *First Meditation*, the meditator agrees to the following maxim:

I should hold back my assent from opinions which are not completely certain and indubitable [*indubitata*] just as carefully as I do from those which are patently false. So for the purpose of casting aside [*rejiendās*] all my opinions, it will be enough to find in each of them at least some reason for doubt [*rationem dubitandi*] (Med. I, 2.: AT VII, 18; CSM II, 12. Emphasis added. Translation altered).<sup>11</sup>

Descartes then argues that to suspend judgment, the meditator first requires *reasons for doubt*. These reasons are provided by the different skeptical scenarios, which the meditator ponders in the *First Meditation* and which make her question her earlier beliefs. For example, finding particular sense perception occasionally deceiving does not yet make the meditator become convinced that the senses are generally not trustable for concluding that I am here sitting by the fire, writing on this piece of paper (or in the balcony, writing on my laptop) (Med. I, 4.: AT VII, 18; CSM II, 12–13). The same applies to every opinion one suspends. After the meditator has stated that “in future I must withhold my assent from these former beliefs just as carefully as I would from obvious falsehoods” and that to succeed in this it is a “a good plan” to turn one’s will in the opposite direction completely, and

10 Commentators supporting IV include e.g. Kenny (1998), Cottingham (1988; 2002), Della Rocca (2006, 149), Newman (2008, 343–346), Perin (2008, 60–62), Carriero (2009, 262–263), Naaman-Zauderer (2010, 120) and possibly Rosenthal (1986, 411). Even Curley notes that perhaps Descartes is not quite the direct voluntarist he seems, but does not take the thought further (Curley 1975, 176).

11 CSM translates *rejiendās* as “rejecting”. However, it is not a conjugation of the word *rejectio* but of the verb *rejicere*, which literally translates as “throwing back”. Descartes uses the same term with the basket-of-apples analogy, referring to removing apples from a basket (*ex corbe rejiceret*), where he is not talking of complete rejection of the apples. The meaning of the word seems indeed to be less strong than *rejection* would implicate. I have thus opted for translating it as “casting aside”.

deceive oneself to pretend those opinions are utterly false, Descartes immediately comes up with another skeptical scenario (the malicious demon) by which the meditator could succeed in this self-deception (Med. I, 11–12.: AT VII, 22; CSM II, 15).

Descartes also emphasises the reasons for doubt in two other instances. In an unfinished dialogue, *The Search for Truth* (henceforth the *Search*), one of the debating characters (Epistemon)<sup>12</sup> states: “But you are not ignorant of the fact that the opinions first received in our imagination remain so deeply imprinted [*imprimées*] there that our will *cannot erase* [*effacer*] them on its own, but can do so only by calling on the *assistance of powerful reasons* [*puissantes raisons*]” (AT X, 509; CSM II, 406. Emphasis added). In the letter to Clerselier, Descartes also comments:

Nevertheless, I did say that there was some difficulty in expelling from our belief everything we have previously accepted. One reason for this is that before we can decide to doubt we need some *reason for doubting* [*raison de douter*] and that is why in my *First Meditation* I put forward the *principal reasons for doubt* [*les principales*] (AT IXA, 204; CSM II, 270. Emphasis added).

Descartes then clearly holds that one requires strong reasons to suspend judgment and likewise to doubt. Therefore, the skeptical scenarios precede the suspension of judgment, because the former is a necessary requirement for the latter.<sup>13</sup> As the reply to Gassendi also indicates, Descartes denies the ease of suspending judgment and holds that suspension requires more than a solitary act of the will. This also indicates Descartes holding indirect effect on the doxastic states (cf. Della Rocca 2006, 149; Newman 2008, 344; Cottingham 1988).

The *Fourth Meditation* can likewise be read as support for IV. In stating “[i]f I [...] simply refrain from making a judgment in cases where I do not perceive the truth with sufficient clarity and distinctness, then it is clear that I am behaving correctly and avoiding error”, Descartes would mean that in such cases our responsibility is to concentrate and attend to the reasons for doubt and suspension. Similarly, the statement of God having given us “the freedom to assent or not to assent” to perceptions is not in contradiction with IV. God could have given us such an ability, without that ability being a direct act of the will (Med. IV, 12. & 15.: AT VII, 59–61; CSM II, 41–42).

It is important then to notice that every textual evidence which seems to support DV can just as easily be read as supporting IV. However, this is clearly not yet sufficient for

12 In the dialogue, Epistemon (gr. ἐπιστημων, ‘knowledgeable’) represents a spokesperson for scholasticism and for this reason does not generally present opinions which Descartes himself holds. However, there are reasons to view Descartes as agreeing with this statement. I return to these reasons in Part 4.

13 However, the skeptical scenarios – that is to say the reasons for doubt – do not by themselves suffice as reasons for suspending judgment. Suspension of judgment similarly requires a reasoning, which is not constituted by the reasons for doubt. I might find some reason to doubt the landing on the moon to have taken place (perhaps, it was a hoax) but this by itself does not yet make me suspend my judgment on whether man has been to the moon. Despite this, for the suspension to succeed, it requires the aid of the reasons for doubt. For this, see also Perin (2008).

establishing indirect voluntarism as the better and stronger interpretation. Indeed, some commentators step outside the text, asking what kind of position Descartes *should* be holding as an intelligent philosopher (e.g. Newman 2008, 345–346). In other words, they ask what would be a philosophically and psychologically convincing account of our ability to accept, deny or suspend judgment.

As the earlier example of winter in Finland demonstrates, evidence does not seem particularly strong for DV. Instead, there are strong reasons to consider it a psychologically problematic position. Direct voluntary acts simply don't seem to have much to do with my beliefs or opinions. Most commentators supporting a directly positive voluntaristic reading of Descartes also admit this. Williams comments that “if this is what assent is, it is far from clear how assenting is even dependent on the will, let alone a mode of it”, asking: “are there not a very large number of things that one just cannot believe, and others that one cannot help believing?” (Williams 2015, 161). Wilson adds that this sort of view on the role of the will seems questionable since “of course we can't just decide to believe or assent to something, and forthwith believe or assent to it”. This, as she states, can also be discovered phenomenologically (Wilson 1978, 145). Broughton likewise considers direct negative voluntarism as “false to the psychology of human intellectual activity”, maintaining that the meditator “can no more suspend judgment by willing to do so than [s]he can believe by willing to do so” (Broughton 2002, 59). However, each of the above commentators reads Descartes's theory of judgment and will as directly (positively or negatively) voluntaristic. If DV is so philosophically unconvincing and psychologically problematic, wouldn't this also speak for IV? At least this would be the case, if we were to presume that Descartes is aiming towards a theory which is as convincing as possible, both philosophically and psychologically.<sup>14</sup>

Thus far, I have argued for indirect voluntarism being a better reading than direct voluntarism for two reasons: 1) Texts that support DV can just as well be read as supporting IV; and 2) IV is both philosophically and psychologically more convincing an account of our ability to accept, deny and suspend judgment. However, these reasons do not yet tip the scales for IV. Merely observing the textual evidence as supporting both sides does not validate one over the other. Similarly, referring to an account that Descartes *should* be holding does not mean that he actually holds it. Newman (2008, 345) especially builds on Descartes's intelligence, arguing that we should not be too hasty in putting a problematic theory like DV into his mouth. However, as Schüssler (2013, 172) has also pointed out, if evidence for DV can be found in Descartes's texts, Newman's argument does not hold. Thus, in the next part, I will be demonstrating what I call a 'knock-out argument' for why indirect (negative) voluntarism is a better reading than direct (negative) voluntarism: -IV is a more coherent and less self-contradictory reading of the general suspension of judgment in the *First Meditation* than -DV.

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<sup>14</sup> However, DV might not in fact be as impossible a position as it has sometimes been portrayed. Cf. esp. Vitz 2015a, appendix & 2015b.

## 4. Will and Suspension of Judgment in the *First Meditation*

In Part 2, I went through the way in which a supporter of -DV can read the suspension of judgment in the *First Meditation*. Suspension of judgment occurs effortlessly, with a simple act of the will – the decision to suspend is the act of suspension itself and the only related difficulty comes from remembering this decision (the so-called memory-argument) (cf. Frankfurt 2008, 29–30; Broughton 2002, 58).<sup>15</sup> This account is usually defended by the *Letter to Clerselier* and by the end of the *Fourth Meditation*. The end of the *First Meditation* seems to also support this: “But it is not enough merely to have noticed this; I must make an effort to remember [*recorder*] it” (Med. I, 11.: AT VII, 22; CSM II, 15). Other suggested evidence for this reading includes the basket-of-apples analogy, which would make the general overthrow of opinions to have two phases, the skeptical scenarios constituting the second phase (cf. Frankfurt 2008, 27–28).

However, this account is problematic in that it leaves us with a great deal of incoherence on Descartes’s part.<sup>16</sup> First, it suggests the suspension of judgment to be far easier than Descartes himself describes it to be. In fact, Descartes goes to great lengths to emphasise how *difficult* and *unnatural* this general overthrow of opinions actually is. Note for example the comment at the beginning of the *First Meditation*: “But the task looked an enormous one, and I began to wait until I should reach a mature enough age to ensure that no subsequent time of life would be more suitable for tackling such inquiries” (Med. I, 1.: AT VII, 17; CSM II, 12). The difficulty of the task is already implied in this comment on its *enormity* – why would the meditator otherwise have to wait for a “mature enough age” that would be more suitable for engaging in the inquiry. At the end of the *First Meditation*, she also describes its result as an “arduous [*laboriosum*] undertaking” (Med. I, 12.: AT VII, 23; CSM II, 15).

In his reply to Gassendi, Descartes likewise questions the idea of the ease to free ourselves from preconceived opinions and common-sense experience. He also emphasises the required effort for the suspension of preconceived opinions in here as well: “But no doubt you wanted to point out that most people, although verbally admitting that we should escape from preconceived opinion, never do so in fact, because they do not spend any *care and effort* [*studium aut laborem*] on the task” (AT VII, 348; CSM II, 242. Emphasis added). Based on these comments, it seems when discussing suspension

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15 It should be noted though that Broughton disagrees with Frankfurt on the issue of Descartes employing suspension of judgment for the meditator *before* she has considered the skeptical scenarios (Broughton 2002, 55, note 20). However, since Broughton also sides with -DV, it is not clear why the meditator could (would) not suspend on judgment merely by willing so, especially since she considers suspension to be in one’s power “here and now” (ibid, 58). Broughton acknowledges some of the difficulties for her position (ibid, 58–59).

16 It is to be noted that Frankfurt is fully aware of this, bringing up some textual problems for his reading (ibid, 25–31).

of judgment, Descartes has in mind something else than a simple and easy act of the will.

However, a proponent of DV does not have to commit to the ease of an act of the will. That voluntariness is difficult does not mean that it cannot be direct. Therefore, referring to the difficulty of suspension is not enough for a convincing argument against -DV.<sup>17</sup> Let's then return to the reasoning behind indirect (negative) voluntarism. In the *Search* (through the mouth of Epistemon), Descartes dictates that the will is not enough to overthrow the earlier opinions on its own and needs the assistance of "powerful reasons" (AT X 509; CSM II, 406). It is true that Epistemon, who in the dialogue represents Aristotelian scholastics (and who can therefore be justifiably seen as holding "the opinions first received" coming from the senses), does not generally represent Descartes's own stand on matters.<sup>18</sup> However, Eudoxus<sup>19</sup>, who in the dialogue is almost purely Descartes's alter ego, does not challenge the view, but instead goes on to *provide these reasons* (though not to Epistemon but to the third character in the discussion, Polyandros)<sup>20</sup> (AT X, 509; CSM II, 406–407). This last paragraph demonstrates well why the overthrow is so difficult. To be able to overthrow one's preconceived opinions, one has to have powerful reasons for the overthrow. Descartes then unequivocally denies that an act of the will would in itself be enough for the suspension.

The second incoherence in -DV comes from the order of the suspension of judgment and the skeptical scenarios. Descartes's own account becomes very clear in the Letter to Clerselier:

[S]ince making or not making a judgment is an act of will (as I have explained in the appropriate place) it is evident that it is something in our power. For, after all, in order to get rid of every kind of preconceived opinion, all we need to do is resolve *not to affirm or deny* anything which we have previously affirmed or denied until we have examined it afresh. But this does not entail that we cease to retain all the same notions in our memory. Nevertheless, I did say that there was some difficulty in expelling from our belief everything we have previously accepted. One reason for this is that before we can decide to doubt, we need some *reason for doubting*; and *that is why* [*c'est pourquoi*] in my *First Meditation* I put forward *the*

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17 Many of the proponents for -DV clearly do imply easiness (e.g. Frankfurt 2008 & Broughton 2002). This, however, is not necessary.

18 The scholastic status of Epistemon can be questioned by referring to the many other viewpoints during Descartes's time (e.g. atomism and materialism) which Descartes likewise wanted to overturn. However, Epistemon is described as having "a detailed knowledge of everything that can be learned in the Schools [*escholes*]", apparently referencing the scholastic school-system (AT X, 499; CSM II, 401). Thus, it is justifiable to consider Epistemon as the spokesperson for Aristotelian scholasticism.

19 Eudoxus (gr. εὐδοξός, 'famous' or 'one of good belief') represents an enlightened Cartesian philosopher in the dialogue and speaks for Descartes's own views.

20 Polyandros (gr. πολυανδρός, from πολυς ἀνήρ, 'everyman') represents a person who lacks tutoring but has untutored common sense and by this, according to Descartes, is more embracing of the overthrow of earlier opinions than someone with an Aristotelian education.

*principal reasons for doubt.* Another reason is that no matter how much we have resolved not to assert or deny anything, we easily forget our resolution afterwards if we have not strongly impressed it on our memory; and *this is why* [*c'est pourquoy*] I suggested that we should think about it very carefully (AT IXA, 204; CSM II, 270. Emphasis added).

The reason why Descartes presents the meditator with the skeptical scenarios in the *First Meditation* is that in order to be able to suspend judgment, one first requires *reasons for doubt*. As Descartes clearly places the skeptical scenarios *before* the suspension of judgment, it would be incoherent on his part if the suspension of judgment occurred before them, as a distinct act. Frankfurt views this to be a mistake on Descartes's part, claiming him to be confusing the two phases of his project as explained by the basket-of-apples analogy (Frankfurt 2008, 26 & 30–31). This is unconvincing to me for two reasons. First, it is insufficient to explain all the consequent incoherence in Descartes's writings. Second, and more importantly, the basket-of-apples analogy is not related to the discussion in the *First Meditation*. It is a reply to Bourdin's objection to the *Second*.

After concluding in the *Second Meditation* that she exists (Med. II, 3.), the meditator goes on to consider what she is (Med. II, 4–5). First of all, she ponders on what she previously thought she was before beginning the project to overthrow her opinions: "What then did I formerly think I was? A human [*hominem*]" (AT VII, 25; CSM II, 17. Translation altered).<sup>21</sup> Here Bourdin objects and asks if Descartes isn't now referring to something that was already found to be false. How can one refer to things which were already rejected and overthrown from the mind? (AT VII, 479; CSM II, 323.) The basket-of-apples analogy would be Descartes's reply to this objection: to examine preconceived conceptions it is necessary to tip the "basket" and go through what is in it one by one. However, turning the basket over does not mean throwing the apples away. Instead, they stay on the side for a later inspection (AT VII, 481–482; CSM II, 324).<sup>22</sup> In other words, the second phase of the 'two-phase project' happens in fact in the *Second Meditation*, as the meditator begins to examine her previous sense-based (Aristotelian) conceptions of herself and the world. The first phase, the general overthrow of opinions, happens in the *First Meditation* and there is no reason to assume its occurrence distinctly from the skeptical scenarios. These paragraphs seem to provide enough evidence for preferring a reading that views the suspension of judgment as coming after the skeptical scenarios, as a result of them.

In the beginning of the *First Meditation* (Med. I, 1.), Descartes has the meditator unequivocally devote herself to the "general overthrow [*eversio*] of [her] opinions" (AT VII,

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21 CSM translates *hominem* as "a man". As I refer to the meditator with the female pronoun, I have opted for the more literal translation "human".

22 This is likewise supported by Descartes's comment to Clerselier: "But this does not entail that we cease to retain all the same notions in our memory [*sinon après (...) quoy qu'on ne laisse pas pour cela de retenir toutes les mesmes notions en sa memoire*]" (AT IXA, 204; CSM II, 270).

18; CSM II, 12. Translation altered).<sup>23</sup> But the overthrow itself does not happen here – the commitment here is merely *preliminary*.<sup>24</sup> It is a dedication to the *effort* required for the overthrow. This general overthrow of opinions requires careful attention and considerable mental effort, which the meditator must promise to adhere to. If the meditator was like Gassendi, acknowledging the need for the suspension but not taking the skeptical scenarios *seriously*, according to Descartes she would not be able to genuinely suspend her judgment.<sup>25</sup> Suspension of judgment requires commitment that is *serious* (sincere) and *free* (without reservation) (*seriò tandem & libere*). As the next paragraph demonstrates, this commitment requires one to concentrate on the reasons for doubt (*rationes dubitandorum*) (AT VII, 17–18; CSM II, 12).<sup>26</sup>

What about the memory-argument? According to it, suspension of judgment is direct, accomplished by a simple act of the will. However, since the decision to suspend is difficult to recall, skeptical scenarios are needed for the suspension to be properly and enduringly possible. Thus, the scenarios help with the suspension. When armed with the memory argument, -DV seems to check both of the required boxes: suspension of judgment is mentally difficult, and the skeptical scenarios are a requirement for it. Merely referring to the insufficiency of the will alone or to the suspension resulting from the skeptical scenarios is not enough to respond to its challenge for -IV.

But why would it be so difficult for the meditator to remember her earlier decision? If the suspension of judgment comes from a simple act of the will, it is not easy to explain why it would be difficult to recall this. Take for example the case of Mr. X quitting smoking. Mr. X quits smoking with a single mental act and decides at the same time never to smoke another cigarette again. According to a proponent of direct voluntarism, why would this decision be so difficult to recall? It seems doubtful that neither Mr. X nor the meditator would be a person with especially poor mnemonic abilities. (If Mr. X happens to be a person with an especially bad memory, the analogy does not really work.) Descartes makes it clear that the suspension of judgment is *generally* difficult for humans psychologically. However, nowhere else does he seem to consider memory to be the stumbling block of the human psyche.<sup>27</sup>

23 CSM translates *eversio* as “demolition”. However, I consider demolition to be misleading, as I don’t see the doubt as *rejecting* the former beliefs. For this, see note 11. Thus, I find the more fitting translation to be “overthrow”.

24 Cf. the *Discourse on the Method*, where the call to abandon all prior opinions comes in Part Two, but the radical doubt itself does not follow until Part Four (AT VI, 13–15 & 31–31; CSM II, 116–118 & 126–127). See also Broughton 2002, 5, note 7.

25 Cf. the *Fifth Objections and Replies* (AT VII, 257–258 & 348–351; CSM II, 180 & 241–243).

26 My reading therefore follows the tradition of seeing the *Meditations* as a *mental exercise*. Cf. esp. Alquié (1950, 176), Gilson (1951, 186), Guerout (1953, 39, note 16), Gouhier (1978, 110–112) & Frankfurt (2008, 20). Recent literature emphasising this aspect include e.g. Schüssler (2013, 172) & Vitz (2015a, chapter 2).

27 Cf. esp. the *Conversation with Burman* (ATV, 148; CSMK, 334).

Let's take a closer look at the evidence for the memory-argument. In the *Fourth Meditation*, the meditator declares:

[E]ven if I have no power to avoid error in the first way just mentioned, which requires a clear perception of everything I have to deliberate on, I can avoid error in the second way, which depends merely on my remembering to withhold judgment on any occasion when the truth of the matter is not clear. Admittedly, I am aware of a certain weakness in me, in that I am *unable to keep my attention fixed* on one and the same item of knowledge at all times [*ut non possim semper uni & eidem cognitioni defixuss inhaerere*]; but by *attentive and repeated meditation* [*attentâ & fraepius iteratâ meditatione*] I am nevertheless able to *make myself remember* it as often as the need arises, and thus get into the habit of avoiding error (Med. IV, 16.: AT VII, 61–62; CSM II, 43. Emphasis added).

According to Descartes then, remembering the decision is difficult because the attention span of the mind is restricted. The mind's grasp of the meditation easily loosens and for this reason the suspension is difficult to retain. Suspension of judgment is therefore *temporarily restricted*. However, when the meditation is replicated often enough with sufficient attention, one becomes more competent in the suspension and it can be accomplished for longer periods of time. This also becomes clear at the end of the *First Meditation* (Med. I, 11.):

But it is not enough merely to have noticed this; I must make an effort to remember it. *My habitual opinions* [*constuetae opiniones*] *keep coming back, and, despite my wishes, they capture my belief, which is as it were bound over to them as a result of long occupation and the law of custom* [*longo usu & familiritatis*]. [...] In view of this, I think it will be a good plan to turn my will in completely the opposite direction and deceive myself, by pretending for a time these former opinions are utterly false and imaginary. I shall do this until the weight of preconceived opinion is counter-balanced and the distorting influence of habit no longer prevents my judgement from perceiving things correctly (AT VII, 22; CSM II, 15. Emphasis added).

The difficulty to remember is not because of the memory itself but rather the mind's natural propensity for believing in habitual opinions (e.g. that sensory perception is reliable). It is not easy to diverge from this inclination (and the inclination is in a sense justifiable), and for this reason the mind's grip from the suspension slackens. Suspension of judgment is cumbersome, not because it is difficult to remember, but because it is mentally laborious. For this same reason, it is also difficult to retain in memory. Recalling the suspension is then specifically paying attention to the reasons for doubt against the reasons for belief. By doing so, the vitality of the suspension is recalled and one can once again vigorously concentrate on it, while also being faced with the affectivity of the will's freedom. This is also

what Descartes means in the *Letter to Clerselier* by impressing the resolution not to affirm or deny anything strongly on memory (AT IXA, 204; CSM II, 270).

It is therefore crucial to note that the memory-argument in no way contradicts -IV. Instead, -DV seems to lead Descartes inescapably to incoherence and self-contradiction. I maintain then that the burden of proof lies with the supporters of -DV. If Descartes considers that the suspension of judgment is executed with a simple act of will, and the only difficulty therein lies in remembering, why would the suspension come about only after consideration of the skeptical scenarios, resulting from them?<sup>28</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

I have presented three kinds of evidence for indirect voluntarism in this paper: 1) All textual evidence for direct voluntarism can just as easily be interpreted for indirect voluntarism; 2) indirect voluntarism is a more convincing reading both philosophically and psychologically; and, what I consider the ‘knock-out argument’, 3) indirect negative voluntarism is a more coherent and less self-contradictory reading of the *First Meditation* and the suspension of judgment therein.

By this account, even Descartes does not argue that I can just decide to believe it to be summer, when all the evidence suggests winter. However, the situation can be different if I can find some evidence that it might be summer (say, even though there is snow on the ground and -12 degrees, my calendar informs me that it is in fact June), or at least some evidence that it might not be winter (and a reason to suspend my judgment on it being winter). In such a case, my will can deny the winter-proposition and affirm the summer-proposition, or at least suspend the belief in winter, while noticing the feeling of its own freedom. Therefore, it seems that those commentators reading Descartes’s judgment theory as directly voluntaristic have in their criticisms – if I may borrow a colloquial phrase – been barking up the wrong tree.<sup>29</sup>

To suspend judgment on the existence of the tree, I need something more than just will and the motivation for suspension. I also need to find reasons to consider my experience of the tree to be in some way in error or disconnected from the way the reality truly is

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28 It should be noted though that perhaps not all criticism on Descartes’s theory of judgment and will is undue. After all, Descartes clearly is a doxastic voluntarist and views the will to have at least some kind of control over our doxastic states, be as it may that it is indirect. It is anything but clear whether voluntariness has something to do with our beliefs or suspension of them, a point that many commentators have likewise paid attention to (e.g. Curley 1975, 173–174; Della Rocca 2006, 149). The topic is still hotly debated (see for instance Shah 2002 & Vitz 2015b), though it may be that Descartes is at error here. However, in any case his voluntaristic theory is not as psychologically problematic as most other readings have suggested.

29 Vitz likewise finds the critique of direct voluntarism in Descartes as unjustified, but for different reasons. According to him, this criticism has only been directed towards +DV and not -DV (Vitz 2010; 2015a, chapter 6 & appendix). In this paper, I have pointed out problems for -DV as well.

(e.g. I might be dreaming or deceived by a malicious demon), and a reason to suspend my judgment. In this sense, suspension of judgment as a mental act is not comparable to the act of quitting smoking. The decision to suspend judgment may be easy to make, but actual success is the result of arduous and attentive meditative practice, and even then, one can suspend judgment only temporarily.

The challenging nature of the suspension of judgment alludes also to another intrinsic aspect of the *Method of Doubt*. As Descartes describes the suspension to be arduous and difficult, it suggests that we should read him as being completely serious about the general suspension of judgment.<sup>30</sup> Based on this, the use of the method is not a purely hypothetical mind game. Descartes truly means that we should suspend judgment on all of our opinions and beliefs, as difficult as this may be. Suspension of judgment is therefore meant to be *psychologically real and genuine*<sup>31, 32</sup>

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30 Cf. e.g. the *First Meditation* (Med. I, 1.: AT VII, 18; CSM II, 12) and the Preface (AT VII, 9; CSM II, 8).

31 Rosenthal (1986, 429–430) comes to a similar conclusion. For this, see also MacArthur (2003).

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