Epistemic Compatibilism

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Epistemisch compatibilisme

Thesis

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To my Parents

Dalia-Regina Vasiliauskienė (1941-1986)

Benjaminas Vasiliauskas (1927-2003)

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I.   Introduction and Overview

Knowledge is important for us, human beings, for a variety of reasons, starting with trivial but necessary reasons to live your life (knowing not to cross the street when the traffic light is red, knowing that water quenches thirst, knowing where you left your bicycle last night, knowing how to buy a train ticket, knowing how to brush your teeth, etc. etc.). Western man also has a collective project that is constitutive of its culture: science; and the aim of science is to gather knowledge about the world in its broadest meaning: from the origin of a particular disease to the origin of man, life, planet Earth and the universe, from why the orbits move as they do to why a mass of people behaves differently from individuals, from why the sky is blue to why the sea is salty, from why the climate seems to change to why rainbows appear, etc. etc. The quest to understand what *knowledge* is, is as old as philosophy itself, and the philosophy of knowledge is called *epistemology*.

The substantive 'knowledge' and the verb 'to know' are used in a variety of manners: we can know a person, we can know how to ride a bicycle and we can know that snow is white. The last-mentioned use, *propositional knowledge* (knowing *that p*, where *p* is proposition), is the most pervasive use and has been the main focus of philosophers. Already in the *Meno*, Plato raises a question how someone knowing that *p* differs from thinking that *p* is true when *p* is true. In this thesis I am also going to focus exclusively on propositional knowledge.

Traditionally, knowledge has been characterised as *justified true belief* (JTB). To rephrase, such a characterisation requires that three conditions are fulfilled when some subject *S* knows that *p*: (a) *S* believes that *p*, that is, *S* thinks that *p* is true; (b) *p* is true; (c) *S* can justify *p*. Succinctly, with obvious abbreviations.

(JTB)   Kn(*S*, *p*) iff B(*S*, *p*) ∧ Tr(*p*) ∧ Just(*S*, *p*)

We shall briefly consider these three necessary conditions in turn.

(a) Philosophers of various persuasions agree that *S* believing that *p* is necessary for *S* knowing that *p*. If Harry says to you that he knows where your keys are, and says that they are in the kitchen, then Harry thinks they are in the kitchen, Harry thinks that the proposition 'The keys are in the kitchen' is true. However, there might be cases where knowledge can come without belief. To give an example, my apartment

was robbed and my laptop computer was stolen. I come into my flat and see that the desk, where the computer was, is now empty. I know that there is no computer on the desk but I cannot believe what I see. So I utter 'I cannot believe it happened'. Some do think[1] that such an example illustrates the possibility of knowledge without belief. However, proponents of the JTB account beg to differ. What I express is not the absence of a belief but is rather a verbal outcry of my mental state of shock.

(b) If Harry not merely believes that the keys are in the kitchen but *knows* they are, then they *are* in the kitchen. If the keys do not happen to be in the kitchen, then Harry's belief they are is *false* and he *doesn't know* where the keys are after all. When he said he did, he was wrong. The necessity of truth for knowledge is least controversial, as false belief would definitely fail to qualify as knowledge. As another example, say my belief that Amsterdam is the capital of Tanzania or that Julius Caesar died of lung cancer are plainly false and therefore cannot be known by anyone. True beliefs guide our actions and can become knowledge. But does every true belief qualify as knowledge?

There is also a way to challenge the truth condition. For example, Sally does not think that she knows the correct answer to a question, posed in a television quiz, yet she answers it *correctly* nonetheless. Say, when asked when World War II ended, she guesses '1945' without knowing the correct answer to the question; the answer happens to be true. In such case, the belief is said to be true due to the *epistemic luck*. Lucky guesses are not appropriate for knowledge-acquisition. Something in addition to true belief is needed, to rule out epistemic luck. Justification is supposed to be that something, as the JTB criterion expresses.

(c) When Harry claims to know that *p*, we are always permitted to ask: how do you know? We ask for a justification, for a reason that we automatically suppose Harry has to think that *p* is true. Suppose you look for a particular train in the station and you ask two conversing people from which platform the train to Paris leaves. One says 'I believe from platform 2', the other says 'I know it leaves from platform 3'. Where will you go? Will you act on the believer or the knower?

Of course the knower. Why? Because he must have a reason to say that he knows, whereas the believer even seems uncertain, you do not assume that he has a good reason, he doesn't know.

The justification condition is closely related to the condition of truth – beliefs that lack justification are more likely to be false than true. However, there is no agreement about the *content* of the justification condition, not even among proponents of the JTB account. There should

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[1] Radford, Colin (1966) 'Knowledge---By Examples' *Analysis* **27**, pp. 1-11.

be another necessary condition of knowledge that in fact *justifies* or *supports* the truth condition all right. But what exactly constitutes a justification? If Tim correctly answers the question what time it is without looking on his watch or any other clock, his correct belief is just a matter of luck; what is needed to call it knowledge, requires a further condition and that is the justification condition. But what counts as a justification is not something all philosophers agree about, proponents of the JTB account included.

In spite of the fact that JTB account introduces justification condition as a shield against the possibility of an accidentally true belief, this account has met with serious problems. Edmund Gettier (1963)[2], has offered counterexamples, where there are cases of justified true belief that do not amount to knowledge. Gettier's examples made convincing the failure of justification to perform its task and rule out epistemic luck. Parenthetically, the necessity of true justified belief was not questioned by Gettier's examples. These examples challenge the joint sufficiency of these three necessary conditions for knowledge.

For example, Smith forms a justified belief that Jones owns a Ford. Smith forms his belief on the basis of seeing Jones driving a Ford and offering him, Smith, a ride. Next, consider that disjunctive proposition 'Jones owns a Ford or Brown is in Barcelona', without knowing anything about his old friend Brown's whereabouts. Since this disjunction follows deductively from 'Jones owns a Ford', Smith also justifiably believes the disjunction. However, it turns out that Jones does not own a Ford --- he is driving a rented car. But Brown just happens to be in Barcelona, and this makes Smith's belief also true. But surely Smith *does not know* the disjunction, because he doesn't have a clue where Brown is, and the disjunct concerning Brown's whereabouts is what makes the disjunction and therefore Smith's belief true, not Smith's mistaken belief that the other disjunct, about the Ford, is true. So we have a true justified belief that does not amount to knowledge. Plausibly some additional, fourth condition is needed to turn justified true belief into knowledge.

His discovery prompted the search for a further condition that should be added to justified true belief in order to get knowledge. Ever since Gettier published his examples, philosophers have been looking for this fourth condition and not one has been found that has been accepted by majority. This persistent situation reveals different views philosophers have about knowledge. At least two possibilities are distinguished.

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[2] Gettier, Edmund. (1963) `Is Justifed True Belief Knowlegde?', *Analysis* **23** (1963) 121-123.

(1) *Internalism.* True belief qualifies as knowledge because of the reasons that accessible to the subject upon reflection; knowledge is acquired via the rational judgment of a true belief. Succinctly,

(Int) $\text{Kn}(S, p)$ iff $B(S, p) \wedge \text{Tr}(p) \wedge X(S, p)$,

where the last conjunct $X(S, p)$ is a justification-conferring state.

(2) *Externalism.* True belief qualifies as knowledge because of a proper causal relationship that obtains between the subject that has the belief and the actual state of affairs A that the proposition is about. Succinctly again,

(Ext) $\text{Kn}(S, p)$ iff $B(S, p) \wedge \text{Tr}(p) \wedge Y(S, A)$,

where $Y(S, A)$ is a relation between subject S and something in the 'external' world.

To give an example of an internalist justification, John's proposition that the sun is shining can be based on his subjective experience of the sunshine that he is aware of. What is required on an internalist view of knowledge is that the justification comes from 'within' the conscious perspective of the subject. Such an interpretation seems commonsensical – what else can we know more easily and directly than our own perceptions? But despite its intuitive appeal, this conception can be objected to as *subjective*. If John wants his belief that the sun is shining to be justified, he reflects on his experience of sunshine. John's having this experience justifies his belief.

Externalism, which aims to establish a link between S knowing that p and the world that p is about, does so, for instance, by means of a causal relation. If I see a glass on the table just in front of me in broad daylight, I acquire knowledge without any additional effort to browse through my mind and look for justification: me having the belief there is a glass on the table is caused by the event of a glass standing on my table. In fact, it appears that a great deal of our knowledge comes quite automatically, without conscious interference of the knower. But for more complicated beliefs some causal interaction with certain objects in the world will not do. Hence this externalist account of justification conflicts with the requirement of having reflective access to the internal content of one's mind, to consult for *reasons*.

These two different proposals constitute the core of the *internalism-externalism debate* in epistemology. The internalist aims at specifying the conditions for knowledge that are internal and accessible upon reflection, while the externalist postulates requirements that are external with respect to the conscious mind. Put in that way, internalist

and externalist intuitions seem mutually exclusive. As William Alston puts it, 'the most common form of internalism (accessibility internalism) holds that only what the subject can easily become aware of (by reflection, for example) can have a bearing on justification. We may think of externalism as the denial of this constraint.'[3]

In other words, if the internalism-externalism debate centers around the accessibility requirement for knowledge, then the views conflict. Several possible moves in the debate have been propounded. First of all, the internalism-externalism debate emerges with the externalists' criticism of the traditional internalist JTB-view of knowledge as justified true belief. Goldman (1976; 1986;)[4], Armstrong (1973)[5], Dretske (1981)[6], Plantinga (1993)[7] propose accounts that question basic internalist assumptions. On the other hand, the views of internalists, such as BonJour (1985)[8], Chisholm (1966; 1977; 1988)[9] and Ginet (1985)[10], question basic externalist assumptions. Let us listen to some participants of this debate. Alvin Goldman (1980, p.32):

> Traditional epistemology has not adopted this externalist perspective. It has been predominantly internalist, or egocentric. On the latter perspective, epistemology's job is to construct a doxastic principle or procedure from the inside, from our own individual vantage point.[11]

Laurence BonJour argues that:

> When viewed from the general standpoint of the western epistemological tradition, externalism represents a very radical departure. It seems safe to say that until very recent times, no serious philosopher of knowledge would have dreamed of suggesting that a person's beliefs might be epistemically justified simply in virtue of facts or relations that were external to his subjective conception.[12]

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[3] Alston, William (1998) 'Internalism and Externalism in Epistemology'. *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Ed. E.Craig.

[4] Goldman, Alvin. (1976; 1992) "What is Justified Belief?" In *Liaisons: Philosophy Meets the Cognitive and Social Sciences*. Bradford Books/MIT Press.
Goldman, Alvin (1986). *Epistemology and Cognition.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

[5] Armstrong, David (1973) *Belief, Truth and Knowledge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

[6] Dretske, Fred (1981) *Knowledge and the Flow of Information*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

[7] Plantinga, Alvin (1993). *Warrant and Proper Function*. New York: Oxford University Press

[8] BonJour, Lawrence (1985) The Structure of Empirical Knowledge. Camvridge Harvard University Press.

[9] Chisholm, Roderick, (1966; 1977; 1988) Theory of Knowledge Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

[10] Ginet, Carl (1985) 'Contra Reliabilism'. *The Monist* **68.**

[11] Goldman, Alvin (1980) 'The Internalist Conception of Justification'. *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, **5**, p.32

[12] BonJour, Laurence (1980) 'Externalist Theories of Empirical Knowledge'. *Midwest Studies in Philosophy*, **5**.

One important remark seems in place here: in almost all cases, no matter what epistemic position is adhered to, philosophers seem to associate knowledge with justification. This is true of the traditional internalist position, the JTB-account, where knowledge is viewed as justified true belief (in that sense, speaking about the conditions of knowledge involves the analysis of justification). As far as externalists are concerned, they are somewhat hesitant about the condition of justification and try to find another term for a necessary condition that turns true belief into knowledge, be it *aptness* (Sosa 1991[13]; 2003[14]; 2007[15]) or *warrant* (Plantinga 1993). However, some of them still use the notion of justification, at least interchangeably with other terms (e.g. Goldman (1986; 1992)).

The preceding remarks suggest that internalism and externalism are enemies for life. But there might actually be certain compatibility between the two positions. There are different accounts of internalism and externalism, depending, as Michael Bergmann (1997)[16] points out, on the many senses of what is meant by 'internal' and on different positive epistemic statuses, such as knowledge or justification. Then, are these positions really in conflict with each other? It might well be that both internalism and externalism have important things to say about human knowledge that can be synthesised somehow.

Some epistemologists are indeed trying to explore the possibililty of a view that accomodates both internal and external elements. Sven Bernecker (2006, pp.83-4)[17] coined the term of *epistemic compatibilism* to designate these efforts. He writes:

> In light of the apparent tie between internalism and externalism, some philosophers have thought that we should end the bickering over the 'correct' account of knowledge and justification. Both internalism and externalism cite powerful intuitions for their support. These intuitions should not be played off against each other but should somehow be reconciled. What seems to be needed is an intermediate position – call it *epistemic compatibilism*.

The quotation shows an attempt to recognize the benefits of both proposals without denying one or the other wholesale. On the one hand, compatibilism recognizes the externalist truth-conducive nature of the

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[13] Sosa, Ernest (1991). *Knowledge in Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[14] BonJour, Laurence, Sosa, Ernest (2003) *Epistemic Justification: Internalism vs. Externalism, Foundations vs. Virtues*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
[15] Sosa, Ernest (2007) *A Virtue Epistemology: Apt Belief and Reflective Knowledge*. **Vol I**. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[16] Bergmann, Michael. (1997). 'Internalism, Externalism and the No-defeater Condition'. *Synthese* **110**.
[17] Bernecker, Sven (2006) 'The Prospects of Epistemic Compatibilism'. *Philosophical Studies*. **130**. pp.81-104.

belief-forming processes, while on the other hand it also recognizes the importance of the internalist first-person account of knowledge. Such efforts to combine elements of both views motivate further, deeper-lying problems about the nature of knowledge: should we talk about *different kinds of knowledge* based on different justification conditions; or should we look for the possibility to combine various proposals into a single conception of knowledge? This dissertation is an attempt to show that epistemic compatibilism is a life philosophical option, which has attractions stronger than those of internalism and externalism separately.

In a nutshell the organisation of the thesis is as follows. In Chapters II and III we analyse internalism and externalism. In **Ch. IV**, I define compatibilism, identify some varieties of epistemic compatibilism and start exploring the relationship between internalism and externalism. The first type of relationship I focus on there is the one which declares mutual exclusivity of the two views of knowledge. After discussing this, I proceed with exploring Foley's compatibilist position. In **Ch. V**, I explore Ernest Sosa's comprehensive epistemology as a specimen of epistemic compatibilism, and in **Ch. VI** I deal with Edward Craig's genealogical view of knowledge, which I claim also is a version of epistemic compatibilism. I end the dissertation with the comparison of the aforementioned externalist positions by defining their strengths, weaknesses and prospects for further development. But before I begin, I want to say something in general about 'intuitions'.

There is a lot of talk in epistemology and in philosophy in general about 'intuitions'. In epistemology, some important epistemic problems are based on our intuitions about knowledge. The Gettier cases can serve as an example: although necessary and sufficient conditions for knowledge are satisfied but we have a strong intuition that in these cases even the justified true belief falls short of knowledge. I shall talk in more detail about the Gettier cases in the following chapters. For the moment I want to explicate the concept of intuition itself. The logical grammar is that of a dyadic predicate: *subject S has the intuition that p*, abbreviated: Int(*S, p*).
Surely having the intuition that *p* implies having the belief that *p*:

(1)   Int(*S, p*) → B(*S, p*)

The converse of (1) equally surely fails: believing that the Pythagorean theorem holds in Euclidean geometry is not a matter of intuition but one of mathematical proof; believing that a meteor was the cause of the extinction of the dinosaurs on planet Earth is not a matter of intuition but one of scientific inquiry; believing there is a yellow banana in front

of me is not a matter of intuition but one of perception; etc. Intuitions in philosophy usually concern

>   (*a*) *conceptual connections* (logical relations between concepts, such as the 'intuition' that knowledge implies truth, the 'intuition' that the truth of a conjunct implies the truth of its conjuncts, etc.), or

>   (*b*) conceptual applications (whether in some usually imaginary situation a particular concept applies or not), e.g., the intuition that the concept of knowledge does not apply in Gettier-situations.

>   (*c*) very general philosophical propositions in so far as not falling under (*a*) (such as having the intuition there is, or must be, an 'external world', or that man and women   must   be   treated equally).

Call a proposition *p* falling under (*a*) or (*b*) or (*c*) an *abc-proposition*: *abc*(*p*). Then we suggest:

(2)   Int(*S, p*)   → *abc*(*p*).

>   In case of (*a*), there is a genuine possibility that one is stating a conceptual truth, a semantic fact about how we use words and expressions (when we say that *S* knows that *p*, we are always permitted to derive that *p* is true because *false knowledge* is a conceptual impossibility in that we never ever, in no context, say that someone *knows a falsehood* --- to be sharply distinguished from *knowing that p is false*. When defenders of Gettier counterexamples to the traditional internalist JTB view of knowledge refuse to attribute *knowledge-that p* to *S* in certain (usually imaginary) situations, then they can be taken to state the *semantic fact* that the way they, as competent users of the English language, use the words 'justify', 'truth', 'believe' and 'knowing-that' is such that asserting that *S* believes that *p* truly and justifiably in any context is not a license to assert that *S* knows that *p* in that context.   So when it comes to (*a*) conceptual connections, 'intuitions' do not originate in some mysterious faculty but in linguistic faculties and express semantic facts about the use of language. Perhaps this even extends to (*b*) general philosophical propositions, but that is less plausible because our colloquial use of words, our linguistic faculties generally, developed in contexts of generically practical needs, not in philosophical contexts of pondering the nature of reality, the objectivity of values, and the like! Thus presumably not *all* stated

'intuitions' by philosophers can be construed as stating semantic facts of the use of language, but those discussed in epistemology seem to fall under (*a*), for which such construals are a possibility.

What 'intuitions' falling under (*a*), (*b*) or (*c*) have in common is that *S* does not, or perhaps even cannot, provide arguments in favour of them, i.e. *S* has no justification for *p*. So:

(3)   Int(*S, p*) → ¬J(*S, p*)

If *S* does appeal to some semantic fact about the use of language, this fact is usually considered to be a 'brute' fact of our contingent use of words in the language we happen to have mastered, rather than some 'inferred' fact *justified* by some inference.

Again, the converse of (3) fails. Examples are lying for the taking: current astronomers can justify that there is a gigantic black hole in the center of every galaxy, but no one will call this an 'intuition'.

Since this dissertation is not an inquiry into the nature of intuitions in philosophy, we call it a day here, submit that our little elaboration on this subject-matter is sufficient for the purposes of this dissertation, and end with this explication:

> **S has the intuition that *p*** iff
> *p* is an *abc*-proposition,   and *S* believes that *p,* and *S* does not have justification for *p*.

In abbreviation-style:

(5)   *abc*(*p*) ∧ B(*S, p*) ∧ ¬J(*S, p*) iff Int(*S, p*) .

This should be enough clarification of our (and others') use of intuitions in epistemology. Now I shall start discussing the main features of internalism.

II.   Internalism and its Critics

II.1 Preamble

In this Chapter, I discuss the main features of internalist views of knowledge, henceforth briefly: internalism; I distinguish three features and treat them in turn.

According to internalism, the grounds of justifying and knowing lie within the subject's own cognitive perspective, within what the subject is or can be aware of. That would be the most general (and, probably, quite obscure) idea of what internalism is. To clear it up, let us consider descriptions of internalism provided by various contemporary epistemologists, proponents as well as opponents.

Alvin Plantinga:

> The basic internalist idea, of course, is that what determines whether a belief is warranted for a person are factors or states in some sense internal to that person; warrant conferring properties are in some way internal to the subject or cognizer. Warrant and the properties that confer it are internal in that they are states or conditions of which the cognizer is or can be aware; they are states of which he has or can easily have knowledge; they are states or properties to which he has cognitive or epistemic access.[18]

John Pollock:

> Internalism in epistemology is the view that only internal states of the cognizer can be relevant in determining which of the cognizer's beliefs are justified.[19]

Robert Audi:

> …justification is grounded entirely in what is internal to the mind, in a sense implying that it is accessible to introspection or reflection by the subject – a view we might call internalism   about justification.'[20]

Laurence BonJour:

> The basic rationale is that what justifies a person's beliefs must be something that is available or accessible to him or her, that something to which I have

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[18] Plantinga, Alvin (1993) *Warrant: the Current Debate*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p. 5.
[19] Pollock, John (1999) 'At the Interface of Philosophy and AI', in J.Greco and E.Sosa eds., *The Blackwell Guide to Epistemology*. Malden, MA: Blackwell. p. 394. (383-414).
[20] Audi, Robert (1998) *Epistemology: a Contemporary Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge*. London: Routledge. pp. 233-4.

no access cannot give me a reason for thinking that one of my beliefs is true[21]

Roderick Chisholm :

The usual approach to the traditional questions of theory of knowledge is properly called 'internal' or 'internalistic'. The internalist assumes that merely by reflecting upon his own conscious state, he can formulate a set of epistemic principles that will enable him to find out, with respect to any possible belief he has, whether he is *justified* in having that belief. The epistemic principles that he formulates and principles that one may come upon and apply merely by sitting in one's armchair, so to speak, and without calling for any outside assistance. In a word, one need consider only one's own state of mind.[22]

Finally, William Alston (1993) distinguishes between the perspective and access internalism:

> First there is the idea that in order to confer justification something must be within the subject's 'perspective' or 'viewpoint' on the world, in the sense of being something that the subject knows, believes, or justifiably believes. It must be something that falls within the subject's ken, something of which the subject has taken note. Second, there is the idea that in order to confer justification, something must be accessible to the subject in some special way, for example, directly accessible or infallibly inaccessible.

We distinguish three main features of internalist view of knowing: (II.2.1) the sources of justification lie in the subject's mind, they are private; (II.2.2) direct accessibililty of these sources to the subject upon reflection; and (II.2.3) performing one's duty in order to believe what is true and only what is true, and in order to disbelieve what is false. We take a closer look at each of these features.

II.2 Features of Internalism

II.2.1 Descartes and the Internal Nature of Justifiers

Some philosophers, such as Laurence BonJour, maintain that the origin of the internalist project stems from the Cartesian approach to epistemology. Thus it enables us to discuss the features of internalism by taking a look at Descartes' epistemology.

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[21] BonJour, Laurence (2002) *Epistemology*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, p. 222.
[22] Chisholm, Roderick (1977) *Theory of Knowledge*, 3rd Edition. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

In his influential work *Meditations on First Philosophy,*[23] Descartes starts his enquiry with the question about the possibility of *certain knowledge*:

> but as even now my reason convinces me that I ought none the less carefully to withhold belief from what is not entirely certain and indubitable, than from what is manifestly false, it will be sufficient to justify the rejection of the whole if I shall find in each some ground for doubt.

He makes several claims about the fact that the world he is aware of *might* be a fiction, a deception created by an Evil Demon. The subject *might* be dreaming or *might* be mad or *might* be on drugs and thinks that his surroundings are real while in fact they are private hallucinations. By methodically suspending and calling all the earlier commonsense beliefs into doubt, he embarks on the search for certain knowledge. He finds that the only thing that cannot be doubted is the process doubting. Since to doubt is a mode of thinking, there is something, a *substance*, that does the thinking, that thinks, a thinker - in Cartesian terms, *res cogitans*, often referred to simply as 'I'. As Descartes puts it, 'I am a thing, which doubts, understands [conceives], affirms denies, wills, refuses, which also imagines and feels.'[24] The subject can doubt the existence of his body and of the entire 'external' world, but he can hardly call into question that fact that he is thinking and that therefore there is a thinker --- *nothing* cannot think, right? This fact of the self is, for Descartes, 'necessarily true' while facts about other aspects of the body and the world (*res extensa*, the spatially extended) are contingently true. Summarised in celebrated Latin: *Cogito ergo sum*. Hence, for Descartes, the source of this *epistemic certainty* is not connected to and does not rely on the existence of an 'external' world; it is located inside the subject and relies on the subject having a conscious mind which is directly accessible only to him.

To sum it up, Descartes opened the path for many philosophers: in order to justify one's beliefs, in order to find out *why* and *what* one knows, one has to introspect, to descend into the depths of one's mind, to reflect. By virtue of this idea, this view of knowledge is called *internalism*. However, in order to ensure that this is possible, the internalist must assume that he is able to access his own mind, to become acquainted with the states of mind. This brings us to the next feature of internalism.

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[23] Descartes, Renè, (1955) 'Meditations on First Philosophy', in E. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross (eds.) *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, Mineola, NY: Dover Publications.
[24] Ibid. p. 54.

II.2.2 The Internal Accessibility of Justifiers

Internalist views of knowledge seem predicated on Descarte's mind-body substance dualism, according to which there are two fundamental kinds of substances, a physical or material substance, *res extensa*, and a mental substance, *res cogitans*. Physical objects are only *indirectly* accessible; their existence is *inferred* via mental faculties and this process of inference begins with initial sensory impulses. By contrast, the mind is *directly* accessible and the subject can become directly and immediately aware of its content. In the *Second Meditation*, Descartes writes:

> [I]t is now manifest to me that even bodies are not properly speaking known by the senses or by the faculty of imagination, but by the understanding only, and since they are not known from the fact that they are seen and touched, but only because they are understood, I see clearly that there is nothing that is easier for me to know than my mind.[25].

Richard Foley[26] calls this the 'egocentric', more commonly called first-person, perspective in epistemology. Possessing knowledge or not depends solely on the subject, his reasons and his internal mental states that are available for introspection and reflection. What is interesting about this view of knowledge is the idea that *internally* justified beliefs show the correct path to knowledge *of the external world*.

Two innate ideas, of God and the Soul, provide a guarantee for the reliability of our mental faculties. Since God is benevolent and does not deceive us, we can trust the cognitive faculties He has endowed us with. Thus Descartes kills two birds with one stone: we can access the content of our own minds, our internal world, and via it we can acquire knowledge of the external world.

For Descartes, knowledge requires certainty, to know is to know certainly; as soon as something can be doubted with good reason, it is not certain and hence not knowledge. Knowledge is indubitable. Our beliefs about the external world can be mistaken, false, and 'it is prudent never to trust completely those who have deceived us even once', Descartes acknowledges. How about things we perceive via the senses? Beliefs about them are formulated by the power of reason. These things being external to the subject's mind, beliefs about these can only possess lower credibility when compared to beliefs about internally accessible things. A belief is certain, if it is 'clear and distinct', says Descartes', and there are no overriding beliefs contrary to it. The ideas

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[25] Ibid. p.58.
[26] Foley, Richard (2002) 'What Am I to Believe?' in *Epistemology: Internalism and Externalism*, ed. by H. Kornblith. Oxford: Blackwell. p. 170. pp. 163-179.

of God and the self, which are perceived with certainty because 'clear and distinct', are pillars to carry the edifice of all our knowledge, according to Descartes. From these certainties, Descartes wants to create inferential chains of justification that stretch up to beliefs about the external world.

Although Descartes was optimistic about the human cognitive powers, his position was criticised for being a form of solipsism. Descartes held that our trustworthy faculties of reason and sense also guarantee that we acquire knowledge of the external world. But he did not take into account that it is not only our senses, will or imagination, but also our reason that is not infallible and is susceptible to error, no matter whether we are guided by the correct method or not. Anything can be justified by our own subjective lights, even if the belief in question is blatantly false. There is no criterion that would allow the subject to judge his own ways of reasoning and justifying because to do so he must rely on those same ways of reasoning and justifying. That is why Descartes' view of knowledge resides within the confines of subjectivity.[27]

Afore-mentioned criticisms notwithstanding, internalists uncontroversially hold that human reason is powerful enough to form justified true beliefs. Due to this presupposition, the subject endowed with cognitive capacities has a *duty* to form its beliefs in a responsible manner. He should be praised for forming true beliefs and blamed for believing false ones. This constitutes the third, *deontological* feature of internalism.

II.2.3 Deontologism and Locke-Clifford Imperative

When the subject has direct privileged access to the belief-justifying grounds, he is obliged to believe what is true and to disbelieve what is false. Many proponents and opponents of internalism mention the concept of epistemic duty as one of the features of this position.

Initiated by Descartes and Locke, the duty-based or deontological conception of justification was further developed by more recent authors, such as Feldman, Ginet, BonJour and, especially, by Alfred Ayer's analysis of the necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge as 'being sure' and 'having the right to be sure'[28], and Roderick Chisholm's 'ethics of belief'. For Chisholm, the questions about the

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[27] Kornblith, Hilary (2001) 'Internalism and Externalism: a Brief Historical Introduction'. In *Epistemology*: *Internalism and Externalism*. p.5-6.
[28] Ayer, Alfred Jules, (1956) *The Problem of Knowledge*, Middlesex, UK: Penguin Books. p.35.

reasons and evidence bringing about the justification of beliefs are the questions of ethics, for to ask them 'is simply to ask whether it is worthy of our belief'[29]. We should not forget, however, that the subject of the *ethics of belief* was asserted with unprecedented force by the 19th-century polymath William Kingdon Clifford, in an essay of 1877 in *Contemporary Review*[30] bearing exactly this title, which opens as follows:

> A shipowner was about to send to sea an emigrant-ship. He knew that she was old, and not overwell built at the first; that she had seen many seas and climes, and often had needed repairs. Doubts had been suggested to him that possibly she was not seaworthy. These doubts preyed upon his mind, and made him unhappy; he thought that perhaps he ought to have her thoroughly overhauled and refitted, even though this should put him at great expense. Before the ship sailed, however, he succeeded in overcoming these melancholy reflections. He said to himself that she had gone safely through so many voyages and weathered so many storms that it was idle to suppose she would not come safely home from this trip also. He would put his trust in Providence, which could hardly fail to protect all these unhappy families that were leaving their fatherland to seek for better times elsewhere. He would dismiss from his mind all ungenerous suspicions about the honesty of builders and contractors. In such ways he acquired a sincere and comfortable conviction that his vessel was thoroughly safe and seaworthy; he watched her departure with a light heart, and benevolent wishes for the success of the exiles in their strange new home that was to be; and he got his insurance-money when she went down in mid-ocean and told no tales.
>
> What shall we say of him? Surely this, that he was verily guilty of the death of those men. It is admitted that he did sincerely believe in the soundness of his ship; but the sincerity of his conviction can in no wise help him, because *he had no right to believe on such evidence as was before him*. He had acquired his belief not by honestly earning it in patient investigation, but by stifling his doubts. And although in the end he may have felt so sure about it that he could not think otherwise, yet inasmuch as he had knowingly and willingly worked himself into that frame of mind, he must be held responsible for it.

One should do one's best in order to believe in the truth! Those who have not done their very best to justify their beliefs commit an *epistemic sin*. Clifford once more (ibid.):

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[29] Firth, Roderick, (1959) "Chisholm and the Ethics of Belief", *Philosophical Review* 68 (4): 493-506. p.494.
[30] Clifford, William. K. (1947) The Ethics of Belief and Other Essays, London, Watts and Co. ('The Ethics of Belief' was first published in 1877, in *Contemporary Review*, 29, pp. 283-309.)

> To sum up: it is *wrong* always, everywhere, and for anyone, to believe anything upon insufficient evidence.

We should add: it is right always, everywhere, and for anyone, to believe anything upon sufficient evidence. Let us call these injunctions jointly *Locke-Clifford Imperative*.

The normative characteristic of knowledge can be more vividly emphasized by focusing on actions that are based on beliefs, which is exactly what Clifford does: in order to judge whether a particular action is right or wrong, one has to decide whether this action conforms to certain norms, which have to be known. A similarity between ethics and epistemology is that both disciplines are essentially *normative*. In other words, *considered judgment* on the basis of some norm is the goal of both of Ethics and Epistemology. Ethics is concerned with the question what it is for an action to be a right or wrong; epistemology is concerned with the question what it is for a belief to be justified or not. Chisholm: 'To know that *h* is true will be not only to have a true opinion with respect to *h*, but also to have a certain right or duty with respect to *h*.'[31] He maintains that the terms 'right' and 'duty' are not merely technical terms but are related, since the *right* to believe a proposition *p* is established if and only if there is no *duty* to abstain from believing this proposition *p*, and *vice versa*.

If a proposition is true and the subject has good reasons to believe it, then he has a duty to believe it. As in the case with actions, there should be certain norms that would allow the subject to judge the status of her beliefs and to distinguish between knowledge and mere belief. These norms imply the duty to conform to them. For example, some internalist epistemologists, such as Chisholm[32] or Feldman[33], think that a belief is permitted only if it is supported by adequate evidence and possesses no overriding reasons or contrary evidence that might lead one to believing a falsity, which is essentially Clifford's Imperative. The subject is held *responsible* for having beliefs. To form one's beliefs responsibly, one has to take precautions in order to prevent acquiring false beliefs, otherwise one will be blamed for not observing his duty. In this way the ethical categories of responsibility, praiseworthiness and blameworthiness enter epistemology and thus epistemology encompasses an ethics of belief.

To put it in a slightly different fashion, if the subject has a duty, or is permitted, to believe that *p,* he does *not* have a right or duty *not* to believe that *p*. According to William Alston,

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[31] Chisholm, Roderick (1966), *Theory of Knowledge*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall. p.11.

[32] Chisholm, *op. cit.*, Ch. 2.

[33] Feldman, Richard (2001) "Voluntary Belief and Epistemic Justification". *Knowledge, Truth and Duty*, M. Steup (ed.), Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.77--92.

on the deontological conception of the epistemic justification of belief that is as close as possible to the standard conception of the justification of action, to be justified in believing that *p* at *t* is for one's belief that *p* at *t* not to be in violation of any epistemic principles, principles that permit only those beliefs that are sufficiently likely to be true.[34]

As Ryle taught us, *ought implies can*: if subject *S* ought to believe that *p*, then *S* can believe that *p*, that is, *S* must posses the cognitive capacities to form *p* and use these cognitive capacities to judge whether *p* is true or false. If *S* happens to have a false belief, then *S* is to blame for having this belief and for dereliction of his epistemic duty.

This position is based on an assumption that in order to be praised or blamed for having, or not having, justified beliefs, subject *S* must have, in Alston's terminology, 'voluntary control' over his own beliefs. Subject *S* must have all his beliefs at his disposal and must be able to manage these beliefs on the spot in such a manner that *S* responsibly comes to believe (or disbelieve) that *p*. We often use such phrases that express the permission or prohibition imposed on our beliefs, such as 'You ought not to think that John is incapable of making brave decisions', or 'I have a good reason to maintain that Simon will keep his promise'. These phrases suggest that in order to decide whether to believe a proposition, *S* must possess the ability to access a feasible set of relevant alternatives.

Now let us connect the deontological condition with other features of internalism. The aforementioned considerations indicate that the deontological feature relies on the accessibility of justifiers and of internal mental contents in general. In other words, the subject must know how to discriminate between truth and falsity, so that he can decide what the fulfillment of the epistemic duty involves in this particular case and which decision has to be made.

For Descartes, the concept of performing one's epistemic duty is an issue of crucial importance: the subject is supposed to believe only what is clear and distinct. This issue of obligation can be discussed in relation to committing an error. According to Descartes, errors happen because of the exercise of our free will (and possibly abusing it). When the will is employed to form a judgment lacking proper justification, the subject falls into 'error and sin'. Hence, in order to produce a proper judgment, two components must be in place: first, the proposition must

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[34] Alston William (1989), 'The Deontological Conception of Epistemic Justification' in *Epistemic Justification: Essays in the Theory of Knowledge*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press. pp. 115—152, p. 117.

be clear and distinct; secondly, the decision what to do with this proposition is voluntary, whether to accept, reject or withhold a judgment. Even though Descartes refers to the powers of reason as very 'feeble and limited' and to the will as 'perfect and unlimited', reason is more important than will in knowledge-acquisition. It is so because the proper voluntary performance is possible only within the limits of the rational. In *The Fourth Meditation*, Descartes writes:

> …if I affirm what is not true, it is evident that I deceive myself; even though I judge according to truth, this comes about only by chance, and I do not escape the blame of misusing my freedom; for the light of nature teaches us that the knowledge for understanding should always precede the determination of the will. It is in the misuse of the free will that the privation which constitutes that characteristic nature of error is met with.[35]

As is clear from this quotation, mistaken beliefs are due to shortcomings of the free will. The possessor of this will is held responsible for the consequences of his volitions. If he forms a belief on any but clear and distinct grounds, it would be treated as a defect of his will. The duty to believe only what is true is ensured by the 'light of nature' (*lumen naturalis*), the idea that the natural powers of the human reason are apt and sufficient to attain truth. If human reason is capable of understanding the truth, then the subject will know, and is therefore responsible for following the epistemic norms and the outcomes of his choices. Descartes' usage of the word 'blame' in this passage seems to suggest that this epistemic requirement is imposed by the higher creature, God, who has created human beings. He designed them in such a way that no matter how limited or imperfect, they are able to and even obliged to follow his principles. That is what humans as rational and voluntary beings should do to reciprocate their Creator. Descartes continues:

> He [God] has at least left within my power the other means, which is firmly to adhere to the resolution never to give judgment on matters whose truth is not clearly known to me; for although I notice certain weakness in my nature (…), I can yet, by attentive and frequently repeated meditation (…), acquire the habit of never going astray.

To conclude, in Descartes' view, no matter how limited and weak the human mind is, it still can be make the right judgments. Moreover, not only the mind can accomplish this task; it also ought to be aiming at it. Thus Descartes can be said to endorse the deontological attitude.

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[35] Descartes, Renè, (1955) *Meditations on First Philosophy*, in E. Haldane and G.R.T. Ross (eds) *The Philosophical Works of Descartes*, Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, p.176.

John Locke is even more attentive to the deontological aspect. According to him, any justified belief should be based on a good reason. Locke formulates his position by pointing out:

> He that believes without having any reason[36] for believing, may be in love with his own fancies; but neither seeks truth as he ought, nor pays the obedience due to his Maker, who would have him to use those discerning faculties he has given him, to keep him out of mistake and error.[37]

Locke argues that humans, as rational creatures, are obliged to believe only what they take to be true and supported by good plausible reasons. This is Locke-Clifford's Imperative again. The acquisition of beliefs should be well thought through and based on good grounds, it should not be arrived at by chance, guess or lucky coincidence. Recognition of rationality as an essential feature of a human being at the same time places the burden of responsibility on the subject. He is the one to blame in case of failure to perform one's epistemic duty. To quote another passage from Locke,

> This at least is certain, that he must be accountable for the mistakes he runs into: whereas he that makes use of the light and faculties that God has given him [and seeks sincerely to discover truth by those aids and abilities he has], may have this satisfaction in doing his duty as a rational creature, that, though he should miss truth, he will not miss the reward of it.[38]

Therefore, the fact of being a rational creature provides humans with the capability of being in a position to know what truth is. This creates a responsibility of believing what is correct and be blamed for not performing one's duties and forming unjustified beliefs, respectively. In the last-mentioned case, his mental capacities are not used the way they were *meant* to.

Although we have taken internalist views to be standard, and marked Descartes as the founding father of these epistemic views, competing externalist views have arisen over the past decades, criticizing internalist views. These criticisms we discuss next.

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[36] ‚reason' meaning without seeing the reasonableness of having faith in the particular authority that we trust in.
[37] Locke, John (1689;1959) *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. A.C. Fraser, Mineola, New York: Dover Publications, p.413.
[38] Ibid. p.413.

II.3 Criticism of Internalism

II.3.1 Preamble

Having discussed the essential features of internalism, let us briefly discuss some criticisms of this position. Traditional epistemology did not question the characterisation of knowledge as justified true belief and there has been wide consensus that internalist conception of justification is the most plausible candidate to fill the gap between true belief and knowledge: truly believing becomes knowing as soon as one has good reasons for believing so. In its wake comes a normative aspect, which goes back to Locke, Descartes and Clifford: we ought to believe those and only those propositions that are justified and disbelieve those and only those propositions whose negations are justified (deontology).

These considerations have been challenged in two important ways: Edmund Gettier presented his well-known counterexamples to sufficiency of justifiably and truly believing for knowing (II.3.2); W.V. Quine attacked 'armchair epistemology' for employing rational logical reduction while dealing with cognition and not paying attention to empirical research on that topic (II.3.3). These two lines of criticism have been starting points for further developments in epistemology; we turn to these starting points next.

II.3.2 Gettier Counterexamples (about cars, places, coins, jobs, sheep and barns)

To rehearse, internalist views of knowledge take justifiably believing in the truth to be sufficient and necessary for knowing:

$$\text{(JTB)} \quad J(S, p) \wedge \text{Tr}(p) \wedge B(S, p) \quad \text{iff} \quad Kn(S, p) \;,$$
or
$$JTB(S, p) \quad \text{iff} \quad Kn(S, p)$$

when $JTB(S, p)$ is the threefold left-hand-conjunction of (JTB). Criterion schema (JTB) is logically speaking a conjunction of the following two conditional schemata:

$$\text{(JTB1)} \quad JTB(S, p) \rightarrow Kn(S, p) \quad \text{and}$$

(JTB2)   Kn(S, p)   → JTB(S, p) .

In his one and only published philosophical paper, Edmund Gettier [39] expressed no criticism of (JTB2), but challenged (JTB1) by providing two Cases (below I and II) where subject S justifiably and truly believes in some proposition q but falls short of knowing that q:

(G)   J(S, q) ∧ Tr(q) ∧ B(S, q) ∧ ¬Kn(S, q) ,

which is the negation of, and therefore inconsistent with (JTB1), but is consistent with (JTB2). Let us first consider Gettier's Case II, which is supposed to be an instance of (G).

Case II: **Cars and Places.** Gettier uses the following assumption:

> for a proposition P, if S is justified in believing P, and P entails Q, and S deduces Q from P, and accepts Q as a result of this deduction, then S is justified in believing Q. [40]

Using an obvious abbreviation for justified belief, Gettier essentially says that justified belief is closed under justified belief in deduction:

(*)   [JB(S, p) ∧ JB($S, p ⊢ q$)] → JB(S, q) .

Let us suppose that Smith is justified in believing that

(1)   Jones owns a Ford ,

because Jones owned a Ford in the past and he has just offered Smith a ride while he was driving a Ford. Suppose further that Smith has a friend, Brown, but is unaware about his friend's current whereabouts. Smith thinks, for some reason or other, of three possible cities where his friend Brown may actually be, and considers the following propositions:

(2) Either Jones owns a Ford, or Brown is in Boston;
(3) Either Jones owns a Ford, or Brown is in Barcelona;
(4) Either Jones owns a Ford, or Brown is in Brest-Litovsk.

Suppose that, *first*, (1) is false because Jones has rented the Ford; and *secondly*, that by sheer coincidence and entirely unknown to Smith, Brown happens to be in Barcelona, so that (3) is true whereas both (2)

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[39] Gettier, Edmund (1963). ,Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?', *Analysis* **23**: 121-123; p.121.
[40] Ibid.p.121.

and (4) are false. Since trivially (2), (3) and (4) follow from (1), and Smith justifiably believes this, he justifiably believes that (2), that (3) and that (4), and therefore *knows that* (3), by (*) and (JTB), but does neither know that (2) nor that (4), because (3) is true and (2) and (4) are false. So far so good, one would say. However, Gettier (1963: 124), asserts that 'Smith does *not* know that (3) is true', in contradiction to what we concluded above on the basis of (*) and (JTB), i.e. Smith *knows that* (3).

Gettier asserts that Smith does *not* know that (3). Why? Smith's justification for (3) is that it deductively follows from (1) and justified belief is closed under deduction (*). But (1) is false. The fact that we end up with a true disjunction by disjuncting falsehood (1) with disjunct 'Brown is in Barcelona' is because *by sheer coincidence and unknown to Smith* this last disjunct is true, and for *this* disjunct Smith has no justification whatsoever. Smith is *lucky* that Brown happens to be in Barcelona because *this* makes him know according to (JTB). Such a 'Gettier situation' (i.e. instantiating (G)) is said to be a case of *epistemic luck* or *lucky knowledge*. When we don't want to know by being lucky but by being properly justified, we should strengthen the sufficient condition (JTB1) for knowing, and the necessary one (JTB2) so that we keep having a criterion, like (JTB) is.

We could try the following: what we know should not be deduced from a false belief, as (3) is deduced from the false belief (1) that Jones owns a car. Getter's first case against (JTB), another instance of (G), also is a case of epistemic luck deduction from a false belief.

Case I: Coins and Jobs. Suppose Smith and Jones have applied for a job. A friend of Smith's told him that Jones is the director's nephew and it is well-known that for this director family always comes first. Smith has also observed Jones counting 10 coins and put them in his pocket. Thus Smith knows that:

(5) Jones will get the job and Jones has 10 coins in his pocket.

Smith deduces the following from (5):

(6) The applicant with 10 coins in his pocket will get the job.

Smith then also knows that (6) by an appeal to (*) or to (HC). Suppose now further that Jones has insulted the director's daughter, and the director got so angry, so that he will give Smith the job out of spite. Smith also has coins in his pocket but doesn't know how many; there happen to be 10 of them. Hence (6) remains a *true* justified belief of

Smith, but justified not because Smith knows that he himself will get the job and that he knows how many coins he has in his pocket, but because (6) follows from (5), which happens to be *false*. But this we proposed to forbid: no knowledge when derived from a falsehood. Abbreviation:

J+(*S, p*): *S* can justify *p* without deducing *p* from some falsehood .

Then our new analysis of knowing-that becomes:

(J+TB) $J(S, p) \wedge Tr(p) \wedge B(S, p)$ iff $Kn(S, p)$,
or
$J+TB(S, p)$ iff $Kn(S, p)$,

with an obvious abbreviation. But as R.M. Chisholm has pointed out, we can have instances of (G) that also clash with (J+TB) because what is known is not deduced from a falsehood.

Case III: Chisholm's sheep. Farmer Rod is standing in a meadow, spots a sheep in the distance and consequently believes there is a sheep in the distance, and he knows a sheep when he sees one. Thus by (J+TB), Rod knows that:

(7)   There is a sheep in the distance.

Suppose that it is not a sheep, but a large white furry dog, with its head turned away from Rod, resembling very much a sheep when seen from a distance. Suppose further that Rod sees a white dot in the deeper distance, which he cannot recognise for what it is because it simply too far away. It happens to be a sheep. So (7) remains a true belief of Rod being justified by means of an observation rather than derived from a falsehood,
but it is a case of epistemic luck, because Rod justifies his true belief in (7) by means of his first observation, which is not correct (it is a dog), whereas the observation that ought to justify (7) is the second one, which was however too vague for Rod to justify anything but that there is *something* in the deeper distance. The reason Rod takes to think that (7) is true is not correct; he does not have the right justification and therefore he *does not know*.

What now? Well, in spite of the fact that Rod did not justify (7) by deducting it from a falsehood, he does have a false belief that he takes to justify (7): that the nearer object is a sheep. Let us therefore adjust (J+) accordingly and call it *false-free justification*:
J*(*S, p*): *S* can justify *p* without involving some falsehood .

Then our new analysis of knowing-that becomes:

(J*TB) $J^*(S, p) \wedge \mathrm{Tr}(p) \wedge B(S, p)$ iff $\mathrm{Kn}(S, p)$,
or
$J^*\mathrm{TB}(S, p)$ iff $\mathrm{Kn}(S, p)$,

with an obvious abbreviation. See Lehrer, *Theory of Knowledge*[41].

      The conclusion of Cases I–III is that strengthening our concept of justification 'internally' is of no avail when it comes to Getter-situations. Perhaps a *fourth*, anti-luck conjunct is needed in addition to truth, belief and justification, or perhaps the justification conjunct stands in need of replacement. Gettier situations paved the way for externalism. However, that was not the only influence that stimulated the emergence of externalist theories. Quine's project of naturalized epistemology was the second major influence in that.

II.3.3.   Quine and Naturalised Epistemology

Another source of motivation for externalist analyses of knowledge was provided by W.v.O. Quine[42], who criticized traditional accounts of knowledge from a naturalistic perspective. He declared that the project of epistemology as logical reconstruction advocated by logical positivists was a failure, because they failed to reduce all scientifically established sentences about the external world to the observational language by formal-logical means. In *Der Logische Aufbau der Welt*[43], Carnap attempted, inspired by Russell, to reduce sentences to sense-impressions and a primitive resemblance relation between them. Such philosophical projects were not and could not be influenced by scientific findings in (cognitive) psychology and learning theory. Not the sort of 'scientific philosophy' that logical positivism aspired to be.
Mutatis mutandis for epistemology. Quine, in the strictest empiricist spirit:

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[41] Lehrer, Keith (1990). *Theory of Knowledge*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, pp.17-18.

[43] Carnap, Rudolf (1928; 1967). *Der Logische Aufbau der Welt* Trans. *The Logical Structure of the World*. Berkeley, CA: University of California.

the stimulation of his sensory receptors is all the evidence anybody has had to go on, ultimately, in arriving at his picture of the world. Why not just see how this construction really proceeds? Why not settle for psychology?[44]

Quine's proposal is to see epistemology as a study of our cognitive activities and capacities. As he writes,

> Epistemology, or something like it, simply falls into place as a chapter of psychology and hence of natural science. It studies a natural phenomenon, viz., a physical human subject. This human subject is accorded a certain experimental controlled input – certain patterns or irradiation in assorted frequencies, for instance – and in the fullness of time the subject delivers as output a description of the three-dimensional external world and its history. The relation between the meager input and the torrential output is a relation that we are prompted to study for somewhat the same reasons that always prompted epistemology; namely, to see how the evidence relates to theory, and in what way one's theory of nature transcends any available evidence.[45]

Epistemology is a branch of natural science. Needless to say that this naturalised epistemology project stands in sharp contrast to traditional epistemology. Quinean Naturalists study the relation between sensory input states (two-dimensional irradiation of retina in the case of our visual receptors, our eyes), and behavioural output states, which can be done entirely from the 3rd person perspective, whereas traditional epistemology crucially involves the 1st person perspective. Notably consciousness plays hardly a part in Quine's naturalised epistemology, whereas it is essential for believing and justifying in the sense of being able to provide reasons for one's beliefs, weigh them, assesses them, and having access to one's mental states. In fact, Quine urges us to abandon the traditional justification-focused epistemology and replace it with the natural science of cognition. But then what about knowledge, for which, according to the standard definition, justification is necessary? Should the concept of knowledge also be abandoned? Attempts to answer these questions contributed to the rise of current externalist epistemology, to which I shall turn in the next Chapter.

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[44] Quine, Willard van Orman (1969) *Ontological Relativity and Other Essays*. New York: Columbia University Press. p. 75.
[45] Ibid. p.82-83.

III.   Externalism and its Critics

III.1 Preamble

After Quine's naturalistic project and Gettier's criticisms, the situation in epistemology has changed with respect to the key concepts of justification and knowledge. Many philosophers tried to respond to the Gettier situations and provided Gettier-proof amendments of traditional JTB analysis, and we have met a few of them in the previous Chapter (JTB+, J*TB, DJTB). Externalist views form one kind of such Gettier-proof views. In the current section, I investigate the main features of externalist views and discuss the main criticisms of externalism.

In internalist views of knowledge, the main justification-conferring properties come from the subject and are −or should be − immediately accessible upon reflection. Furthermore, the rational ability to acquire true beliefs makes it a person's epistemic duty to acquire true and only true beliefs (the Locke-Clifford Imperative), and makes a person responsible for the beliefs that he holds. In comparison, the basic tenet of externalist views of knowledge and justification is that knowledge and justification are a matter of what is external to the subject, a matter of relations between mind and reality, between word and world. Instead of reasons, externalists demand justified belief to be the result of reliable cognitive processes, which are processes involving the knowing subject and the 'external' world. For example, there should be an appropriate causal connection between the (contents of the) mental state of belief and actual states of affairs. In what follows, I discuss externalist features such as the external connection, reliability and counterfactuality.

III.2 Features of Externalism

III.2.1 External Connection

Certain internalist intuitions seem fairly common-sensical. For example, I can know that I have a headache or that yesterday I remembered some episode from my childhood without anyone else knowing it. When asked, I could explain how I came to know such propositions. First-hand experiences seem the most trustworthy and giving strong support for our

beliefs. On the other hand, this is not the whole epistemic story. Consider children. It would be hard to deny that they possess a considerable amount of knowledge, although their reflective capacities are poorly developed. According to the traditional JTB account, their true beliefs could never attain the status of knowledge.

Consider people who know certain things without knowing how they have come to know them or they don't know the justification for a particular true belief − perhaps forgotten. When the held belief that *p* is true, even if the person has no justification for it, we infer that the person should *know* that *p*. This statement can be further explained with the case of the *chicken-sexer*, who comes to know that a chicken is a rooster rather than hen without knowing how his belief came about. He just looks at a chicken and forms a true belief about its gender. His belief is not justified by reasons accessible upon reflection, so that according to JTB and sibling analyses, his beliefs do not amount to knowledge. But we can clearly see that he has the ability to form true beliefs about chickens.

Somewhat similarly, many of our everyday beliefs are formed impulsively, without even having a chance to think through reasons, yet we seem to know many things without reflecting on them. I form a belief that my neighbour is wearing an orange hat just by looking at him. This belief is true because he is actually wearing it at the time when I see him in the morning leaving his house. Do I really have to collect reasons in order to promote my true belief to knowledge? Surely not. I know what I see. However, not according to internalist views. These views (JTB and variants) make us know far less than we think we do. For example many true beliefs we form on a daily basis of our immediate surroundings no longer qualify as knowledge.

These considerations put pressure on the internalist accessibility requirement. Perhaps knowledge can also be gained without awareness of justifying reasons, in some other way. Such another way is by means of a relation between beliefs and facts. This relation is 'external' because the subject is often unable to access the belief-grounding process upon reflection.

On the basis of earlier-presented counterexamples, externalists reject accessibility upon reflection and argue that knowledge does not require the subject to possess justifying *reasons*. They favour another analysis of knowledge: Kn(S, *p*), which can be regarded as a result of the external causal connection between B(S, *p*) and states of affairs.

In 1973, David Armstrong coined the term 'Externalism' in his book *Belief, Truth and Knowledge*:

According to 'Externalist' accounts of non-inferential knowledge, what makes a true non-inferential belief a case of knowledge is some natural relation which holds between the belief-state, and the situation which makes the true belief true. It is a matter of certain relation holding between the believer and the world. It is important to notice that, unlike 'Cartesian' and 'Initial Credibility' theories, Externalist theories are regularly developed as theories of the nature of knowledge generally and not simply as theories of non-inferential knowledge.[46].

This is not a novel view in the history of philosophy; allusions to externalist epistemic views have been stated before. For example, Armstrong points out that Plato hints to an externalist view in *Meno*, but then quickly criticises it without even starting to consider its prospects carefully.[47] Frank Ramsey was the one to maintain explicitly a similar view concerning knowledge and critisized internalist access as necessary for having knowledge. In his short essay 'Knowledge', he proposed the view that

a belief [is] knowledge if it is (i) true, (ii) certain, (iii) obtained by a reliable process. (…) We might then say that a belief obtained by a reliable process must be caused by what are not beliefs, in a way or with accompaniments that can be more or less relied on to give true beliefs, and if in this train of causation occur other intermediary beliefs, these must all be true ones. [48]

In internalist views of knowledge, good reasons for thinking that a proposition is true, justifying beliefs, play the main part. The Gettier cases show that some internally justified true beliefs fall short of knowledge. In externalist views of knowledge, good reasons are absent and replaced with relations between beliefs and external things, such as states of affairs, facts, events, and what have you, and consequently direct access to one's reasons
is no longer necessary. If we look at a red rose, we immediately believe that there is a red rose in front of us; such perceptual beliefs are caused by the 'external' world, no reasons are brought to bear to justify this belief. The following parallel vividly illustrates the external view.

Armstrong proposes to interpret the concept of knowledge as a thermometer. Whenever the thermometer-reading lawfully corresponds to the actual temperature of a given environment, this state coincides with the factual information, produces a true belief and can be considered a case of knowledge; whenever the thermometer shows

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[46] Armstrong, David (1973) *Belief, Truth and Knowledge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p.157.
[47] Ibid., p.159.

[48] Ramsey, Frank. (1931) *The Foundations of Mathematics and Other Logical Essays*. Ed. by R.B. Braithwite. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. p. 258.

incorrect temperature-readings of some environment, a false belief is formed. Of course, there might be cases where the thermometer reading corresponds to the actual temperature of the environment, and the belief formed happens to be true, but it cannot qualify as a case of knowledge. If, for example, the thermometer is broken and it accidentally shows the temperature corresponding to the actual temperature of this environment, the true belief was formed just by accident and therefore it does not amount to knowledge. (This is just like Russell's broken clock that tells twice a day the right time, so that when you look at it at those two times, the clock reading provides lucky knowledge of the time.) To translate the thermometer model into epistemological language, this example shows that a belief is justified if the subject's belief that p comes to reflect the actual state of affairs p adequately. Armstrong:

> When a true belief unsupported by reasons stands to the situation truly believed to exist as a thermometer-reading in a good thermometer stands to the actual temperature, then we have non-inferential knowledge.[49]

The connection between true belief states and the world may be *law-like*. What is a law-like connection? We mention several features of a law-like connection. *First*, the law-like connections should be open to scientific investigation.

Secondly, law-like connections ground subjunctive conditionals. For instance, if the temperature were different, the thermometer would not have shown the reading that it actually shows. If a certain state of affairs described by p were different, then the belief that p would be false.

Thirdly, law-like connections are often independent of the conscious reach of subject. In other words, they can be realized irrespective of whether there is anybody to be aware of them.

Externalist views of knowledge using causal external connections face the problem of causal *overdetermination*, of which we give an example [50]

(ii) Suppose Mary comes to form the belief (G) that George is at home in virtue of hearing his voice from the kitchen. In fact, it is the recorded past conversation of him that is played on a recording-device. Hence her belief (G) is false. But, as it appears later, George is in the basement at home doing some craftwork, in which case her belief (G) has an appropriate connection and is true, but should not be regarded as a case of knowledge due to the fact that believing (G) was based on

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[49] Ibid., p.166.
[50] Skyrms, Bryan (1967), 'The Explication of 'X knows that p', *Journal of Philosophy* **64**, pp.373-389.

hearing George's recorded voice from the kitchen. Hence, the situation we face here is that for the same belief (*G*) we have two different appropriate connections.

These examples show that causal chains sometimes produce true beliefs but not knowledge. Not all causal chains that connect the belief and the fact that *p* are appropriate. Not all of them give rise to knowledge. Some taste like Gettier: epistemic luck if one were to allow 'inappropriate' connections --- but externalists don't. Knowledge needs more than some causal connection – the causal connection has to be an *appropriate* one, i.e. one that would lead us to the truth most of the time, and recording-devices do not. Whence we arrive at the second feature of externalism: reliability.

III.2.2 Reliability of Cognitive Processes

Apart from the causal connection between belief and the world, what matters for externalist is the way this causal connection is generated. Hence the second externalist feature that is vividly be expressed by John Greco's slogan

Aetiology Matters![51]

The problem of overdetermination is solved by choosing 'the right cause' of the true belief, *the right* cause is the one that leads 'reliably' to the true belief, and *reliably* means that similar processes generically lead to knowledge. Consider the following illustration.

Suppose a brick falls on John's head and, as a result, forms a belief that his car is blue. And, indeed, his car is blue. Clearly, John's true belief does not count as knowledge. Why not? Because the way his belief was produced does not usually produce true beliefs. Dizzy people generically babble. We do not want to acquire true beliefs by bricks falling on our heads, or taking XTC pills, making LSD trips, dream vividly, etc. All beliefs acquired in this fashion fall short of knowledge even though they happen to be true. These belief-generating processes are unreliable.

Armstrong points out:

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[51] Aetiology: the study of causes.

the question in what areas non-inferential knowledge is found seems to be a *psychological* question, a question about the cognitive structure and the powers of the human mind.[52]

Such a naturalistic standpoint echoes Quine's urge to naturalize epistemology. The subject is a living organism with particular natural cognitive capacities and it is the task of cognitive psychology to study these capacities and asses their reliability.

Externalists delve into the causal history of a particular process, and try to identify those processes that have a tendency to produce a relatively high degree of true beliefs. In virtue of this truth-conduciveness the process is considered *reliable*. There are two notions that need further inquiry: (i) cognitive process and (ii) reliability.

(i) Process should be understood as a *procedure*, which takes cognitive states as 'inputs' and generates 'outputs' – believing certain proposition at a certain time, that is, doxastic propositional attitudes. Simple reliabilist theory is sometimes also called 'historical' or 'generic reliabilism', because a belief here is considered as properly formed when it has aetiological 'ancestry' in a reliable process. Here, contrary to received epistemological tradition, where the justification of belief is judged merely by the actual situation of a subject, warrant for knowledge is derived from the history. The process is still sound, even if some of the past cognitive operations were not successful. It is only required that cognitive processes were reliable, i.e., produce a fair amount of true beliefs most of the time. In Goldman's words:

> For a person to know a proposition *p*, it is not enough that the final phase of the process that leads to his belief in *p* be sound. It is also necessary that some entire history of the process be sound (i.e., reliable or conditionally reliable).[53]

It is interesting to note that only by means of a reliable method it is possible to redraw the line between what does and what does not count as knowledge. Reliability contains the aspect of contingency and is sufficient for knowledge. What is not required, however, is that the procedure is fail-proof.

(ii) Which processes are reliable? Goldman maintains that confused reasoning, wishful thinking, believing hunches, guesswork, reliance on emotional attachment or hasty generalization all are unreliable. In contrast, memory, good reasoning, perception and

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[52] Ibid., p.165.
[53] Goldman, Alvin. (1979; 1992) 'What is Justified Belief?' In *Liaisons: Philosophy Meets the Cognitive and Social Sciences*. Bradford Books/MIT Press. p.119.

introspection are reliable because they share the feature of general truth-conduciveness of beliefs produced. Our cognitive faculties are reliable, but Goldman notices that this also depends on the conditions under which 'input' experiences occur. For example, if myopic Martin sees a squirrel on the tree just for some seconds from afar and he does not wear his glasses, his belief that he has just seen a squirrel rather than a bird is not reliable. But if Gertrude has good vision and she has seen a dog from a couple of meters distance, her perceptual belief is considerably more reliable. Goldman:

> visual beliefs formed from brief or hasty scanning, or where the perceptual object is a long distance off, tend to be wrong more often than visual beliefs formed from detailed and   leisurely scanning, or where the object is in reasonable proximity.[54]

If beliefs need not be certain, what is then the degree of reliability required for a belief to count as knowledge? Reliabilists are not univocal in their answers to this question. The only clear shared constraint is that the reliable cognitive process need not be a guarantee for certainty. In Goldman's words, there is only a tendency that reliable processes produce true beliefs rather than false ones. It is enough that the belief-forming processes yield true beliefs most of the time.

We have discussed which cognitive processes are appropriate and reliable so as to produce knowledge. Reliabilists also demand reliable processes to be *robust*: reliable processes should also generate true beliefs in relevant counterfactual situations. This is the third feature of Externalism that we shall elucidate in the next section.

III.2.3 Counterfactuals

Exernalism needs to specify in which environments our cognitive faculties succeed and where they fail to generate knowledge. This will be achieved by an appeal to the framework of possible worlds. Quite understandably, not all possible worlds are equally relevant. Thus, it is worthwhile to narrow the scope and consider only the 'live options'and 'genuine possibilities', i.e. the situations that lie very close to actual situations, ones that are most likely to occur in the actual world. This requirement poses the task to set the criteria for discriminating between the nearby possible worlds and the more distant ones.

In this article *Discrimination and Perceptual Knowledge*[55], Goldman suggests that the concept of knowledge gets its content

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[54] Ibid. p.114.
[55] Goldman, Alvin (1976). "Discrimination and Perceptual Knowledge". *The Journal of Philosophy* **73** pp. 771-791. Reprinted in *Liaisons: Philosophy Meets the Cognitive and Social Sciences*. Bradford Books. 1991. pp. 85-104.

through the notion of reliability of the belief-forming processes, which is defined not only though the actual production of true beliefs, but also though production of beliefs in relevant counterfactual situations. In this account, he emphasizes one more aspect of the verb 'to know' that implies a property of discriminating true belief that amounts to knowledge from its relevant alternatives that are likely to occur in certain actual situation. The concept of *relevance* here means referring to situations that are close to the actual world.

Goldman ponders the situation of Henry in Barn County. Say, Henry acquires many justified true beliefs about his environment, but also justified false ones when it concerns barn-facades. Goldman writes:

> A person knows that *p*, I suggest, if the actual state of affairs in which *p* is true is *distinguishable* or *discriminable* by him from the relevant possible state of affairs in which *p* is false. If there is a relevant possible state of affairs in which *p* is false and which is indistinguishable by him from the actual state of affairs, then he fails to know that *p*.[56]

In the first formulation, there is no relevant alternative to the barn so it can be said in that case that Henry knows there is a barn in the field; in the second formulation, the fake barn introduces such an alternative, therefore in that case Henry's belief that there is a barn in the field instead of the facade is false and, consequently, Henry does not know there is a barn in the field. Fake barns create a relevant possibility of taking it as a real barn and not being able to distinguish between these states.

This solution of the Gettier problem of epistemic luck raises the question of the criteria for selecting the alternatives. Goldman points out that only the possible situations that are the most similar to the actual world can form a feasible set of relevant alternatives. Regularities are very important: they are the most promising candidates because there is a high likelihood to see them in action many times in the future.

Goldman relativizes the selection of the relevant alternatives to the subject, her circumstances and to the so-called DOE (Distance-Orientation-Environment) relationship with the object, on the basis of which a belief is formed. According to Goldman, the process of cognition may be regarded as a two-stage procedure:

1. one is forming perceptions out of (sensory) data;
2. secondly, the beliefs are produced out of previously formed perceptions.

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[56] Ibid p.88.

In order for the process of cognition to succeed, those two stages should be in harmony with each other and each stage-specific discrimination process should be sufficiently effective in yielding true beliefs. Goldman:

> *S* has perceptual knowledge if and only if not only does his perceptual mechanism produce true belief, but there are no counterfactual situations in which the same belief would be produced via an equivalent percept in which the belief would be false.[57]

Granted counterfactuality, what are the general conditions for knowledge? When we claim that reliable cognitive processes generate beliefs that are factually connected to the world, we want this connection to be sensitive, or, in Nozick's terms, to track the truth: if the facts change out there in the world, we expect the truthfulness of our beliefs to change accordingly.

Nozick[58] states four conditions for knowledge, explicated in terms of counterfactual, or subjunctive, conditionals (a counterfactual is a subjunctive conditional with a false antecedent, hence 'counter-factual', better terminology: counter-actuals!) The conditions of *p* being true (1) and S believing that *p* (2) are necessary. The third condition, which in the traditional account of knowledge is that of epistemic justification, is now actually split into two subjunctive conditions:

(3) If *p* weren't true, *S* wouldn't believe that *p*;

(4) If *p* were true, then *S* would believe it.

In abbreviation-style:

(Noz) $[\mathrm{Tr}(p) \wedge \mathrm{B}(S, p) \wedge (\neg \mathrm{Tr}(p) \Rightarrow \neg \mathrm{B}(S, p)) \wedge (\mathrm{Tr}(p) \Rightarrow \mathrm{B}(S, p))]$
iff $\mathrm{Kn}(S, p)$,

where the double arrow $(\Rightarrow)$ is the subjunctive conditional. Although (Noz) rules out lucky knowlegde (Gettier cases), as Nozick argues, (Noz) does not rule out the possibility of holding a false belief passing for knowledge.

Nozick's analysis (Noz) of $\mathrm{Kn}(S, p)$ explicates the subjunctive conditions using standard possible world semantics. Therefore, the third condition may also be put like this:

$\neg \mathrm{Tr}(p) \Rightarrow \neg \mathrm{B}(S, p)$ is true (in the actual world) iff
    in all closest worlds where *p* is false, *S* does not believe that *p*.

[57] Ibid. p.98.
[58] Nozick, Robert. (1981) *Philosophical Explanations*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

If the subject's belief that *p* is merely accidentally true, as in Gettier's examples, there exists a proximate possible world where *S* has this belief but it happens to be false (because Henry has his eyes directed at a barn facade), and therefore fails to be knowledge (because not true)

This analysis is also called *truth-tracking*. For a belief to become a case of knowledge, it is not sufficient that *S* believes that *p*; in addition, this belief should also 'track' or 'discriminate', as Goldman has called it, the truth among similar possible worlds or relevant alternatives. The combination of the subjunctive conditionals in (Noz) means that in the closest possible worlds, where *p* is false *S* does not believe that *p*, and *S* believes it, where *p* is true.

I stop here with the discussion of the main features of externalism. As we mentioned before, this view emerged as an attempt to look for the 'fourth condition' after the Gettier counterexamples had been introduced. Its goal was to address the issues that the traditional account of knowledge failed to address, and to provide an alternative to internalism.

However, as the opponents of externalism point out, externalism faces new problems, which do not threaten the traditional account of knowledge. We address these problems for externalism next.

III.3 Criticism of Externalism

In this Section, I consider the following three objections to externalism.

1. The skeptical problem, illustrated by Descartes' Evil Demon and Putnam's Evil Scientist; this challenges the necessity of reliability for knowledge.
2. The meta-incoherence problem, illustrated with the clairvoyance case, challenges the sufficiency of reliability for knowledge.
3. The generality problem, which is related to the individuation of the processes underlying knowledge-acquisition and to the scope of the beliefs they produce.

III.3.1 The Skeptical Problem (Evil Demon and Evil Scientist)

The Evil Demon problem is a skeptical problem (originaly raised by Descartes and re-introduced into contemporary epistemic debate by Cohen[59] and Lehrer[60]), which questions the necessity of reliability for

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59 Cohen, Stewat. (1984). Justification and Truth. *Philosophical Studies* 46: 279-96.
60 Cohen, Stewart and Lehrer, Keith. (1983). 'Justification, Truth, and Knowledge'. *Synthese* 55.

justification. The counterexample goes as follows: imagine your own identical twin, say Mary. She has identical cognitive capacities: her memory is as good s yours; she has the same experiences and forms the same beliefs out of them. Normally, in the actual world her beliefs are true and reliable and therefore they constitute (externalist) knowledge. Let us assume further that Mary is a victim of an Evil Scientist, who feeds directly into Mary's brain signals that she experiences as perceptions; nothing what Mary appears to see exists. If she forms a belief that she sees an orange in front of her, this belief is *false* because a product of evil deception: there isn't an orange in front of her at all. All her perceptual beliefs are false and, as it appears, Mary is not at all an ordinary human being but a brain in a vat (Putnam)[61].

Now let us go back to reliabilism. Recall that according to reliabilism, justified belief is the one which is produced by a reliable process. Intuitively, if our intellectual twins have the same experiences and form their beliefs in the same way as we do, these beliefs should be equally justified (identity intuition). But these cognitive processes are not reliable in the demon's world, because there they produce false beliefs. Therefore reliabilist face the problem: if reliability is necessary for justification and in the demon world cognitive processes are not reliable, can the beliefs of the victims be justified. Here we face the conflict of an identity intuition and reliabilist argument: intuitively Mary's beliefs should be justified because she is our identical twin. However, her beliefs do not seem to meet the reliabilist conditions and cannot be justified. Reliabilists have to deal with the question whether it is possible to have justified beliefs even if they are not produced by a reliable process.

III.3.2 The Meta-incoherence Problem (BonJour's Clairvoyance)

Another problem raised for externalism tries to show that reliability is *not sufficient* for knowledge. Take the clairvoyance case, which depicts the situation where a belief is reliably produced but cannot be regarded as justified. For example, Norman possesses a perfectly reliable power of clairvoyance and is always able to tell exactly where the President is (suppose she is in New York City). News reports say that the President actually is in Washington DC, but because of an emergency the President happens to be in New York City. Norman himself does not have any evidence to endorse or to deny his belief that the President is

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[61] Putnam, Hilary. (1981) *Reason, Truth and History*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.

in New York City, but it is formed on the basis of this unfailing capacity for predicting the whereabouts of the President and it happens to be true. So, BonJour[62] concludes, the belief that the President is in New York City is produced *reliably*. But is it justified? Reliabilists, according to BonJour, should reply in the affirmative, which is repugnant to reason. The clairvoyance case shows that externalism cannot provide us with a correct view of knowledge, or so BonJour concludes.

III.3.3 The Generality Problem

The generality problem pertains to the individuation of a reliable process. It concerns the kind and scope of belief-forming processes. Goldman himself notices that difficulty and gives it the name of the *generality* problem. The question is that of defining the form of a belief-producing process. How broad or how narrow the relations between inputs and outputs ought to be? The definition of the scope of a reliable process has an impact on evaluation of reliability of a belief produced by that process.

 Although Goldman himself detected this problem in his analysis, his proposal to address it, did not seem sufficient to other philosophers. As Richard Feldman points out:

> we need an idea of what the relevant types of belief-forming processes are. Without such an account, we simply have no idea what consequences the proposal has since we have no idea which process types are relevant to the evaluation of any particular beliefs.[63]

According to Goldman, to judge the reliability of a process requires that the kind of process under consideration has some *statistical* properties, notably the truth and falsehood ratio of beliefs produced by that process. This makes it mandatory to make sure *which* beliefs are produced by the kind of process under consideration, and what that *kind* of process is. If, for example, we were to talk about Peter seeing a dos and forming a belief 'the dog is running in the park', where should we stop specifying: Peter having a perception, Peter seeing, seeing a dog, seeing a dog in broad daylight, seeing a dog in a daylight on the 20th November 2010, in Helsinki, etc.? Which description of the process is relevant for the externalist account of reliability-based knowledge?

 There are two issues associated with judging the reliability of a process. If the scope is not specified too broadly, there is a greater likelihood to have more false beliefs admitted under the heading of one

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[62] BonJour (1985). *The Structure of Empirical Knowledge*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
[63] Feldman, Richard, 'Reliability and Justification', *The Monist* **68** (1985) p. 160.

process. On the other hand, if the scope is specified too narrowly, there is a risk that the process suits only a single belief. This *generality problem* challenges neither the sufficiency nor the necessity of the reliability condition for knowledge, but rather focuses on the underpinning of reliability: cognitive processes and their scope as belief-producing processes.

These are thus the problems externalism: skepticism, meta-incoherence, generality. Externalist epistemologists offer different ways either to overcome these problems, which I am not going to discuss further here. Some of the solutions are discussed later on in **Ch. VII**. On this note I finish the overview of the main features of internalism and externalism as well as the objections to both positions. In the next Chapter, I am going to inquire into the possible relationships of both views; but first an explicit statement of the current PhD-Thesis and what it attempts to contribute to epistemology.

III.4   Leading Question of this Dissertation

Textbook wisdom has it that Internalism and Externalism are opposing and competing epistemological views. Internalism thrives on the intuition that

> (**Int**) justification is necessary for knowledge, and *to justify* presupposes the ability to submit reasons for one's belief, be aware of them, being able to discuss, explain, communicate, judge and question them, and that consequently involves normativity,

whereas Externalism thrives on the intuition that
> (**Ext**) knowledge consists of true beliefs that are produced by reliable cognitive processes,such as causal processes, of which one does not need to be aware at all, and where   consequently normativity is not involved.[64]

Internalism and Externalism are usually considered as opposing and competing epistemological views, as is recognized by some epistemologists, like Armstrong (1973), Dretske (1979) or early BonJour (1985). Debates in epistemology therefore have the general character of making trouble for Internalism or for Externalism and then trying to make these troubles go away by subtle revisions or weakening

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[64] Normativity of externalist epistemology is a matter of debate. Some philosophers, such as Plantinga (1993), Kim (1988) argue that externalism can also accommodate normativity

epistemological claims. Some have suggested that Internalism and Externalism talk past each other and that two kinds of propositional knowledge have to be sharply distinguished; then the ensuing relationship between internalism and externalism stands in need of clarification. If that is correct, then textbook wisdom is wrong.

The possible relationships between Internalism and Externalism have not been in the limelight of epistemological inquiry until quite recently. As noted before, epistemologists were mostly focused on providing arguments for one side of the debate and criticizing the other. However, the intuitions underlying both epistemological views have some plausibility: on one hand, it seems intuitively correct that we have internal access to our own mental states; on the other hand, a lot of knowledge is acquired without thinking about the justifying reasons for each our beliefs. Internalism supports the view of an individual as an autonomous thinker; externalism supports the view that we acquire a great deal of knowledge without reflecting on justifying reasons of our everyday beliefs. Can these intuitions be somehow reconciled when we take them to be about the same concept of knowledge? Bernecker (2007) has introduced the obvious term 'compatibilism' for views that answer this question in the affirmative.

In summary, the leading question of this dissertation is the following two-fold groups of questions:

1. What are the possible relationships between Internalism and Externalism in epistemology? Can they somehow be combined or are they destined to be rivals about one and the same concept of propositional knowledge?
2. When several kinds of epistemological views of propositional knowledge that do justice to both intuitions (**Int**) and (**Ext**) are possible, is there one that stands out as the current best view?

In the remainder of dissertation, I shall attempt to answer these questions.

IV. Relationships between Internalism and Externalism

IV.1 The Meaning of Compatibilism

The aim of this Chapter is to give a definition of compatibilism and investigate the possible relationships between Internalism and Externalism. First we discern three kinds of relationships between Internalism and Externalism:

(1)   *Hostile*: Internalism and Externalism are logically incompatible, mutually exclusive; join them and you fuse a logical explosion generating contradictions all over the place.

(2a) *Friendly*; Indifference: Internalism and Externalism are compatible, but they are talking about two different (although possibly related) propositional knowledge concepts: normative, justifiable knowledge and a-normative, caused knowledge;

(2b) *Friendly*; Harmony: Internalism and Externalism are compatible; they are complementary and about one concept of propositional knowledge.

Let us rehearse the intuitions once more for Internalism and Externalism:

(**Int**) Justification is necessary for knowledge, and *to justify* presupposes the ability to submit reasons for one's belief, be aware of them, being able to discuss, explain, communicate, judge and question them, and that consequently involves normativity.

(**Ext**) Knowledge is constituted by true beliefs produced by reliable cognitive processes, by causal processes, of which one does not need to be aware at all, and where consequently normativity is not involved.

First we inquire into the meaning of compatibilism. The *Oxford English Dictionary* provides the following description of the adjective 'compatible': 'Mutually tolerant; capable of being admitted together, or of existing together in the same subject; accordant, consistent, congruous, agreeable.' For our purposes, it is important to emphasize

that two *compatible* positions should be 'complementary' with respect to a common subject. They may focus on different yet unrelated properties of the same subject of predication. For example, propositions 'being a good carpenter' and 'having three children' can be applicable to lots of human beings but are unrelated. In other words, their compatibility is empty i.e., it consists in no more than that the ascription of both properties to the same subject does not lead to contradictions. A compatibilist view should achieve more than absence of contradictions: it must accommodate both internalist and externalist intuitions (**Int**) and (**Ext**). Iff it does, we call it *complementary.*

But of course compatibility of two philosophical views should imply *logical compatibility*, that is, *consistency*: a compatibilist view must not generate contradictions. This entails that no contradictory properties are assigned to the concept of propositional knowledge. Now I propose to *refine* the concept of logical compatibility, so as to have different *degrees* of compatibility, all of which however imply logical compatibility.

Statements P and Q are **compatible to degree n** iff

  (i) P and Q are consistent, and
  (ii)   there are n concepts that are expressed in both P and Q .

So two statements that have no concepts in common (are intuitively about completely different subjects), usually are consistent, but compatible to degree 0. Next, consider these two philosophical theses:
  (A) Statement 'P' is true iff 'P' corresponds to a fact.
  (B) Statement 'P' is true iff P (T-Schema).
(A) and (B) are usually taken to be consistent (i). They share the concepts of proposition and of truth (ii). So they are compatible to degree 2. (They also share 'iff', but that expresses a logical connective and we don't count them.)

Two propositions may not contradict each other because they are simply talking about two different issues: they involve different and unrelated concepts. For example, 'The universe began with a Big Bang' and 'My grandmother was born in Saint-Petersburg' are compatible to degree 0; and 'I have a Lithuanian passport' and 'Several exo-planets have been discovered during the past years' provide another example. Compatibility 0 will be difficult to realise in epistemology, because both intuitions that have to be accommodated mention 'truth' and 'belief', so a compatibilist view that somehow unites Internalism and Externalism must have these two concepts *in common*, and therefore do not involve *unrelated* concepts.

Nonetheless, one may take Internalism and Externalism to be about different concepts of propositional knowledge, as announced before. For one, Foley[65] prefers to take *knowledge* and *justification* as *unrelated* concepts, which have different functions in our epistemic endeavours. For example, I can be *justified* in believing that I see a glass of water in front of me, even if I am a victim of an evil demon and all my perceptual experiences are illusions. On the other hand, I can come to *know* that John is wearing green glasses without contemplating supporting reasons, when that belief is true and is reliably produced. Another example is to distinguish between *knowledge* and *understanding*, and explicate knowledge in externalist terms and understanding in internalist terms (Kvanvig, 2003)[66]. Only a semantic move away from Foley and Kvanvig is to hold there are two distinct concepts of propositional knowledge (see above) that are confusingly expressed (in English) by the substantive 'knowledge' and the verb 'to know'. Take the belief 'There is a goat in the field'. I can have one kind of knowledge if my belief is formed by a reliable process, with no further conditions required, and possess different kind of knowledge only if, in addition to the former requirement, I would also have access to the reliability of grounds for holding that belief. That is the way Sosa (1991[67], 2003[68], 2007[69]) distinguishes between 'animal' and 'reflective' knowledge (see further **Ch. V**, Section V.2).

Another way to make Internalism en Externalism compatible is to become a pluralist about justification, as Alston[70] (2005) defends: that there is not one kind of justification, which is Internalist in nature, but a plurality of kinds, some of which are Internalist, some Externalist, and perhaps some even a combination of both.

In the remainder of this dissertation, we shall continue first with the hostile relationship of incompatibility of Internalism and Externalism, followed by the friendly kinds of compatibilist views.

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[65] Foley, Richard (2003) 'A Trial Separation between the Theory of Knowledge and the Theory of Justified Belief'. *Ernest Sosa and His Critics*. Ed by J. Greco. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
[66] Kvanvig, Jonathan (2003). *The Value of Knowledge and the Pursuit of Understanding*. Cambridge: Camridge University Press.
[67] Sosa, Ernest (1991) *Knowledge in Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University press.
[68] Sosa, Ernest, BonJour, Laurence (2003) *Epistemic Justification: Internalism vs. Externalism, Foundations vs. Virtues*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
[69] Sosa, Ernest (2007) *A Virtue Epistemology: Apt Belief and Reflective Knowledge*. **Vol I**. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
[70] Alston, William (2005) *Beyond Justification*. New York: Cornell University Press.

IV.2 Hostile Relationship: Incompatibility

The first possible relationship between Internalism and Externalism is that of straight incompatibility. Both Internalists and Externalists of this persuasion hold that they cannot be reconciled; there is only one correct view of propositional knowledge. For one, Laurence BonJour [71] explicitly rejects externalism as a plausible account of knowledge. At the end of the **Ch. III**, we discussed the meta-incoherence problem for Externalism illustrated with the clairvoyance case due to BonJour. He writes:

> Descartes, for example, would have been quite unimpressed by the suggestion that his problematic beliefs about the external world were justified if only they were in fact reliably caused, whether or not he had any reason for thinking this to be so. (…) Thus the suggestion embodied in externalism would have been regarded as simply irrelevant to the main epistemological issue, so much so the philosopher who suggested it would have been taken either to be hopelessly confused or to be simply changing the subject. (…) My own conviction is that this reaction is, in fact correct, that externalism, like a number of other distinctively 'analytic solutions' to classical philosophical problems reflects an inadequate appreciation of the problem at which it is aimed. '[72]

To rephrase BonJour's account into more positive terms, there is only one kind of knowledge and that kind definitely is internal. Intuitions purporting to indicate that 'knowledge' can also be acquired *without* any conscious interference or reflection either is wrong or about something else than knowledge, such as 'caused true beliefs'. If this is correct, then Externalism is false.

Looking from the externalist perspective, internalism does not fare very well either. Internal accessibility is too much to ask for in many undeniable instances of knowledge. Alvin Goldman criticizes Internalism for wrongly assuming that the grounds for justification can be properly selected solely from internal perspective:

> There is no guarantee, or even a hint of a guarantee, that our intuitive epistemic judgments could have been properly chosen from the internal standpoint. (…) We have seen that propositions of logic are internally problematic. Beliefs in such propositions, therefore, cannot be allowed in the internal standpoint; (…) an appropriate doxastic practice *vis-á-vis* propositions of logic partly depends on our powers of reasoning and intuition. Well chosen doxastic instructions should reflect the scope and accuracy of our imaginary and computational faculties. The exact nature of

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[71] BonJour, Laurence (1985) *The Structure of Empirical Knowledge*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press
[72] Ibid. pp.36-7.

these powers and faculties, however, is a contingent matter, so there cannot be doxastic attitudes concerning them from the internal standpoint.[73]

On the basis of these considerations, Goldman draws a conclusion about the internalist position in general:

…should we conclude that internalism is a mirage, a conception that beckons to us with no real prospect of satisfaction? Many epistemologists would shrink from this conclusion, since it would leave nothing but externalism to satisfy our need for a theory of justification. But I shall argue that we should be thoroughly content with externalism, that it offers everything one can reasonably expect (if not everything one has always wanted) in a theory of justification.[74]

If externalism provides the right view of knowledge, then internalism is false.

Let us summarize. The preceding passages indicate the ways in which some prominent proponents of either internalism or externalism see the other position as an implausible if not incorrect alternative. One conclusion is that we should be arguing for one alternative, the correct one. But which one is that? Another conclusion is to recoil in skepticism. Yet another conclusion is that neither internalism nor externalism *alone* provides the correct view of knowledge, but that some combination does. This means to reject the incompatibility and hence mutual exclusivity of internalism and externalism. Another reason to doubt the mutual exclusivity is that there is a notable diversity between internalist and externalist views, as noted by Bergmann (2006).[75] He notices that there are different varieties of internalism and externalism, some more moderate and other more radical versions of both views. Perhaps
a careful selection of features of varieties of externalism and internalism can be combined to yield a compatibilist view.

IV.3 Friendly Relationships

IV.3.1 Indifference: Foley and the Division of Epistemic Labour

Apart from the initial reluctance to combine internalist and externalist elements in epistemology, which was discussed in the previous section, there also exists a variety of other options, which make

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[73] Goldman, Alvin. (2001) 'The Internalist Conception of Justification'. Reprinted in *Epistemology: Internalism and Externalism*. Ed. by H. Kornblith. Oxford: Blackwell.. pp.55-57
[74] Ibid p.59.
[75] Bergmann, Michael (2006). *Justification Without Awareness*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

an attempt to combine the two views together. The first option that I am going to discuss now allows for both internalism and externalism to play a role in epistemology, yet argues that this can be done only if we see internalism and externalism as pertaining to different epistemic states. Because of this independence, internalism and externalism can co-exist in epistemology as two *indifferent* projects. Arguments in favour of and against internalism are *indifferent* for externalism in so far as they pertain to justification, and conversely. In other words, the indifference of the two theories 'means that each theory has its own clearly defined area and does not interfere with the other. There are situations when people clearly have knowledge without having justifying reasons to support their beliefs. On the other hand, there are situations when people would have all the internal conditions met for justification yet their belief would not be true and would not amount to knowledge. On the basis of such situations we can question whether knowledge and justification are as intimately connected as it was traditionally thought to be. It seems that they can be separated as performing different functions in epistemology. Internalist intuitions guide the concept of epistemic justification, while externalist intuitions guide the concept of knowledge.

The proponents of the latter attitude, like e.g., Foley (2003), come up with a surprising suggestion. Let me explain why I call it 'surprising': if we look from the point of view of the traditional analysis of knowledge, justification and knowledge are closely related. Justification was traditionally considered to be the condition that turns true belief into knowledge and epistemologists. Some decades ago, both internalists and externalists still used the notions of justification and knowledge alongside one another. For them, an appropriate account of justification would turn true belief into knowledge. Only quite recently these two notions became regarded as separable, and that is the assumption Foley rests his suggestion on. Foley defines an assumption of tight interconnection as 'unfortunate' because the idea of internalism and externalism as mutually exclusive positions stems precisely from it. Instead of seeing internalism and externalism as rivals and consider only one of these positions as a 'true' way to knowledge, he suggests that:

… there are different, equally legitimate projects need to be distinguished. One project is that of exploring what is required to put one's own internal, intellectual house in order. Another is that of exploring what is required for the one to stand in a relation of knowledge to one's environment."[76].

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[76] Foley, Richard (2003). 'A Trial Separation Between the Theory of Knowledge and the Theory of Justified Belief'. *Ernest Sosa and His Critics*. Ed. by J.Greco. Oxford: Blackwell. p.61.

To abbreviate,

Ext: KnE(S, p) iff [Tr(p) ∧ B(S, p) ∧ R(S, p)] ,
Int: KnI(S, p) iff [Tr(p) ∧ B(S, p) ∧ J(S, p)] .

The separation between the two different theories – theory of knowledge and theory of justified belief shows how internalism and externalism can co-exist. From the point of view of compatibilist perspective, Foley's suggestion leaves enough of breathing space for both an internalist and an externalist. A proponent of each position has a clearly designated task of what she can or cannot do. Such a version of compatibilism dissolves the disagreement between internalism and externalism. It eliminates the urge to opt for only one position in epistemology and criticize another as an implausible alternative. Foley writes:

Relaxing the tie between the two [knowledge and justified belief – G.V.] frees the theory of knowledge from overly intellectual conceptions of knowledge, thus smoothing the way for treatments that acknowledge that people are often not in a position to provide a justification for what they know, and it simultaneously creates a space for a theory of justified belief that is not cordoned off from the kinds of assessments of each other's beliefs that we actually make and need to make in our everyday lives.[77]

What grounds the very idea of separation between these two concepts? As noted, in the traditional account, knowledge inevitably entails justification. However, the Gettier cases have demonstrated that justified true belief does not necessarily amount to knowledge. That was supposed to be done by postulating the impossibility to defeat a knowledge claim by adding yet another true premise to the existing ones. The justification condition – it is often argued – is the one to blame for failing to guarantee the successful transformation of true belief into knowledge.

Furthermore, the separation of justification and knowledge stems from the problems related to the subjective nature of internalist justification. Subjective justification does not necessarily have an appropriate relationship between belief and reality. The evil demon case is a good example to illustrate that. The demon victim, who thinks that she sees an orange in front of her, clearly does not have knowledge because her belief does not correspond to reality whilst she is brains in a vat. However, her subjective perception is phenomenally indistinguishable from reliable perception in normal circumstances, when a belief does

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[77] Ibid p.62.

amount to knowledge. Such indistinguishibility prompts us to think that although the belief of the victim falls short of knowledge, there is nevertheless something worthy about it; something, that deserves some positive epistemic status. One way to do this is to argue that the victim does not have knowledge but does possess justification. That is the case, one might say, because having knowledge requires 'the objective fit' between belief and reality, while justification aims for 'subjective appropriateness' of holding that belief, to use Greco's terminology.

Why Foley's compatibilism does not fulfil our expectations? The answer might be as follows: if internalist account can only deal with justification condition, could beliefs that have their source in reflection or introspection qualify as knowledge? Internalist elements are not presented in all cases of knowledge, but that does not mean that beliefs acquired through reflection or introspection cannot amount to knowledge. If knowledge and justification are separated it is easy to see how knowledge can be seen as external, but it is not so clear whether internal knowledge can be possible. On the other hand, one may question whether many internalists would deny themselves a chance to offer an account of knowledge instead of justification alone. However, other forms of compatibilism which try to reconcile internalism and externalism by distinguishing different kinds of knowledge. I am going to discuss them in the subsequent sections.

IV.3.2 Indifference: Many Concepts of Knowledge

Knowledge is valuable, but in a given context some knowledge is more valuable than other knowledge. The standards of justification may be dependent on how valuable a subject deems it to know a particular proposition: higher value goes hand in hand with a higher level of justification. If our lives depend on it, we demand certainty. Subject S knows that p in context C iff p is true, S believes that p and S is justified in that context:

(ContKn) $Kn(S, p, C)$ iff $[(Tr(p) \land B(S, p)) \land J(S, p, C)]$

So another way to reconcile internalism and externalism is to submit there is not a single concept of knowledge but there are many, as many as there are 'contexts' in which the concept is used by subjects, whence the name for this view of knowledge: *epistemic contextualism*. In one

context, internalist factors may be dominant; in another externalist factors. In this sense contextualism is *compatibilist*. In what follows, I discuss [1] the main thesis and motivations for contextualism; [2] analyze the factors in a context that play a role in judging knowledge claims and [3] what a context is; finally, I show [4] how contextualism is a variety of epistemic compatibilism.

[1] The main thesis of epistemic contextualism states that it is possible to reconcile seemingly contradictory knowledge claims by allocating them to different contexts with different standards for knowledge. As a consequence, the same proposition Kn(S, p) may have different truth-value depending on the context in which it is uttered. This means that the surface grammar of 'Kn(S, p)' is wrong. Let C be some context. Then the correct grammar of the knowledge-predicate is: Kn(C, S, p), which abbreviates: in context C, S knows that p. Hence it becomes possible to have Kn(C_1, S, p) *and* ¬Kn(C_2, S, p).

One motivation for epistemic contextualism stems from the desire to solve the skeptical problem. Consider the following valid deductive argument:

(P1) I do not know that I am a brain in a vat (my perceptual experience that I am might be some hallucination);
(P2) If I do not know I am not a brain in a vat, then I cannot know that I have hands.
(C) So, I do not know that I have hands.

Our common sense resists drawing conclusion (C), yet both premises appear true and then the soundness of logic guarantees the truth of (C). Many people do not question whether they have hands or not; they do not even consider the possibility that their perceptual experience is a hallucination created by some evil demon, so they know they have hands, or any other ordinary proposition for that matter. On the other hand, if we consider this inference in a *philosophical context*, then philosophers of a skeptical inclination may very well claim not to know that p, because they cannot rule out the philosophical possibility that he is *not* a brain in vat. Thus in ordinary contexts, (P1) is false and the argument to (C) stops there. In philosophical contexts only skeptical philosophers have to deal with (C), because only for them (P1) is true. Since they are skeptics already, due to the truth of (P1), they will gladly accept (C), which hardly comes as a surprise to *them*.

Not only skeptical scenarios present grounds for contextualist claims. Another motivation for contextualism emerges from recognizing

that cognition occurs in the social context and that standards for knowledge can vary, depending on the stakes, interests or expectations of the interacting and putatively knowing subjects. The higher the risk or gain, the more stringent the standards are. Let us remember the famous bank case of K. DeRose.[78]

A couple is driving home on Friday evening and the man starts to wonder whether a bank is also open on Saturdays. His wife replies that it is open. Under the low-stake circumstances the wife possesses knowledge (one context). But if the man has to cash out his check by the end of the week because otherwise it will not be valid, the stakes increase and the wife's utterance about the bank being open on Saturdays does not amount to knowledge – they now better pass by the bank and check the opening times (another context).

Similarly, imagine Sarah flying on an airplane and asking a flight attendant whether the meal contains peanuts. The attendant's answer 'This meal does not contain peanuts' is judged in the context when Sarah is trying to lose weight and avoid additional calories, which is a relatively low-risk in comparison to the scenario when Sarah is allergic to peanuts and in an extreme case eating peanuts can eventually cause death (different context). When she explains the extreme case to the flight attendant, he surely wants to make sure and apparently does not know that his meal does not contain peanuts.

[2] Traditional Cartesian epistemology mainly focussed on the individual knowing subject (Chapter II). It was maintained that if the grounds for knowing are positioned in the mind of the subject, then the environment where a belief is formed does not seem to be relevant for the justification of the belief. Along with influences such as Wittgensteinian language games and the emergence of externalist theories of knowledge, the focus has shifted from an individualist and an invariantist to a social and relativised (to a context) judgment of knowledge-claims.

Epistemic contextualism allows for greater flexibility concerning knowledge claims. Therefore, in DeRose's words, even keeping an eye on sceptical scenarios with high justification standards, contextualism also turns its eye to more ordinary contexts and situations with no demands of absolute certainty. Contextualism tries to confront the sceptical *invariantist* view that if a doxastic or epistemic claim in

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[78] DeRose, Keith (1992) 'Contextualism and Knowledge Attributions', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, **52** pp.913-929.

general does not satisfy high and only philosophically relevant standards, this also implies that humans are not capable of attaining much knowledge. We know almost nothing, although we think we do --- precisely the core claim of epistemic scepticism.

A contextualist approach to epistemology also emerges from the linguistic realm transforming the question about the conditions of knowledge into the question about linguistic assertions, which determine the criteria of truthfulness for these assertions in different contexts. The aim is to analyze how the verb 'to know' is attributed in various contexts. Contextualism allies with Quine-Davidson ideas of indeterminacy of translation and ontological relativity in understanding and interpreting linguistic behaviour, epistemic behavior included. In order to illustrate this linguistic interpretation of both reality and cognitive criteria, let us turn to P. Unger's quotation:

> In discussions of language, few things may be taken as relatively basic: On the one hand, there are certain people (or other 'users') making marks or sounds. On the other hand, there are certain effects achieved on people as regards their conscious thought, their experiences, and, most important, their behavior. Everything linguistic, in between, is explanatory posit.[79]

Due to contextualism's semantical character, one can doubt the *epistemological* relevance of such a theory. As Richard Feldman points out: '…it is not true that contextualism holds that the standards for knowledge change with context. Rather, it holds that the standards for the application of the word 'knowledge' change.'[80] Feldman suggests that contextualism makes a step away from the traditional discussion about the conditions of knowledge. What makes contextualism relevant as a theory of knowledge? Contextualists do not deny that they focus on knowledge-sentences rather than the substance of knowledge itself. However, the fact that they focus on the concept of 'knowledge' and not other concepts, such as 'flatness', 'height' or 'weight', *makes it* epistemically relevant. Contextualists differ amongst themselves in how they regard the concept of knowledge. Cohen[81] proposes to treat it as an indexical, Hambourger[82] suggests treating it similarly to other relational terms, like 'large', while Stanley[83] focuses on the specifics of the term 'to know' and suggests not to draw false analogies with other terms but

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[79] Unger, P. (1984) *Philosophical Relativity*. Oxford: Blackwell. p.6
[80] Feldman, R. (2004). Comments on De Rose's 'Scoreboard Semantics'", *Philosophical Studies*, **Vol. 119**. p.24.
[81] Cohen, S. (1988) 'How to Be a Fallibilist'. *Philosophical Perspectives 17: Language and Philosophical Linguistics*, pp.25-50.
[82] Hambourger, R. (1987) 'Justified Assertion and the Relativity of Knowledge', *Philosophical Studies* 51, pp. 241-269.
[83] Stanley, J. (2004) 'On the Linguistic Basis for Singe Contextualism' *Philosophical Studies*, 119, pp.119-146.

recognize that the concept of knowledge has its own way of context-dependency.

One may object that contextualism requires several subjects in a context, at least one knower and an attributor, who attributes knowledge to the knower. This does not seem to include contexts where somebody has not uttered a knowledge claim, yet plausibly there are such contexts, such as when you walk alone and observe one thing after another: you gain perceptual knowledge without any conversations, without asserting anything or even wishing to assert anything. But contextualists counter this objection by arguing that in fact contextual epistemic conditions also extend to situations of unuttered beliefs and one-person cases. Keith DeRose[84] analyzes these cases in more detail and suggests a 'mirroring approach between thoughts or beliefs and utterances or assertions'. The same things that are claimed to be about assertions are also valid analogically with respect to the solitary cases that do not have conversational context of other assertions.

[3] One more important task for contextualists is to explain what actually constitutes *the context*. According to contextualists of various persuasions, contexts is constituted from such factors as preferences, pragmatic interests, stakes, intentions, purposes, expectations, presuppositions and more. An important question is to identify whose context and whose preferences, stakes and expectations are germane for epistemic judgments. Here we have two options:

(1) the context of the subject;
(2) the context of the attributor.

Epistemic status of a proposition p will depend on the context in which p is judged. It might be that in context C_1, p will amount to knowledge, but in the context C_2, p will be denied to be knowledge. This *attributor contextualism* seems to be the more dominant approach, adhered to by philosophers like S. Cohen, M. Heller and R. Neta. They hold that conditions of epistemic attribution are intersubjective: all subjects ought to ascribe knowledge to a subject in a context or none of them ought to. As Cohen writes,

> In general, the standards in effect in a particular context are determined by the normal reasoning powers of the attributor's social group. Thus I may correctly deny knowledge to S where a member of the moron society correctly attributes knowledge to S. Because the attributions are context-sensitive, there is no contradiction.[85]

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[84] DeRose K. (1995) 'Solving the Skeptical Problem'. *The Philosophical Review* 104. pp.6-7.
[85] Cohen S. (1987) 'Knowledge, Context and Social Standards', *Synthese* **73**. p.15.

[4] After what has just been said, it is interesting to note a parallel with the compatibilist theories. We can see subject, or first person, contextualism as an internalist view, and attributor, or third person, as an externalist, view. Depending on the context we have to apply different standards; there is no contradiction between subject and attributor contextualism. They both can co-exist at the same time, which makes them a form of epistemic compatibilism.

Internalism and externalism also enters epistemic contextualism when specifying the details and the relevant aspects of the context. Internalist elements can be found, for example, in Cohen's view when he discusses the emergence of an indexical character of the term 'to know' from 'to justify'; the last-mentioned is guided by the rule of salience, which requires the ability to preclude the possibility of error by providing good reasons for justification. Externalist elements are present in contextualism in accounts such as De Rose's, where he analyzes knowledge in Nozickean terms of truth-tracking and sensitivity (subjunctive conditionals). DeRose:

> When it is asserted that some subject *S* knows (or does not know) some proposition *p*, the standards for knowledge (the standards of how good an epistemic position one must be in to count as knowing) tend to be raised, if need be, to such a level as to require *S*'s belief in that particular *p* to be sensitive for it to count as knowledge.'[86]

Although contextualism can accommodate both internalism and externalism without contradiction, the very structure of presenting such a pluralist picture of knowledge might create certain problems. One of the difficulties is similar to the one emerging for the internalist theories of knowledge, especially coherentism. If the standards for knowledge are always contextual, and there are as many standards and there are contexts, then the proponent of such a view faces the problem of solipsism. For example, if Stephen judges himself as a great mathematician by his own lights, then it does not necessarily mean that he actually *is* a good mathematician, granted that such an attribution is not a matter of subjective taste but one of objective capacities and achievements. This objection is especially relevant to subject contextualism, because the standards for knowledge depend on the interests and presuppositions of the subject when judging his own beliefs.

Another objection is related to the contextualists' claim that the standards for knowledge are implicit in different contexts. If this is the

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[86] DeRose, K.,(1995) 'Solving the Skeptical Problem', *The Philosophical Review* **111**, p.36.

case, then it becomes difficult to see how knowledge can be transmitted to others. This way of thinking leads to a rather radical form of relativism: every context has its own standards. In my opinion, my objection comes close to Wittgenstein's 'the private language argument'[87]: if we consider our beliefs as linguistically articulated, we cannot allow for a total relativism of meanings. Due to the fact that language is used by more than one person, the implicit meaning (or criteria for knowledge) can be (and in principle is) shared.

To conclude, brute and simple ways to define two compatibilist views of knowledge, as we did above, with one concept of propositional knowledge, are the following two;

With that I am completing the Chapter on incompatibility and one friendly compatibilist relationship and moving on to discussing the second friendly version of compatibilism, Ernest Sosa's virtue perspectivism.

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[87] Wittgenstein, Ludwig (1953) *Philosophical Investigations*. Ed. G.E.M. Anscombe and R. Rhees. Oxford: Blackwell.

V. Virtue Perspectivism

V.1 Preamble

At the end of the previous Chapter we have made our acquaintance with various friendly relationships between Internalism and Externalism. In this Chapter, I shall analyze a well worked out variety of epistemic compatibilism, which falls in the category of a harmonious relationship and distinguishes two concepts of knowledge: externalist animal knowledge and internalist reflective knowledge, which are essentially KnE(*S, p*) and KnI(*S, p*), respectively. This version is Ernest Sosa's *virtue perspectivism*. Sosa relates the animal-reflective distinction mainly to the problems for the externalist theories of knowledge. Animal knowledge alone, being an externalist element of the distinction, cannot successfully deal with these objections, or so Sosa thinks. That is why it needs to be supplemented by internalist element of reflective coherence in order to form reflective knowledge. Later in this chapter (**V.6**) I shall analyze Sosa's solutions to these problems in more detail, but in order to do that, first I want to focus on the animal-reflective distinction and analyze each element of it separately.

V.2 Introduction to Sosa's Virtue Perspectivism

Sosa introduces the distinction between *animal* and *reflective* knowledge as follows:

> One has *animal knowledge* about one's environment, one's past and one's own experience if one's judgments and beliefs about these are direct responses to their impact – e.g. through perception or memory – with little or no benefit of reflection or understanding.

> One has *reflective knowledge* if one's judgment or belief manifests not only such direct response to the fact known but also understanding of its place in a wider whole that includes one's belief and knowledge of it and how these came about.[88]

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[88] Sosa, Ernest (1991) 'Knowledge and Intellectual Virtue'. *Knowledge in Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p.240.

Succinctly, the animal (AK)-reflective (RK) distinction can be abbreviated as follows:

(AK=Ext): $Kn(S, p)$ iff $[Tr(p) \land B(S, p) \land R(S, p)]$,
(RK) $\quad\quad Kn(S, p)$ iff $[(Tr(p) \land B(S, p)) \land (R(S, p) \land J(S, p))]$

The first kind of knowledge humans share with animals, whence the terminology. This kind of knowledge is automatic and does not require reflection and accessibility to one's mental states. Animals possess this kind of knowledge but not the other kind, because they lack the capabilities to reflect, to reason and to compare reasons and evidence, capabilities that human beings possess. Let us recall the epistemic Internalist and Externalist intuitions discussed earlier:

> (**Int**) Justification is necessary for knowledge, and *to justify* presupposes the ability to submit reasons for one's belief, be aware of them, being able to discuss, explain, communicate, judge and question them, and that consequently involves normativity.

> (**Ext**) Knowledge is constituted by true beliefs produced by reliable cognitive processes, of which one does not need to be aware at all in order to gain knowledge.

Clearly animal knowledge is geared towards (**Ext**) whereas reflective knowledge is geared towards (**Int**).

Animal and reflective knowledge in Sosa's account are combined with each other in a way that the former comes as a background while the latter comes on top as awareness about the reliability of the belief-generating faculties. Animal knowledge could in principle exist separately from reflective knowledge, but not the other way around. Reflective knowledge, according to Sosa, must always stand on the firm backround of animal knowledge. The connection between these types of knowledge is especially vivid in the case of human knowledge. We shall soon analyze these concepts further; first we consider Sosa's motivation for introducing the distinction.

V.3 The Animal-Reflective Distinction

We can identify two major sets of motivations: (i) one set relates to the coherentism-foundationalism debate in epistemology; (ii) the other relates to the Internalism-Externalism controversy. The first attempt to

formulate the virtue account appears in Sosa's article 'The Raft and the Pyramid: Coherence versus Foundations in the Theory of Knowledge' (1991)[89]. To be precise, the animal-reflective distinction is not yet introduced in this article, but Sosa speaks about intellectual virtues as successful and stable dispositions to form beliefs and about primary and secondary justification.

(i) The main objective of the article, as the title suggests, is to address the debate between coherentism and foundationalism. The metaphors of the raft and the pyramid signify these positions. The foundationalist strategy is criticized for having too restrictive a set of obvious truths and not being able to provide a sufficient background to justify a large amount of our ordinary knowledge. Coherentist justification regards justification as a relation between two propositional mental states; one of them is a justifier and another is a belief that is justified. In other words, a belief is justified by its membership in a coherent system of beliefs. This account of justification relies (or is parasitic, as Sosa says) on logical relations among propositions. As a consequence, coherentism is criticized for not acknowledging the importance of *experience* in justification. Coherence of beliefs is not enough; they must be linked to our experiences, by means of which we make contact with the world. This criticism is important to the foundationalism-coherentism debate. Besides this debate (i), there is another set of motivations, relating to the internalism-externalism debate (ii). As (ii) is the main topic of my Thesis, I shall concentrate on (ii).

In his later articles, Sosa explicitly formulates the animal-reflective distinction and relates it mainly to the problems for the externalist theories of knowledge. Animal knowledge alone, being an externalist element of the distinction, cannot successfully deal with the objections against externalism, which we have discussed in **Section III.3**, or so Sosa thinks. Let me briefly review these objections. One of them, the *generality problem*[90], stems from the need to define the scope of cognitive processes. How should a process be specified so that it does not become too narrow, such that it allows only one case, or, on the other hand, if we characterise a reliable process in too broad so that it would affect the very notion of reliability by making it blurred and imprecise.

Another problem that prompts Sosa to formulate his account is related to the meta-incoherence problem, also known as the clairvoyance counterexample suggested by BonJour. Externalists (reliabilists), the critics say, should admit that a clairvoyant belief is a

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[89] Sosa, Ernest (1991) *Knowledge in Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
[90] Conee E. and Feldman R. (1985) 'The Generality Problem for Reliabilism'. *The Monist*. 89. pp.1-29.

case of knowledge. Yet for the critics, such as BonJour, this conclusion is implausible because looking from the clairvoyant's subjective perspective, *he* does not have any evidence to support his belief and therefore *does not know* that his belief is reliable. It looks rather accidental. BonJour argues that in order to consider such case an instance of knowledge, we need to add a condition of subjective justification.

The third main problem for externalist accounts is the Skeptical Evil Demon problem, which questions the necessity of reliability for knowledge. If, as externalists claim, knowledge does not require us to have awareness about the grounds of our beliefs, then the beliefs of the victim in a demon world cannot count as knowledge. On the other hand, there is a clashing intuition that if the victim is an identical twin of a normal human being who forms his beliefs reliably, then the victim's beliefs should also have some justification.

Sosa tries to solve this problem by introducing the animal-reflective knowledge distinction to his account. I shall discuss the solution later in this Chapter. Thus Sosa combines internalist and externalist elements into the combination of animal and reflective knowledge. In the following section I am going to analyze those two types of knowledge in turn. I shall start with animal knowledge.

V.4 Aptness and Animal Knowledge

Animal knowledge, to recapitulate, is an externalist kind of knowledge, which requires an appropriate causal connection between a belief and a fact. Such knowledge is a result of reliable belief-forming faculties, such as perception or memory, without the presence of reflection and belief-grounding reasons. Next to reliable belief-forming processes, Sosa introduces the concept of *intellectual virtue*. A successful and stable cognitive faculty, which produces true beliefs most of the time, is intellectually virtuous. Virtues are defined as dispositions. One meaning of 'disposition' is the propensity or inclination to perform a certain action or acquire a certain belief. The subject possesses a faculty which, under relevant circumstances, enables him to act or believe in a certain way. Sosa's concept of intellectual virtue is an *externalist* component of his view of knowledge. The 'virtuousness' of a faculty is characterized along the reliabilistic lines, i.e. whether a faculty can reliably lead us towards the truth. In other words, what makes a faculty virtuous is its performance, which can be characterized through its *truth-conducivity*, the ratio of truth and false beliefs produced by this particular cognitive faculty. As Sosa points out, 'what is required in a faculty is not to lead

us astray in our quest for truth: that it outperforms feasible competitors in its truth/error delivery differential.'[91]

The definitions of a *reliable* process and a process being intellectually virtuous are very similar. Is there a difference between them? Yes. Where they differ is an additional feature that being intellectually virtuous adds to reliability. All virtuous processes are reliable, but not all reliable processes are virtuous, more is needed to become virtuous. Sosa differentiates between cognitive processes that are typical and recognized as such by the members of a cognitive community, and the ones that are reliable but neither typical nor available for many, like brain tumors and clairvoyance generating true beliefs. What kind of cognitive faculties can claim the status of having an intellectual virtue? Sosa has in mind such cognitive processes as induction, deduction, memory, perception and introspection, and even abductive reasoning and testimony. These are the intellectually virtuous ones.

True beliefs produced by intellectually virtuous processes and relevant to a particular environment are called *epistemically apt*. In his most recent writings[92], Sosa is speaking of aptness as having an 'A-A-A structure': Apt, Accurate, Adroit. The term 'accuracy' requires that a belief must reach its goal, i.e. be true. However, as we have already discussed, beliefs can be true because of many different reasons, some of which might be accidental. Therefore a belief must not only be accurate, but also *adroit*, which means that the accurate belief should be accurate in virtue of the skill or competence of the believer. The truth must be attained not just randomly but by proper means.

Consider this example. An archer shoots an arrow and the arrow hits the target. The way the arrow has been launched manifests the competence of the archer (e.g., the angle, the strength and the speed of the arrow). The arrow accurately reaches the target due to the archer's competence.

Next consider another example. The archer shoots an arrow and does that skillfully.
However, on the arrow's way to the target, a gust of wind blows it off the track. But then, luckily, another gust of wind blows is back and the arrow hits the target anyway.

What do these examples suggest? In both cases the shot by itself is accurate because it hits the target. The archer's skill is causally relevant to the arrow reaching the target and in that sense is related to

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[91] Sosa, Ernest (1991). 'Intellectual Virtue in Perspective'. *Knowledge in Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.227.
[92] BonJour, Laurence, Sosa Ernest. (2003) *Epistemic Justification*. Oxford: Blackwell; Sosa, Ernest (2007). *A Virtue Epistemology*. Vol.I. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

the shot's accuracy, so it is adroit. Unfortunately, in the second example, due to the two gusts of wind, which divert the course of the arrow and then bring it back, we cannot consider this shot as apt. That is the case because the final result is due to the interferring gusts of wind rather than the competence of the archer. In that case the shot is accurate, adroit but not apt.

Something similar goes for beliefs. If a belief is true and that is due to the believer's intellectual virtues or competence, then that belief is also apt. But if a belief is accurate, i.e. true, and its accuracy is attributable to luck rather than adroitness, this belief is not apt. In conclusion, apt belief is not only a belief that is accurate and adroit, but the one that is accurate *because* adroit.

Sosa[93] takes the concept of adoitness in two ways, as follows. (1) *Constitutional competence*, which is due to the virtuous intellectual nature of the subject. For example, John can be competent as a human being, who possesses all the relevant cognitive faculties typical to human beings. When they are employed, we speak of (2) *full competence*, which requires the consitutional competence to be situated in some relevant environment.

Let us focus on (2). The performance of a cognitive faculty is relative to the context where it takes or can take place. In Sosa's words, 'abilities correlate with accomplishments only relative to circumstances'[94]. Therefore, in judging whether a belief is virtuous, it is necessary to include the relevant environment among the evaluative conditions. In order to do that, we first need to characterize which environments can be considered relevant.

Which circumstances are relevant? Let us look at some examples. If Mary fails to see a black cat 50 meters away on the road in the middle of the night, that does not make her vision unreliable, because these conditions are not relevant to the determination of the reliability of her visual sense. If, on the other hand, she fails to see a black cat in the middle of a sunny day from 2 meters – that situation shows the unreliability of her vision. The first example about Mary's vision shows the circumstances that are clearly irrelevant for acquiring true beliefs. On the other hand, there are circumstances that are not considered relevant, yet the belief formed is true.

Another example of irrelevant circumstances, pointed out by Sosa, pertains to the case where a belief is true, but it occurs in very sophisticated or atypical circumstances. These circumstances are

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[93] Sosa, Ernest (2008) 'Agency, Credit and Wisdom'. Conference Presentation at the conference on Epistemic Agency. Madrid, October, 2008.
[94] Sosa, Ernest (1991). 'Intellectual Virtue in Perspective ' Knowledge in Perspective. Cambridge University Press. p.274.

peculiar to one individual and can hardly be repeated by other people or even by the same person on other occasions. Sosa:

> Consider for comparison a slicing golf swing in a unique complex of circumstances including a clump of trees obstructing the hole and a tree off to the side: the sliced ball bounces off the tree to the side for a hole in one. Relative to its highly specific set of circumstances it was of course an effective stroke to hit. Does that earn it any credit, however, as a stroke to learn, practice and admire? Of course not, since the circumstances in question are unlikely to be repeated in every game of someone's career, that is just a fantastic accident one could not have expected with any reasonable assurance and which other golfers cannot expect in their own careers.[95]

Similarly, if one's belief is generated in specific circumstances with some reliable cognitive process, these circumstances can be so odd that the process can hardly be considered intellectually virtuous. The last-mentioned requires 'typical' circumstances. The term 'typical' refers to circumstances in which the cognitive process is reliable and the cognitive capacity to employ it is shared by the members of the same epistemic community. Intellectual virtue requires a sufficient level of stability and regularity of the ways beliefs are formed, and this in turn requires 'typical' circumstances rather than odd ones.

To summarize, Sosa distinguishes three components that constitute animal knowledge. In order for a belief that p to be an instance of animal knowledge,

(1) p has to belong to the field of propositions F;
(2) the subject should be in 'typical' circumstance C while believing that p;
(3) p is true.

Condition (2) deserves further analysis.

Let E be an environment in which 'typical' circumstances obtain, i.e. where the subject's cognitive capacities work reliably. For example, human cognitive faculties are wired to work in our actual environment of planet Earth rather than on Mars. Circumstances C denote a more specific state of affairs occurring at a certain moment in that environment E. For example, Eric's belief that the North Sea is stormy today relates to a particular state of the sea at that moment. Field of true propositions F consists of the true propositions that can be generated by 'relevant' cognitive faculties in an appropriate environment. The phrase 'relevant', which is a relation between circumstances C and field of propositions F, excludes little, it covers the quite simple to the very

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[95] Ibid p.276.

complex, internal as well as external. As in the example of Mary's vision, her visual performance depends on such conditions as good daylight, proper distance between her and an object, size of the object and so on. In the actual environment and under normal circumstances her vision is truth-conducive, i.e. has great likelihood of producing true beliefs. The example of seeing a black cat in the middle of the night from a long distance presents an example of irrelevant circumstances where one fails to form an apt belief. Since in both examples Mary forms a belief based on her visual experiences, the relevant field of propositions pertains to visual beliefs and to such features as shape, colour, and spatial location of an object. In cases of beliefs produced by other cognitive faculties, the fields and specific traits are different. If all relevant conditions are satisfied (daylight, short distance, middle-sized object), then the formed belief conforms to the relevant environment and is true.

The relevancy relation between circumstances C and the field of true propositions F is not universal but relative to the nature of the knowers. This C/F correlation is obviously different depending on the species: a bat's 'knowledge' presumably is very different from human knowledge. We note that the concept of environment is not just an independent concept describing the external conditions in which certain experience occurs: it is always closely tied to the field of output beliefs produced with respect to it and the notion of subject's nature.

The preceding discussion reveals that environmental circumstances are not merely characterised spatio-temporally but involve also intellectual conditions of the knowers. Humans and dogs may share the same faculty of vision, but their inner nature is different, which entails differences of how the visual system operates or how they see the world in general (dogs do not see colors). Similar things hold for the beings having the same dispositions relative to different environments, such as Extraterrestrials --- they might share the same faculties but, due to their presumably completely different mental structure, they operate on different cognitive grounds that are relevant to different environments. What is intellectually virtuous depends also on the kind of knowers we consider.

Thus correlation F/C related to the nature of a knower can be virtuous only with respect to the environment E. Another example: Jeremy, a human being with virtuous cognitive faculties, forms a true belief '*Café Sacher* in Vienna is selling delicious Sacher cakes.' When judging such a belief, we need to take into account the environment Jeremy is in when forming this belief. Suppose that he forms a belief in our actual environment, i.e. on Earth, in Vienna, while browsing through the menu in *Café Sacher*. All the required conditions for a virtuously

produced belief obtain, Jeremy is in the environment relevant to his cognitive faculties. Therefore his belief is an instance of knowledge.

The most theoretically significant relationships between cognitive faculties and environment are the ones that happen relatively frequently, instead of the ones that are just happen very rarely, or are merely 'theoretical possibilities'. For this, the concept of *safety* is introduced. Safe beliefs are the ones that are usually true in the actual world and in possible worlds lying close to it, and therefore cannot easily go wrong.

Apart from atypical environments, there is a question that pertains to the human environment. Given that the subject's cognitive abilities are functioning in the relevant environment, it is still not clear how to define the sufficient level of reliability required for a particular belief to count as knowledge. Without a clearer idea about the scope of a reliable process, the opponents of externalism say, the claim that reliability turns true beliefs into knowledge sounds dubious. In order to answer this question, Sosa specifies the typical characteristics of virtuously formed beliefs and identifies the features and tendencies of reliable processes. He also argues that we must *relativize* the evaluation of the processes to a certain epistemic group *G*. A belief is likely to be virtuous iff the subject's capacity to acquire true beliefs under certain circumstances does not deviate widely from the capacities of his fellow members of the group in the same field under similar circumstances. Sosa lists the conditions how to judge whether the cognizer is insufficiently virtuous in judging the truth of a belief in the field *F*. These criteria negatively express the traits that diverge from the group *G*. Sosa claims that

> the subject is not grossly defective in ability to detect thus the truth in the field *F*; i.e., it cannot be the case that [subject] *S* would have, by comparison with *G*:
>> (a) only a relatively very low probability of success,
>> (b) in a relatively very restricted field *F*,
>> (c) in a relatively very restricted environment *E*,
>> (d) in conditions *C* that are relatively infrequent,
> where all this relativity holds with respect to fellow members of *G* and to their normal environment and circumstances.[96]

These conditions show that aptness of belief depends not only the relationship between a subject and the circumstances of the external world but is also relative to the epistemic group that subject belongs to. By adding this condition, Sosa introduces a *social* dimension into his account. I believe we can consider humanity under the same broad kind of group when it comes to acquiring knowledge due to the natural

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[96] Sosa, Ernest (1991) 'Reliabilism and Intellectual Virtue'. *Knowledge in Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.142.

cognitive endowment. Also, the group is closely connected to that of external circumstances. It can most appropriately express the relation of inner nature and the external environment. The subject who belongs to the epistemic group *G,* manifests acceptable cognitive performance in the environment, which is characteristic to a particular species. On the basis of that, it is possible to get certain measures and establish the range of 'normal'. If the subject's belief that *p* has its source in a cognitive faculty that is not deviating from these standards, then the belief is sufficiently virtuous.

An apt belief must also be of 'an approximately normal attainment' by other members of an epistemic community. In other words, virtuous beliefs should be of interest of and attainable by other members of that epistemic group. Sosa claims that 'normal' may differ depending on a particular community, because one's conceptual and linguistic resources are immensely influenced by one's society. Since society accepts only those concepts that are of use to it, so epistemic justification that evaluates subject's cognitive virtues by comparing them with what is 'normal' to his or her community should also be useful to it. To quote Sosa,

> We care about justification because it tends to indicate a state of the subject that is important and of interest to his community, a state of great interest and importance to an information-sharing species. What sort of state? Presumably, the state of being a dependable source of information over a certain field in certain circumstances. In order for this information to be obtainable and to be of later use, however, the sort of field *F* and the sort of circumstances *C* must be projectible, and must have some minimum objective likelihood of being repeated in the careers of normal members of the epistemic community.[97]

As discussed in the introductory chapters, the (traditional) internalist account of knowledge was primarily focused on the subject and his internal nature. Sosa wants a broader view, which includes also the environmental and social factors of cognition. Foley sees this as a pitfall in Sosa's account: he notices that this trouble lurks in the very definition of actual environment and specifically in the personal pronoun 'we', the knowers who stand in relation to environments. To quote Foley, 'On this approach, a major issue is who the 'we' is supposed to be. People in the community of the person being evaluated? Most people currently alive? Or yet another group?'[98]

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[97] Sosa, Ernest (1991). 'Intellectual Virtue in Perspective' *Knowledge in Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. p.282.
[98] Foley, Richard (2004) 'A Trial Separation between the Theory of Knowledge and the Theory of Justified Belief' *Ernest Sosa and His Critics*. Ed. by J. Greco. Oxford: Blackwell. p.68.

The answer to this question comes from the just-discussed reference of Sosa to a group *G*. The group *G* represents roughly the cognitive performance, which is characteristic to a particular species. In principle, I believe, there is no need to measure the cognitive abilities of all human beings currently alive or all who have ever lived on the planet Earth. Obviously, there is some statistics involved, as well as some special methods about such kind of inquiries, ranging from the age to culture to geography of the subjects. Then it is possible to get certain measures and establish the range of 'normality'. If subject's belief that *p* has its source in the cognitive faculty that is not deviating from these standards, then the belief is apt. Hence, since Sosa identifies himself with a representative of *homo sapiens*, his usage of the pronoun 'we' refers to that particular species (in general) and the range of normality peculiar to it. In the same vein, it is possible to criticize Foley's claim that the usage of 'we' interferes with the definition of reliability, the key concept of Sosa's account. Foley does not see whom the personal pronoun refers to. I do not think this is a legitimate objection since Sosa does elaborate quite thoroughly on how beliefs should be selected based on the features characteristic to an epistemic group. In my opinion, the epistemic group could qualify as 'we' in Sosa's works.

Everything that we have said about animal knowledge shows that this is an externalist account; as an externalist account, it has to give an answer to the objections that are raised to externalist accounts. Some problems can be resolved with the resources provided by this account, yet some others remain unsolved. Sosa's way to answer them led him to introduce another element to his account, i.e. the element of reflective knowledge to which I shall now turn.

V.5 Coherence and Reflective Knowledge

In this section I am going to discuss reflective knowledge, the second element of Sosa's account. The very name of *virtue perspectivism* already refers to a combination of an externalist concept of intellectual virtue and the internalist concept of reflective coherence. Just a while ago, I mentioned some problems that motivate Sosa not to stop his epistemic view at the level of animal knowledge. Sosa's position can be regarded as a sort of reliabilism (and externalism, for that matter). It developed out of process reliabilism as an attempt to deal with certain problems that plague the externalist theories, which I introduced in **Ch.III** section III.3. To emphasize the positive side, such a distinction

expresses Sosa's recognition of the importance of both externalist and internalist intuitions and an attempt to give both pride of place.

By exploring the animal-reflective distinction, we approach the critical point in Sosa's epistemology. Animal knowledge is pervasive and essential, yet it fails to account for certain important aspects of human cognition that internalists advance. Sosa's aim is to give due attention to these internalist intuitions about knowledge. The stability and reliability of belief-forming processes, according to Sosa, is supported by developing deeper individual awareness of our own stable disposition to have a relevant *F/C* correlation and by being confident that reliability is not a matter of dumb luck. In other words, the subject must possess an *epistemic perspective*, which includes not only beliefs but also awareness that the sources of these beliefs are reliable.

To recall, the main attribute of animal knowledge is its truth-conduciveness, while reflective knowledge is distinguished by broad comprehensive coherence and a grasp of the reliability of one's cognitive processes. Reflective knowledge posits the requirement of broad internal coherence, 'awareness, of how one knows, in a way that precludes the unreliability of one's faculties.' [99]

Reflective coherence might lead one to think that Sosa aims to formulate a version of *coherentism*. That is not correct. As I have mentioned while discussing the motivations for the animal-reflective distinction (V.3), Sosa is aware of the shortcomings of the coherentist position and it would be a mistake to claim that he argues in favor of the this approach. Traditionally, coherentism is considered to be an epistemic position where justification of belief comes from other beliefs and from 'fitting' consistently into the subject's belief system. Coherentism's rival, the traditional *foundationalist* view, is the position that justification of belief finally rests on the evident foundations that are within the immediate reach of the cognizer, true beliefs that are *evident*, such as reports of observations. Coherentism rejects this foundationalist strategy and depicts justification as stemming from the entire web of beliefs. In this way, the coherentist attempts to eliminate the skeptical challenge of infinite regress that foundationalism is struggling with. *Coherentist justification* stems only from the relations of the belief system without any need of any independent ground outside the web of beliefs or any connection with the external world.

For a coherentist, as Sosa vividly points out, it is impossible to reach out to the external world beyond the web. If justification depends solely on coherence, then, the greater the level of coherence the more justified the belief is. But if the person has a distorted sense of reality or

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[99] Sosa, Ernest (1997) 'Reflective Knowledge in the Best Circles'. *The Journal of Philosophy*, **94**. p.410.

engages in flawed reasoning, say, his belief system can be perfectly coherent. But it is not truth-conducive. In this case coherentist justification is closed in a vicious circle and it is implausible to conclude that this way of justification is correct. So what is the solution? Sosa says:

> When a belief is epistemically justified, *something* renders it justified, and distinguishes it from beliefs that derive from paranoia, or wishful thinking, or superstition, and the like. What is thus epistemically justified, epistemically effective, must be truth-connected. So, when the belief is about the external world, the feature that renders it justified must somehow involve that world, and must do so in a way that goes beyond the world-involvement required even for it to have worldly content. After all, the unjustified beliefs of the paranoid and the superstitious are also about the world and must have the world-involvement required for them to have their proper content.[100]

Sosa admits that traditional coherentism is not a plausible theory of justification because of the lack of truth-conducive connection to the external world. For that reason, coherentism needs to be supplemented with reliability, because the last-mentioned links the internal web of beliefs to the external world. It causally hooks onto the world and makes the way for truth-conduciveness to enter the epistemological scene. Can reliability and coherence be plausibly united in one theory, and what could be their relationship?

The concepts of *epistemic perspective* and *reflective awareness* of a virtuous belief-source serve as stabilizers, which also eliminate the element of epistemic luck. Putting beliefs into a unified coherent perspective thus should enhance the chances of having justified 'unlucky' beliefs. The perspective itself is created and reinforced by regular and successful epistemic performance (as well as conscious understanding and recognition of this performance). Stability and success in acquisition of true beliefs with the same *F/C* correlation is also a sign of reliability. Also, it gives us a background to believe that such a tendency will be successful in the future and produce justified beliefs in the same field and circumstances. To aptness and a stable relevant *F/C* correlation, which characterize animal knowledge, Sosa adds the requirement of *epistemic perspective*. That requires the subject to be aware of the reliability of the sources of his beliefs. Due to this quality, reflective knowledge has more overall value than merely animal knowledge. In virtue of the ability to introspect and become aware of the reliable sources of his beliefs, the subject is able to attain broad

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[100] BonJour, Laurence; Sosa, Ernest (2003). *Epistemic Justification: Internalist vs. Externalism, Foundations vs. Virtues*. Oxford: Blackwell. p.108.

coherence of his beliefs and familiarity with the reliability of own intellectual faculties.

Sosa presents a notion of *reflective coherence* which differs from traditional *coherentism.* Reflective coherence is not merely a collection or a set of beliefs, put together coherently and thus consistently. As Sosa puts it,

…comprehensive coherence is not just mechanical, but must reflect appropriate sensitivity to factors like simplicity or explanatory power. And it must include not only belief/belief connections, but also experience/belief connection constitutive of good perception, and conscious state/belief connection constitutive of good introspection. This broader conception of the coherence of one's mind involves not only logical, probabilistic, and explanatory relations among one's first-order beliefs, but also coherence between these beliefs and one's sensory and other experiences, as well as comprehensive coherence between first-order experiences, beliefs and other mental states, on one side, and beliefs about first-order states, on the other.[101]

We can see from the quote that we are dealing here with a different *kind* of coherence, as compared to the traditional coherentist theories, if only because of the different elements that are coherently put together. To repeat, there are not only logical connections between beliefs, but also connections between experience, beliefs and other conscious states, whereas traditional coherentism deals only with a link between beliefs.

In order to understand better how reflective coherence and epistemic perspective are combined, let us return to the distinction between animal and reflective knowledge. Sosa claims that reflective knowledge does not exist separately from animal knowledge. Animal knowledge does not require the support of internalist elements, but when it comes to reflective knowledge, internalist elements join in. If reflective knowledge were to exist separately, then it would run the same risk of losing the truth-conducive link to reality as it was in the traditional coherentist approach. For that reason reflective knowledge cannot function just by itself - it always has to be supplemented with something else, something external, that relates to the world, and that is precisely animal knowledge. Thus in Sosa's view, internalist knowledge relies on externalist knowledge.

By adding the comprehensive coherence condition to animal knowledge, Sosa attempts to overcome the problems of externalist views of knowledge. Let's see how.

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[101] Sosa, Ernest (1997) 'Reflective Knowledge in the Best Circles'. *The Journal of Philosophy* **94**. pp.410-430.

V.6 Virtue Perspectivism Applied to the Problems for Externalism

I have mentioned at the outset of this Chapter that the animal-reflective distinction originated as an attempt to solve the problems for externalism accounts. To recall, the main problems for externalist accounts I have discussed are:

1. The Generality problem;
2. The Meta-incoherence Problem (clairvoyance);
3. The Skeptical Problem (evil demons and evil scientists).

Sosa tackles these problems by appealing both to internalist and externalist intuitions. I shall discuss them and see how some of the problems are addressed from the resources of Sosa's account. I shall discuss all three problems in turn.

(1) The Generality problem. In order to solve the generality problem, Sosa appeals both to the animal and reflective elements of his distinction. On one hand, the definition of the proper scope of a reliable process requires a certain relativization to the community and context (circumstances in an environment, as we have seen) where the process is functioning reliably. When Sosa is explaining what it is to believe out of sufficient intellectual virtue, he considers the range of normality with respect to a certain epistemic group of individuals *G*. A member of *G* should not deviate from the other members of *G* with respect to the main characteristics of belief-acquisition. If a process systematically produces true beliefs in certain circumstances, that allows us to regard this process as producing beliefs non-accidentally. Regularity is an important indication of reliability.

Also, by requiring normality with respect to *G*, it is possible to exclude weird beliefs or processes, which are not typical for *G*. Sosa explicitly excludes the processes that are very restrictive and have a low probability of success. These ramifications can help us to deal, even though only partly, with the generality problem, because the group condition prevents the overly restrictive beliefs from being considered sufficiently virtuous. If these requirements are met, then the highly specific process and highly specific circumstances in which it occurs cannot be considered virtuous despite the perfect reliability.

Example. Dolly has a reliable vision and forms a belief, that she saw Paolo Coelho in the local bookstore. Externalists would agree that if the belief is formed via a reliable cognitive process, this belief is an instance of knowledge. The opponents of externalism suggest that in order to arrive at such conclusion, externalists should think about the

very notions of 'process' and 'reliability' and to define the boundaries of the process clearly. A lot of different factors contributed to formation of belief: the light was strong enough so that it was possible to see and distinguish objects and people; an image was passed to the brain through the visual nerve; the person was recognized as a famous writer Paulo Coelho, not to speak about what the process of recognition should involve. If we start thinking how to define a reliable process and where we should stop specifying the details of the process, the matter does not look as straightforward as externalists claim.

In order to answer this objection, Sosa also demands that a belief should fall within the subject's reflective perspective, i.e., that he is or can become aware of the reliability of his cognitive faculties. If the subject is aware of how he arrives at a particular belief, i.e., what exactly are the sources of his beliefs, then he also knows whether the scope of the belief-producing process is appropriate. Also, by reflection, the subject can become aware of the limitations of his cognitive faculties and act appropriately to ensure that his beliefs fall within his competence domain. Sosa:

> The likely solution [to the generality problem], is likely to be sought, as I see it, in the requirements that F and C must fulfil if (i) F and C are to be usefully generalized upon by us as the epistemic community of the subject S (…); and if (ii) F and C are to be usefully generalized upon by the subject himself as he bootstraps up from animal to reflective knowledge. Such generalizing is itself an intellectual act which to be respectable must reflect intellectual virtue.'[102]

In conclusion, both internal perspective and external context help Sosa to solve the generality problem.

(2) The Meta-incoherence Problem. The meta-incoherence problem can also be solved along similar lines as the Generality Problem is solved. The aforementioned group constraints provide clearer contours for virtuous reliable processes and exclude the processes that can happen to be reliable by luck but fall out of the range of normality. In addition to that, the condition of internal perspective ensures that the knower rejects even a reliable source of belief when that source does not fit within his epistemic perspective. Sosa:

> The problem of coherence relative to a normal human today is, I think, its failure to meet the challenge of doxastic ascent. If a normal human today were suddenly to receive the gift of clairvoyance, he would be helpless to

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[102] Sosa, Ernest (1991), 'Intellectual Virtue in Perspective'. *Knowledge in Perspective.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p.284.

explain the source of beliefs delivered by his new gift and how that source operates. There is much that we know at least implicitly about memory and its mode and conditions of reliable operation. And it is largely this that enables discrimination in favour of memory and against suddenly endowed clairvoyance.[103]

Doxastic ascent is typically an internalist notion, related to reflective knowledge. When, for instance, Sally knows that she knows that *p*, she performs an act of doxastic ascent.

Now let us take a look at the case of Norman the clairvoyant. We can see how such a case violates the conditions just discussed. Norman has no evidence either to affirm or to deny that his faculty of clairvoyance is reliable. As Sosa claims, a virtuous belief should be usefully generalized upon the subject and his epistemic community *G*, and it is doubtful that clairvoyance is a process that can be generalized. It is too rare and clearly deviates from the rest of our epistemic perspective and the faculties of our fellow members of our epistemic community. Therefore, clairvoyance can be ruled out from the list of typical cognitive processes and provide a solution of the meta-incoherence problem. On Sosa's account, clairvoyantly obtained true beliefs are *not sufficient* for knowledge, full stop.

(3) The Skeptical Problem. Several of Sosa's ideas are involved in solving the skeptical problem: the concept of an assumed environment, the relativization of knowing to circumstances in an environment, and the notion of epistemic perspective. To remind, the judgment of beliefs also depends on the *environment*, in which the subject's beliefs are relevant and function reliably. Sosa introduces the concept of an *assumed* environment, which tells us how certain beliefs *ought* to be evaluated. Sosa makes a distinction between *actual* and *assumed* environments: the first one is the environment that the subject *S* is actually in; the second one is the environment that is relevant to *S*'s intellectual constitution. Let us say that actually *S* is in the evil demon environment but according to his nature, which we take to that of an ordinary human being, *S* needs a human environment. Then we assume that the human environment is more relevant to his intellectual composition than the evil demon environment. Then the former is more important in the evaluation of the virtuousness of a belief. That is, even without being in the normal environment *E* under conditions *C*, subject *S* still can preserve the intellectual virtue and therefore have justified beliefs. Sosa argues that such an argument is possible because the environment-reality relation, or conditional *ECF,* retains its truthfulness

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[103] Sosa, Ernest (1991) 'Nature Unmirrored, Epistemology Naturalized'. *Knowledge in Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 94-95.

even when *S* is not under these conditions during the formation of a belief.

The evil demon case is based on the assumption that the victim of an evil demon is an intellectual twin of a normal human being with respect to the mental structure and operation of cognitive capacities. If a victim is an intellectual counterpart of a normal human being, then he should be placed into the human environment, where his cognitive faculties function reliably and produce virtuous beliefs. That is why we can evaluate the evil demon induced beliefs with respect to the actual environment. If the victim were a being of some totally different inner nature, which does not resemble human nature, then this strategy would not be legitimate. So, Sosa's concludes that knowledge requires virtuous beliefs that are produced in relevant environment. To quote:

> On the present proposal, aptness is relevant to environment. Relative to our actual environment *A*, our automatic experience-belief mechanisms count as virtues […]. Of course, relative to the demonic environment *D*, such mechanisms are not virtuous and yield neither truth nor aptness. It follows that relative to *D* the demon's victims are not apt and yet relative to A their beliefs are apt. This fits our surface intuitions about such victims: that they lack knowledge but that internally they are blameless and, indeed, virtuous.[104]

To conclude, Sosa's solution to the skeptical problem rests on the idea of assumed environment. A victim's belief in the demonic environment does not amount to knowledge, although the way that belief is produced is reliable in the human environment.

As we have seen, Sosa's solutions to the standard problems rely on and involve both internalist and external elements, and the distinction between animal and reflective knowledge. However, adding the reflective knowledge element in this compatibilist account creates some problems, which is the topic of the next section.

V.7. Challenges for the Animal-Reflective Distinction

For a start let me note that Sosa's animal-reflective distinction is not a clear-cut one - it is sometimes difficult to tell where one ends and the other begins. Sosa makes a remark concerning the limits of the distinction. It is quite clear that structurally animal knowledge always comes first, and the reflective knowledge rests on top of it. In the process of virtuous believing, intellectual virtue is basically located at

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[104] Sosa, Ernest (1991) "Intellectual Virtue in Perspective" *Knowledge in Perspective*. Cambridge University Press. p.289.

the level of animal knowledge, and the reflective level requires being conscious about the reliability of the source of a belief.

We sum up Sosa´s epistemic compatibilism in four conditions:

1. Belief-forming processes should be truth-conducive;
2. Beliefs should be produced by reliable cognitive processes;
3. Beliefs should be coherent;
4. Subjects should be aware of the reliability of their own cognitive processes.

These conditions are interconnected as follows: each level requires all previous levels to be fulfilled. One, the least complicated, way to apply these conditions for the distinction between animal and reflective knowledge is to attribute 1 and 2 to animal knowledge and 3 and 4 to reflective knowledge, because 1 and 2 are clearly externalist conditions, while 3 and 4 are clearly internalist. But for Sosa making the distinction does not come as easy as it may seem at a first glance.

Even though Sosa distinguishes these two types of knowledge, the demarcation between them is not sufficiently clear. There is a certain inconsistency in the way Sosa is describing animal knowledge: in some of his writings, he acknowledges animal knowledge as an independent and proper kind of knowledge; however, in other writings he says that animal 'knowledge' can be called so only metaphorically. That suggests a certain incoherence with respect to this kind of knowledge, but also to the animal-reflective distinction in general. As a consequence, since solutions to the standard problems depend on the animal-reflective distinction, the incoherence also has an impact on these problems.

I shall return to this discussion shortly and first explore three questions about Sosa's account: (1) Two interpretations of animal knowledge (2) Some element of reflection is involved in our most basic epistemic operations, and not in those of animals, which casts doubt on the distinction as it is drawn by Sosa. Further, reflective knowledge as a requirement for human knowledge arguably is too strong.

V.7.1 The Border between Animal and Reflective Knowledge

Although animal-reflective distinction looks quite straightforward at the first glance, if we read Sosa more carefully, we can notice certain ambiguities of the distinction. In some places he indicates that animal knowledge is the *proper kind* of knowledge, in others he says that animal *knowledge* can be called so only metaphorically. See for instance what Sosa writes here:

How can one rule out its turning out that just any true belief of one's own is automatically justified? To my mind the key is the requirement that the field *F* and the circumstances *C* must be accessible with one's epistemic perspective. (*Note that this requires considering servomechanic and animal so-called 'knowledge' a lesser grade of knowledge, or perhaps viewing the attributions of 'knowledge' to such being as metaphorical* [my italics – G.V.], unless we are willing to admit them as beings endowed with their own epistemic perspectives).[105]

In this passage Sosa does not attribute a high status to animal knowledge. This passage makes us wonder whether animal knowledge deserves the name of knowledge at all.

On the other hand, Sosa notices that in many cases of human knowledge, reflection is operating even on the level of animal knowledge, without being conscious about the sources of virtuous faculty. To put it another way, even beliefs definitely belong to the level of animal knowledge can hardly be formed purely automatically and unconsciously. For an adult human being with normal cognitive capacities, reflective reason is always present even in rather simple processes of belief formation:

> *Note that no human blessed with reason has merely animal knowledge of the sort attainable by beasts.* [my italics – G.V.]… A reason-endowed being automatically monitors his background information and his sensory input for contrary evidence, and automatically opts for the most coherent hypothesis even when he responds most directly to sensory stimuli. … The beliefs of a rational animal hence would seem never to issue from *unaided* introspection, memory, or perception. *For reason is always at least a silent partner on the watch for other relevant data, a silent partner whose very silence is a contributing cause of the belief outcome.*[my italics – G.V.] [106]

To sum up, the conclusion we can make on the basis of these two quotations is that Sosa is rather ambiguous about his animal-reflective distinction. The functioning of reflective knowledge is also not clear. Sosa's thus seems committed to the following propositions:

(A) Humans are not capable of purely animal knowledge.
(B) Animals are not capable of reflective knowledge.

One may ask: how is it possible to verify Sosa's statement that the reflection is working 'subconsciously' even when forming the simplest perceptual belief if, according to the animal-reflective distinction, it is

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[105] Sosa, Ernest (1991), 'Intellectual Virtue in Perspective', *Knowledge in Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp.274-275.

[106] Sosa, Ernest (1991) 'Knowledge and Intellectual Virtue'. *Knowledge in Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P.240.

on the animal level that knowledge is acquired automatically and reflection signifies a conscious act? Is a 'silent partner', taken as a *reason we are not conscious of*, not a contradiction in terms?

If we allow, as Sosa does, subconscious working of reflection, then the same reasoning can also be applied to animals, and we can claim that animals can also acquire reflective knowledge. Consider an example: a young gazelle is eating grass on the savannah when at the same time it sees a lion approaching from behind the bushes. There are at least three possibilities what the gazelle can do in this situation: (i) stay in the field and ignore the lion; (ii) run as fast as it possibly can and try to save its life; (iii) confront the lion. From all three options, (ii) seems to be the true one and thus let us proceed accordingly.

When we reconsider this case from the perspective of the animal-reflective knowledge distinction, we can ask what kind of knowledge does the gazelle possess? If we allow Sosa's description that for humans a reflective dimension is present even in the case of animal knowledge as 'the silent partner' that monitors the cognitive process and automatically opts for the most plausible hypothesis, it seems that in the aforementioned case the gazelle also possesses some kind 'silent partner' that enables it to motivate the decision to run from the lion. Then, following Sosa's line of reasoning, animals should also be capable of certain level of reflection without being able to form (especially second-order) beliefs. Such conclusion clashes with proposition (B), namely that animal knowledge is purely impulsive and that animals are not capable of reflective knowledge. However, I am inclined to think that the gazelle case is an instance of animal knowledge, fuelled by the instinct of self-preservation rather than motivated silently by a subconscious reflective dimension.

Another way to challenge the distinction between animal and reflective arises when we consider the level of reflection required for reflective knowledge. According to Sosa, reflective awareness does not have to be very detailed; just a general grasp is enough. To quote a passage from Sosa,

For reflective knowledge one not only must believe out of virtue. One must also be aware of doing so. Of course one need not know with precision and detail the exact character of the relevant *C* and *F*. *Some grasp of them is required, however, even if it remains sketchy and generic* [my italics – G.V.].[107]

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[107] Sosa, Ernest (1991) 'Intellectual Virtue in Perspective'. *Knowledge in Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. P.278.

However, if we allow the presence of even very sketchy reflective dimension in the realm of animal knowledge, then it is not clear anymore where the line is to be drawn. This uncertainty has implications with respect to the problems for internalism and externalism we are concentrating in this thesis I already mentioned that the motivations for adding reflective knowledge to the animal knowledge emerged as an attempt to protect the externalist account of knowledge from the objections, of generality, meta-incoherence, and skepticism. Does Sosa's reflective knowledge account succeed in dealing with these problems? Solving the generality problem requires much more detailed introspection than just very generic hint, because we need to draw a clear boundary where to stop specifying the relevant details of cognitive process. Like Greco[108] and Kornblith[109], I think that the requirement that 'sketchy and generic' reflective dimension cannot satisfactorily solve the aforementioned problems that plague externalist accounts. I shall say more about Sosa's solutions to the standards epistemic problems in **Ch. VII.** Meanwhile I would like to discuss one more difficulty threatening Sosa's account.

V.7.2 Reflective Knowledge is Too Strong

One more aspect of the animal-reflective distinction can be called into question. If we regard reflective knowledge as the main type of human knowledge (because there always is some 'silent partner' present), then the conditions for knowledge are way too strong for many of the cases when people plausibly acquire knowledge. As mentioned, Sosa seems to hold on to the idea that human knowledge is of the reflective sort, but it cannot function alone without the firm background of animal knowledge. First, one must have reliable cognitive faculties that generate reliable beliefs. Only then the subject can be aware that these faculties are reliable. If we consider this in terms of the four requirements 1-- 4 (listed at the beginning of **V.7**) that are prerequisite in the animal-reflective distinction, then for reflective knowledge to obtain, all four requirements must be satisfied.

In many situations of everyday life, however, people operate extensively on the animal level without much interference of the reflective. When we look again from the perspective of the four requirements, then again it is not clear whether the line between animal and reflective can be drawn at all. Such an observation contradicts

[108] Greco, John (2003), 'How to Preserve Your Virtue While Losing Your Perspective', *Ernest Sosa and His Critics*. Ed. by J.Greco, Oxford: Blackwell.
[109] Kornblith, Hilary (2003). 'Sosa on Human and Animal Knowledge'. Ernest Sosa and His Critics. Oxford: Blackwell.

Sosa's assumption (A), which says that the proper human knowledge is reflective. If assumption (A) were true, Sosa's compatibilist account would make knowledge particularly difficult to attain, which would turn instances of knowledge into a rarity. In order to get in touch with a more mundane and realistic picture, we must question the plausibility of such a conception.

As Greco points out, if humans are not capable of purely animal knowledge, then the requirement of a reflective perspective should become a general condition of knowledge. But the reality is such that we achieve reflective knowledge quite rarely and there are many more cases of knowledge than there are cases of reflective knowledge among them. Therefore (A) can then be accused of violating Greco's *psychological plausibility objection*: 'It seems that in the typical cases of knowledge, people do not have any beliefs about their beliefs, or beliefs about the sources of their beliefs, or beliefs about the reliability of these sources'[110].

In other words, this passage shows that in our ordinary cognitive endeavours people do not even use reflection and therefore do not have a perspective in Sosa's sense. Humans are not able to develop such a detailed perspective by virtue of which they can always correctly identify the faculties that are sufficiently virtuous to guarantee that the beliefs acquired amount to knowledge. If we think about the transition from perceptual input to beliefs about it, we have to take into account that a lot of complicated psychological operations are happening during this process, and these operations can hardly ever be within the reach of human awareness. On that point we are back at the discussion about the internalist accessibility condition that has been discussed in **Ch. I**. Greco supports the idea that 'non-conscious' acquisition of information is common in human cognition.' He writes:

> In what sense is such information acquisition non-conscious? Sometimes what is meant is that important initial inputs go unnoticed, perhaps because exposure time is below the threshold needed for conscious detection. At other times new information is acquired via non-conscious cognitive processing, as when a perceptual system uses algorithms and heuristics that are too complicated to be used in conscious inferences. In either case, the cognitive dispositions involved are not available for representation by the subject, either occurrently or dispositionally, because essential elements of them are not so available'. … Characterisation of human cognition requires only the following assumption: that our cognitive functioning is importantly sensitive to information about the world without needing to represent that information, and without needing to have it available for representation.

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[110] Greco, John (2003), 'How to Preserve Your Virtue While Losing Your Perspective', *Ernest Sosa and His Critics*. Ed. by J.Greco, Oxford: Blackwell, p. 97.

> Given the available empirical evidence it is not implausible that this assumption is true.[111]

Recall that Sosa claims that in the case of humans, the reflective dimension can be present subconsciously, and that purely animal knowledge is not possible. The above quotation shows just the opposite, i.e. that human beings are capable of *non-conscious* cognitive processing. By including this quote I aim at clarifying the conflict between Sosa's views and Greco's psychological plausibility thesis. In a word, the distinction between animal and reflective knowledge needs to be made more clearly. We might say that any distinction inevitably has a certain level of vagueness, just as Hume says when he claims that the distinction between day and night is still useful despite the fact that there is also an intermediate state of dusk in between. Even if that is the case, however, in philosophy there is also a strong motivation to keep the distinctions as clear and sharp as possible. True, if there is vagueness it needs to be indicated. However, along with the recognition of vagueness, I would like to see some discussion about the implications such vagueness might have for solutions of the standard epistemic problems.

To conclude, in spite of the aforementioned criticisms, Sosa's virtue perspectivism is perhaps the most elaborate form of epistemic compatibilism – he tries to address all major problems of internalism and externalism debate. As I tried to show, the solutions to the Gettier and Skeptical problems deserve special credit, yet the distinction between the animal and reflective knowledge faces a couple of serious difficulties that require further attention. Furthermore, introducing social aspects in the theory can also be regarded as an advantage, because they bring more realistic outlook to epistemology. In that respect Sosa's compatibilist account comes close to Edward Craig's view that the value of knowledge is defined through its function of indicating reliable sources of information in everyday epistemic practices. The next Chapter is devoted to Craig's view.

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[111] Ibid. pp.102-103.

VI. Craig's Genealogical Compatibilism

VI.1 Preamble

Both previously-discussed versions of *compatibilism* involved some kind of partitioning: Foley advocated a division between the theory of knowledge and of justification, Sosa distinguished kinds of knowledge. Alternatively to both positions, internalism and externalism can also be combined without partitioning of the concepts of knowledge or justification. The purpose of the current Chapter is to explore such a version of compatibilism, indicated in **Ch. IV** as a harmonious form of reconciliation. This view of knowledge changes the main focus of the philosophical quest to understand what knowledge is. The means to illuminate the concept of knowledge comes from investigating its *purpose* for humans and its *function* in society at large. This *genealogical* view of knowledge is due to Edward Craig (1991); the adjective '*genealogical*' means that the concept of knowledge is analysed in terms of its origin in the basic needs of human beings. It is tempting to interpret genealogical compatibilism along the lines of the evolutionary theory, yet Craig is neutral about this issue. His main aim is to tell a speculative genealogical story about the origins and function of the concept of knowledge.

As we shall see, such an analysis (or, as Craig puts it, *synthesis*) of knowledge differs from the traditional analyses, which aim at capturing the grounding intuitions of this concept, i.e. its intuitive *intension*, and testing them against various examples and counterexamples, i.e. its *extension*, thus leading to an explication of knowing-that. My first task will be (1) to introduce Craig's account and critically discuss various parts of his genealogical view; then (2) to compare it to the earlier-discussed versions of compatibilism and investigate how well this version of compatibilism is able to deal with the standard epistemological problems.

VI.2 Genealogical Compatibilism

Let us start with an overview of Craig's genealogical compatibilism. Craig (1990)[112] investigates the concept of knowledge from a different perspective than traditional epistemology, as has been indicated above.

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[112] Craig, Edward (1990). *Knowledge and the State of Nature*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

The motivation for this project is based on two reasons: the *first* reason is all-too-familiar for all contemporary epistemology and concerns finding a solution to the Gettier counterexamples; the *second* reason resides in questioning the significance of the traditional game of presenting complex examples and counterexamples, because this game leads to complicating the analysis of knowledge beyond necessity.

An illuminating comparison is the following one. Suppose one wants to analyse the concept of a *chair*. When we aim for a traditional Carnapian explication, we look for a conjunction of conditions C1, C2, …, Cn which are jointly sufficient and separately necessary for a concrete object X to be a chair:

Chair(X) iff C1(X) and C2(X) and …. and Cn(X) .

We then focus our attention on the typical shape that chairs have, but it will be difficult to find which features of shape all chairs have in common. Another way of understanding what a chair is, is looking at its *purpose*: a chair is *an object for us to sit on*. This may lead to an explication after all, but not necessarily so. A concept of a chair may arise that circumvents the game of example and counterexample of any proposed *explication*; it almost seems absurd *not* to consider its purpose in order to find out what a chair is.

Analogously, Craig asks what the purpose of our ordinary concept of knowledge is, of how we use it in our lives and why we need it. He starts with the hypothetical S*tate of Nature scenario* and raises the question of *why* man needs the concept of knowledge in that state. On the basis of this question, Craig hopes to find contours of the concept of knowledge and the conditions that govern its application. He claims that the concept of knowledge has originated from the concept of a *good informant*. A good informant, as we shall see later, should truly believe a proposition and to do so to the degree of reliability that is relevant to an inquirer's needs. The main function of the concept of knowledge is 'to flag reliable informants'. Genealogical analysis aims at providing an explanation why certain concepts, like that of 'good informant', got introduced and eventually evolved into the concept of knowledge. In order to mark the contrast between traditional analyses of knowledge as providing explications, he calls his account 'conceptual synthesis'. Craig offers a hypothetical 'pragmatic explication', in the sense of focusing on man as an *agent who tries to survive* in a state of nature.

The State of Nature hypothesis, in which man needs the concept of knowledge, can be compared to Hobbes'[113] theory of social contract. For Hobbes, the state of nature phase grounds the creation of the state and leads to the emergence of society because of the basic urge to survive. When explaining the significance of his project, Craig argues as follows:

> We are attempting 'the state of nature' explanation of a number of facts of conceptual or linguistic practice. Such explanations work by identifying certain human needs and arguing that the [cognitive] practices are a necessary (or at least highly appropriate) response to them, they will therefore be at their strongest when the human needs from which they start are the most practical, hence the most undeniable ones.'[114]

Hobbes and Craig agree about the basic motivation that underlies their projects, i.e. survival. In Hobbes' theory, the war of everyone against everyone threatens the lives of individuals. That is why they are obliged to collaborate and create a state. In Craig's theory, individuals are not so hostile towards each other, but also only minimally co-operative. Solitary life poses a threat for survival and that motivates the emergence of greater co-operation and, eventually, of the concept of knowledge. Another point of similarity between the two theories is that both Hobbes and Craig create *hypothetical* stories how the need for state and for the concept of knowledge might emerge out of basic human needs.

As a starting point of his hypothesis, Craig begins with an imaginary early community of human beings with limited cognitive capacities, yet capable of speaking a language. They are rather selfish, mostly concerned with the satisfaction of their own needs. These humans need true beliefs about their environment in order to act, to overcome the obstacles and avoid the dangers of their environment, to find shelter and food; in other words: to survive. Due to their finite nature, humans depend on each other for information for their survival. 'Is there a sable-tooth tiger coming?' asks one to another high up in a tree, who is a good informant for the purposes of the questioner. The questioner need not climb the tree anymore. Using informants saves time and effort. In general, people know little about many things although they frequently need to know more about them for whatever concrete purpose at hand. 'Can you eat this berry?' 'No, once someone ate it and within a day he fell ill.' Rather than spending too much time

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[113] Hobbes, T. (1651; 1994) *Leviathan, or the Matter, Form and Power of Commonwealth, Ecclesiastical and Civil*. The English Works of Thomas Hobbes, vol. 3, ed. E. Curley, Chicago, IL: Hackett Publishing Company.

[114] Craig, Edward (1990), *Knowledge and the State of Nature*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, p. 89.

and resources to find the needed information, it is much easy, more cost-effective and safe to get information from others.

Needless to say, people who ask, do not expect just any response, but they are after information, which is true or at least sufficiently reliable (which it is if it is true). Beliefs guide our actions and therefore are very important for survival. Groups of humans having predominantly false beliefs do not have a high chance of survival. This is how the necessity of having true beliefs is established.

This leads to a preliminary explication: *S knows that p* iff *S* has true belief that *p* and has obtained *p* from a good informant. The two conditions are however closely related, as we shall see next.

Whenever true beliefs are necessary for survival, then in the state of nature people who are seeking information (inquirers) face the important task of distinguishing between *good* and *bad* informants. Good informants should provide the inquirers with relevant and reliable information. For example, when a tiger is approaching, Peter, who is up in a tree, is a *better informant* than Mary, who is combing her hair in the cave with a twig. Humans in the state of nature society have to judge the quality of an informant: good or bad?

VI.3 Good Informants

How to recognise a good informant? As Craig puts it, we want an informant such that if he tells us that *p,* we shall thereupon believe that *p* (p.12). Good informants are sources of true beliefs. So that when 'knowledge' flags good informants, knowledge implies true belief. Hence it looks we have already recovered two of the three indisputably necessary conditions for knowledge of the traditional JTB analyses. Yet Craig warns us not to be lured into this kind of thinking. These features do resemble the truth and belief conditions of the traditional analyses, but it does not mean they are identical. Genealogical compatibilism calls for more flexibility and departs from black-and white conditions for knowledge by taking being a perfect and a lousy informant to be the end points on an almost continuous scale. Instead of necessary and sufficient conditions, Craig rather wants to focus on *prototypical cases of knowledge attribution*:

> what may look like an attempt to state necessary conditions should rather be taken as part of the description of a prototypical case, a case from which speakers and their audiences will tolerate, in the right circumstances, varying degrees of deviation. How much deviation, and under what circumstances, ought to be related to the purpose behind the formation of the concept in

question. The prototypical description enshrines the features that effect realisation of the purpose when things are going on as they nearly always do. (p.13).

To emphasize, the focus in prototypical cases is not on looking for counterexamples or searching how to deal with the 'freakish cases', i.e. cases that are practically very rare or hardly detectable. The focus lies on analyzing cases that constitute our everyday epistemic practice. More needs to be said however on the concept of a good informant, to which we return now.

The fact that a good informant believes the truth is not sufficient. We need an additional indicative property that correlates well with truth, so that we can identify a good informant. Craig (p. 85) lists the following characteristics of being a good informant:

(1) He should be physically accessible to me here and now.

(2) He should be recognisable by me as someone likely to be right about p.

(3) He should be as likely to be right about p as my concerns require.

(4) Channels of communication between him and me should be open (e.g., we should speak the same language and be able to understand each other).

This is by no means an exhaustive list, and there can be other characteristics, depending on a particular situation, yet (1)—(4) are to be noted quite frequently. Sometimes the detection in an immediate situation will mean simply understanding the informant's bodily position, presence, or the direction of the gaze. For example, if I see John looking out the window (but my gaze does not reach that far so as to see what is happening outside), I can ask him whether it is raining; but I am not asking him whether the postman has already arrived, because the front door is on the other side of the building and John would not be able to see him even if the postman was next to the house. John's presence next to, and his gaze outside the window, can help me identify whether he is a good informant about the rain. Usually people are reliable informants in such direct situations; but the indicative property is not always as straightforward as in these simple cases. Sometimes it is indeed very difficult to recognize an informant due to various reasons, like incompetence, bad visibility, unclear display of the indicative property and the like. Some elaboration on the indicative property is mandatory.

Craig does not require that asking whether the indicative property obtains is a sharp question that has an immediate Yes or No answer. The

detectability of characteristics (1)--(4) varies among people, situations, risk, concerns, importance and competence. Some of the characteristics can be noted, and some of them missed by an inquirer. An informant might also fail to manifest the property clearly *enough*. This raises the question, how this indicative property can still be an important component of the concept of knowledge. Craig has an answer to this difficulty, which brings the 'pragmatic', or perhaps better 'collaborative' component of his view of knowledge to the surface: contrary to the traditionally-minded epistemologists, the essential sociality of human beings does not put the burden of detectability of the indicative property on the shoulders of a single inquirer. That is how we can avoid worrying about specifying conditions for an individual inquirer for the detection of the indicative property. As long as there is *someone else* in the group who is better at detecting the indicative property of an informant, the inquirer can rely on *her*.

This assumption seems to rest on a further idea about the *trust* that other people will indeed tell you about reliable informants if the need arises. As social beings of an information-sharing species, we are *epistemically interdependent*. As we see, Craig makes essential assumptions about the finitude, sociality and co-operation of human beings. I believe that the relationship between sociality and altruism deserves closer attention, in particular Craig's assumption that altruism is among the basic modes of information-sharing in a society.

VI.4   Collaboration and Sociality

Collaboration and sociality are the assumptions that hold Craig's view together. Due to the limited competences of individuals, people need to share information and receive it from others in order to enhance their well-being and survival. In society, people exchange information among themselves. Craig claims that humans gradually become more altruistic as they develop and start thinking not only about their own immediate needs, but also about collecting the information they do not need here-and-now, which they or others may need in the future. Also, when asked for information, people often provide when they are requested form something in many areas of our daily lives. For example, when asked from which platform the next train to Paris leaves, the conductor tells me it leaves from platform 4. Moreover, he may also encourage me to hurry up, because only 5 minutes left before departure. If asked about a restaurant to have dinner, an informant will share the relevant information and add that this restaurant serves the best lamb chops in

town. People engage in such a practice more often than not. Not only humans but also animals share 'information' with others: bees perform dances to indicate the sources of nectar to others, birds warn other birds about a hawk flying nearby.

Craig talks about the 'natural altruism' of human beings, yet he does provide a more elaborate account of this concept. In certain places he talks about *empathy* and *natural altruism* as a motivation to collect information that is not needed in the immediate situation (p. 83); in other places he also admits that people share the information they know because they would expect others to do the same when the need arises. The latter looks like a case of reciprocity, or *tit for tat.*

Some might object that Craig is not clear and coherent in his concept of altruism. If we look from the perspective of the evolutionary theory, his remarks about the 'natural empathy' as a background for collaboration may seem dubious. These theorists claim that if altruism exists, and we give favours to others, it is because we do expect that our favours to be reciprocated. Such 'Tit for tat' strategy enhances survival. On the other hand, mainstream evolutionary theory emphasizes self-interested and competitive sides of human nature. Given this condition, it is likely that some humans will try to free-ride and receive benefits from others without offering anything in return. If that is the case, then we need to look for some mechanisms that could control and correct such tendencies. How could that be done? What is indeed motivating us to share truthful information: altruism or expectation that the benefits are going to be reciprocated?

We can respond to such query by drawing attention to the fact that Craig does clearly distinguish his imaginary genealogy from the evolutionary theory. He is not so concerned to make his genealogy consistent with the theory of actual human cognitive development, because Craig focuses on the very general features of human social life that he thinks that no other more specific theories are of any relevance with respect to the concept of knowledge (p.10). It is indeed quite strange that Craig, being an advocate of pragmatic explication of knowledge, does not care much about established scientific theories to back up his position. It would seem only natural if he moved in that direction due to his practical orientation. That might be considered as a shortcoming of this approach. His declared practical attitude is not on a par with the reluctance to take empirical research into account. This tension provides an opportunity for future developments in that direction. First attempts have already been made by Axel Gelfert (2011)[115], who combines Craig's genealogical account and evolutionary

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[115] Gelfert, Axel (2011) "Steps to an Ecology of Knowledge: Continuity and Change in the Genealogy of Knowledge", *Episteme*. **8,** pp. 67-82.

theory. Clearly more inquiry in that direction is warranted to strengthen the genealogical approach.

On the other hand, talking about the evolutionary theory, although the mainstream opinion with respect to altruism affirms the reciprocate version of altruism, this opinion is not supported unanimously. Some scholars (De Waal, 2008)[116] argue for the possibility of the empathy-driven altruism. Thus matters are not yet completely settled in evolutionary theory and it would be premature to endorse that humans always collaborate out of self-interest. And, although it is an interesting question to explore, it does not have a direct relevance to the topic at hand. In what follows, I shall try to show why it is the case.

Whatever the motives, be it reciprocity of favours or be it empathy, people still share information and in doing that they have to use concepts. The most important one is that of the reliability of shared information. As I noted at the beginning of this section, people do tell a lot of things reliably to each other, but of course, sometimes they do try either to withhold what they know, or to convey unreliable information. A potential informant might not share the information with me, but he can share it with someone else, whom he finds trustworthy. Alternatively, there might be other informants around, whose information might be less reliable but is available here and now, and are open to share the information. In that case, the most significant factor is relevance, that the informant's reliability would be proportional to inquirer's needs. The suggestion that Craig gives us is such: 'so long as they [the informants] seem trustworthy, follow their recommendations' (p.83). In other words, this suggestion means that in more cases than not people are prone to be reliable informants; that reliability is primary with respect to unreliability. This is not to say that people do not have inherent self-interested tendencies and will never act on them - that would be too unrealistic to expect. The question to ponder is what stops people from free-riding and offering unreliable information more often than not?

Of course, free-riding and distortion do happen in epistemic practices, but it is difficult to be free-riding *all the time* without engaging in an exchange at some point in your lifetime. As mentioned earlier, when humans engage in group activities, they become epistemically interdependent informants and inquirers. They are pooling information to be used by themselves and others. People are usually good at tracking the reciprocity actions in society, so if someone is constantly acquiring relevant information without contributing, then others also are likely to withhold the information after they notice the

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[116] Waal de, Frans (2008) "Putting the Altruism Back into Altruism: The Evolution of Empathy". *Annual Review of Psychology* **59**, pp.279–300.

self-serving behaviour. Eventually, it might be more costly to look around for other informants than to disclose the information. On the other hand, if someone is sharing mostly unreliable information, then he loses credibility in the group. Think of a boy who cried '*Wolf!*', who is saying the word even though there is no wolf around. If he is not telling the truth very often, then even in the cases when he is right, no-one will take him seriously. Losing that status might deny him the access to the pool of information, or, at the very least, put serious constraints to it. Therefore the boy will only cry 'Wolf!' when he sees a wolf coming.

Furthermore, when people engage in group activity, this gives rise to certain norms and values, which help to regulate behaviour of and communication among the group members. These values aim to restrict the free-riding and unreliability of information. They encourage trust and reliability even when acting on them does not serve the self-interest of an individual. Bernard Williams (2002, p.91)[117] argues that such values are Accuracy and Sincerity. Being sincere will help to prevent the pool of information from deliberate lies, and being accurate should encourage the informant to share unbiased, undistorted and sufficient (to inquirer's needs) information. Miranda Fricker (2007, p.116)[118] is adding Testimonial Justice to the list of values, which 'frees the hearers […] from the prejudice that would cause them to miss out on truths they may need'.

These values regulate epistemic practices and impose certain guidelines on the informant in order to protect the reliability of information. Now, if we look into Craig's genealogical theory, he does not discuss reliability of shared information from and responsibilities of an informant. Rather, he is focusing on the perspective of the inquirer. The last-mentioned perspective aims at distinguishing reliable informants from unreliable ones. Consequently, that makes him more interested in the features of detectability of a reliable informant than aforementioned responsibility of truth-telling. I noted earlier in this Chapter that detectability can be as simple as 'looking out of the window in the right direction' and as complex as 'delivering a message with confidence'. In addition, detectability properties might not always be visible to an inquirer or he might not have the capacity to recognize them. Then he can encounter the problem of how to detect reliable informants. Craig admits at that stage of human development, when people engage in collective activities and form epistemic practices that are more detached from the immediate needs of a particular situation, a

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[117] Williams, Bernard (2001). *Truth and Truthfulness*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
[118] Fricker, Miranda (2007) *Epistemic Injustice: the Power and Ethics of Knowing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

single individual does not have to bear the full burden of detection. Craig:

> My interest in other persons' powers of information-collection does not just arise from the fact that I may sometimes wish them to pass it on, or recommend informants to me. I shall become involved in group action, and affected by the actions of others; then circumstances will arise in which it is important to me that someone in the group holds a true belief as to whether *p*, and quite unimportant whether the route by which they acquired it, would have been open to me or not. (I am very pleased that there are people who know how to disarm and dismantle a nuclear missile, but whether those who instructed them would also be prepared to instruct me is of no interest to me at all.) (p.92)

What we can see from this quotation is that the *social component* in the view of knowledge, where the participants of epistemic practices engage in interaction within a group, diminishes the importance of a detectability condition. As long as I can consult other knowledgeable people, I do not have to detect a good informant by myself. On the other hand, engaging in cognitive group activities calls for the emergence of shareable concepts. Craig calls this process *objectivisation*, which I am going to discuss next.

VI.5 Objectivisation

During the process of concept formation, subjective tied-to-the-situation concepts are replaced with the concepts of a more general nature, which can serve more people in various situations for various concerns. In other words, the concepts get gradually detached from the informant and his local and immediate needs and get *objectivised* into more general concepts. To say that a concept is getting more 'objective' means that it is not tied to only one peculiar situation with unique set of needs. An objectivised concept will be more detached and will be applicable in a wider range of situations serving different needs with different requirements of reliability. Along with the development of the concept of *knowledge*, the requirements for the attribution change as well. Say, if I am in a life-threatening situation and thus the stakes are high, then my belief should have a very high degree of reliability. Alternatively, if my situation is secure enough and the issue I want to find out does not have a heavy bearing on my well-being, then information having lower reliability is enough. As noted before, Craig's hypothesis is that knowledge originates from the concept of good informant. The concept of knowledge lies at the end of the objectivisation process and can therefore be considered as an '*enquiry stopper*', to use Klemens

Kappel's[119] phrase. In other words, when we attribute knowledge to a proposition, we stop questioning and stop looking for further evidence that supports or denies that proposition.

The process of *objectivisation* proceeds in different stages. When people start inquiring into their own reliability with respect to the question whether *p,* a notable change begins: *from* the default third person perspective of identifying a reliable informant *to* the first person perspective of evaluating *oneself* as reliable informant. Further, humans recommend some informants to others, or engage in group activity, and rely on other people who are more competent in given circumstances. Such a process, as we discussed in the previous Section, diminishes the requirement of having an indicative property that was so essential in the State of Nature stage. In order to please both recommender and inquirer, the extreme subjectivity of the particular situation is diminished and the situation has evolved towards objectivity.

The following step consists in recommending an informant to more and more people in society. Due to the fact that different people need information that is used in different situations, the details of which are not initially known, the standards for knowledge are pushed upwards in order to satisfy the needs of even the most demanding inquirers.

In the initial stage, the delectability properties which were tied to a particular situation of an inquirer with special needs play a crucial role. As the concept of knowledge is getting more detached from immediate circumstances and special needs, the detectability requirement is gradually losing its force. Instead of the last-mentioned, the importance of a *reliability* requirement is growing and eventually superseding that of detectability. Someone can be called a good informant even in the absence of the features that played a crucial role in the initial state of nature situation. If someone in the group possesses the relevant information as to whether *p*, then separate members do not have to be able to access that information. That is how knowledge becomes detached from the immediate context. The concept of knowledge emerges at the very end of this process of objectivisation, where some invariability is achieved with respect to varying perspectives and various needs of inquirers. Apart from the stages of concept development, an attempt to set the common standard for different points of view demands a high degree of reliability, because the particular situation of each inquirer is not known and the concept of knowledge has to satisfy different demands for reliability. The common standard had better be high than low.

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[119] Kappel Klemens (2010). 'On Saying that Someone Knows: Themes from Craig'. In A.Haddock, A.Millar, and D.Prichard (eds.) *Social Epistemology*, pp.69-88. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

On one hand, the tendency of the objectivisation process to raise the standards is commendable. On the other hand, what is the mechanism to ensure that the standards do not become *too* high? To put it differently, we need to have the standards high enough to satisfy demanding inquirers, but at the same time within the reasonable limits so that they are still applicable to reality. Otherwise, due to the pressure to set the standard very high, the process of objectivisation may prompt *skepticism*. In response to that pressure, the standards are likely to approach the level of certainty. For sceptics, if the high standard is not met, there is no knowledge. In the process of objectivisation, we could also follow a similar line; then knowledge becomes unattainable. The phrase '*likely* to approach certainty' is crucial here, because the standard should to be high enough to be realistic for a range of different contexts, yet short of certainty. Therefore the objectivisation process must lead to a stop at an appropriate level. When our need for true belief is derivative from our basic need for survival, then sceptical withholding of beliefs would pose a serious threat for the human well-being. As Craig writes,

> survival calls for action, and action needs belief, so having false beliefs is no worse than   having no beliefs at all, and will often turn out a great deal better, hence no practical motives could lead us to prefer the latter state to the former and impose tests that would keep our falsehoods by rejecting everything.' (p.118)

> There are, in a sense, factors which cause objectivisation to stop short of the sceptical fantasies: it is bound to stop short of considerations which are never considered. But that does not mean that the concept so formed acquires as it were a 'hard boundary' at this point. On the contrary, the operative fact is precisely that nothing happens here, so we neither have a positive boundary, nor the positive absence of one.' (p.117)

As we see from the quotations, a human need for survival and action would force us to adopt a standard for all practical purposes rather than withhold judgment and attribute knowledge only to beliefs with 100% reliability. Sufficient level of reliability will depend on the situation and on the prototypical cases of knowledge similar to the one under scrutiny. In the next section I shall focus on prototypical cases.

VI.6   Comparison of the Genealogical View and the Common Law Tradition

One of the challenging features of the genealogical view is the idea of *prototypical cases*. To repeat, the traditional analysis of knowledge first proposes a criterion and then attributes knowledge on the basis of that

criterion. Prototypical case analysis starts with the actual situations in which we know and then works its way to identify the most exemplary cases that will serve for future reference in attributing knowledge. How are we to identify *prototypical* cases? On the basis of what do we identify them? Craig requires that his genealogical view should leave space for deviation. Let us find a way around these issues. My proposal is to elucidate the prototypical cases account by comparing it to the *Common Law Tradition*.

Let me first briefly summarize Craig's take on that issue. According to him, the concept of knowledge (and the criteria of evaluation along with it) emerges from epistemic practices, just as cultural values and legal rules emerge from practices. This does not happen overnight – it unfolds through history depending on the contexts of their development and involves not a single individual but lots of individuals --- practices are inherently social. As far as I understand this historical process, the rules for the prototypical cases emerge by selecting the situations that proved to result in true belief. On the basis of these cases, we can identify future situations where the concept of knowledge is applicable. To be sure, such a brief description looks easy on the surface, but it does encounter its own difficulties, such as the selection of a *precedent* and the identification of cases that can serve as relevant precedents for the evaluation of future cases. The main question I want to focus on is the question of the formation of epistemic principles and the identification of prototypical cases, and address the worry that due to the absence of initial criteria, identification of prototypical cases is not possible. On the basis of a comparison with the *Common Law Tradition*, I argue that prototypical cases can be identified and that epistemic principles are emergent rather than stated *a priori*.

There are two main legal traditions nowadays, the *Civil Law* and the *Common Law*. In the Civil Law Tradition, the criteria are stated in statutes as general rules, and court decisions are not as important as the statutes and legal treatises, which explain general legal principles. In the Common Law Tradition, the judgment is based on previous court decisions, which form a precedent. Future cases, which are similar to the precedent, should be treated along the same lines. It also happens that the decisions are made without clear initial principles given beforehand. The first decisions are based on the sense of justice of the judges; but after several cases of a similar kind, it is possible to observe some emergent general principles of the Common Law. I understand that some people can immediately object to the appeal to the sense of justice, which indeed sounds illegitimate. I agree, the requirements of 'fair practice' or 'the sense of justice' can be deemed too enigmatic. However, at the starting position that is the minimum we have. That

minimum by itself should not be enough, some other factors should also be present.

Legal theorist Lon Fuller, in his essay '*Adjudication, its Forms and Limits*' (1978)[120], is discussing a case-by-case development of legal principles in the Common Law, and also the situations where there are no rules given in advance. He points out that an effective adjudication is possible even without the rules given in advance. Such success can be proved historically. However, in order to accomplish that, there should be a common human interest and reciprocity in society. This regime of 'reciprocity and exchange' is the place of shared goals where the formation of the principles begins. This is rather vague, but it may serve as an impetus for more definite principles to emerge. After some cases, the general framework starts to emerge. The Common Law tradition principle-development is more flexible and adaptable than the Civil Law tradition, which adheres to statutory law. The advantage of this flexibility is that usually many things are not thought about in the beginning and emerge only after cases have been carefully analyzed, or when some unexpected aspects in subsequent cases suddenly emerge. The law is thus more dynamic and allowing for a certain variability and divergence from the initial principles. In this case-by-case process the law is 'making itself pure', to use Mansfield's words.

If we compare Common Law approach and traditional philosophical analysis, we can observe that such an approach clearly differs from traditional philosophical analysis. For instance, Hume contends that there are two areas where human reason is at work: it either relates to testing hypotheses by facts, or to drawing implications from premises stated beforehand. Anything that falls outside these domains simply does not belong to the realm of reason. In contrast, Fuller and Winston propose that adjudication, the process of judicial decision-making, can be rational without falling into these two categories. To quote him,

> There is, I submit, a third area of rational discourse, not embraced by empirical fact or logical implication. This is the area where men seek to trace out and articulate the implications of shared purposes. The intellectual activity that takes place in this area resembles logical deduction, but also differs in important respects from it. In logical deduction the greater the clarity of the premise, the more secure will be the deduction. In the process I have in mind, the discussion often proceeds most helpfully when the purposes, which serve as 'premises' or starting points, are stated generally and are held in intellectual contact with other related or competing purposes. The end result is not a mere demonstration of what follows from a given

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[120] Fuller, Lon L., Winston, Kenneth I. (1978) "The Forms and Limits of Adjudication", *Harvard Law Review* **92**, pp. 353-409.

purpose but a reorganization and clarification of the purposes that constituted the starting point of inquiry.' (p.381).

However, when we look at Craig's genealogical account of knowledge, it seems to possess similarities with this train of thought. That is why I find it elucidating to make a comparison between epistemic practices account and legal practices concerning the Common Law. Such comparison makes sense because:

1. Both of them have a historical dimension.
2. Prototypical cases of knowledge can be compared to legal precedents, because the evaluation of the subsequent cases depends on the precedent or prototypical cases created in the past.
3. Both approaches emphasize the goals of a society and an element of sociality and exchange as the underlying assumptions that enable the formulation of the main evaluative (legal or epistemic principles).

Having in mind these three points, it is possible to argue that the practices in the Common law tradition can clarify the basic assumptions of genealogical view as well as show the possibility of implementing such view in reality.

What about the worry that it is difficult to explain how prototypical cases are identified? In the initial stage these are the pillars that support the process of principle formation, because the general principles are still under construction. The process of objectivisation in Craig's account enables us to identify and modify the principles which do not recur or are not accurate enough. Fuller:

> We need, I believe, to keep two important truths before us: (1) It is sometimes possible to initiate adjudication effectively without definite rules; in this situation a case-by-case evolution of legal principle does often take place. (2) This evolution does not always occur, and we need to analyze what conditions foster or hinder it. (p.374).

Similar truths, I hold, can be set in front of the eyes of an epistemologist: to study how epistemic practices evolve and which factors have positive or negative influence to the process.

The analogy between the genealogical view and the Common Law Tradition casts light on the worry about the identification of prototypes. The fact that such a legal system is established and functional already demonstrates the possibility of evaluation on the basis of precedent. This is not to deny there are problems with this legal tradition, yet the Common Law Tradition has been functioning for several hundred years. By analogy between Craig's genealogical

approach and the Common Law Tradition, we infer the possibility of the attribution of knowledge on the basis of prototypical cases and explain the sociality assumption as having a fundamental influence on the subsequent development of the concept of knowledge.

Having discussed the general overview of Craig's genealogical view, we proceed to address the compatibilist character of the view: how does it combine internalism and externalism?

VI.7 The Compatibilist Nature of Genealogical View

Having answered one worry of the genealogical approach, let us continue further with compatibilism. As noted earlier, I shall try to show that Craig's account provides harmony between internalism and externalism. In order to compose this harmony, we need to look back to the origins of genealogical account. Craig objects to the very distinction that some analyses of knowledge are intrinsically internalist and others intrinsically externalist. Internalism requires internal accessibility or awareness of having good reasons as additional to true belief. Externalism e.g. requires reliable causal connection as the additional condition. According to Craig, such a distinction is more a matter of history than of the nature of these positions. The epistemic practices account reverses the order of analysis: essentially, the criteria are not initially established and then applied – they emerge from the epistemic practice and are shunned from atypical cases.

In the epistemic practices approach, internalist and externalist elements interact in slightly different way: they are not as tightly interconnected so that the possession of one would require the possession of the other, as in Sosa's account; nor are they divided into completely different theories, as in Foley's account. In fact, they originate and function within the same framework of detecting reliable informants, but their functions relate to different epistemic situations; each situation aims at evaluating a different kind of informant.

The basic assumption that the concept of knowledge originates in the need to detect reliable informants, points to a *third-person perspective* and therefore to externalism. Craig however does not want to commit himself to either the internalist or the externalist side of the debate. He argues that although the third-person perspective is indeed the default standpoint of his approach, nothing within his theoretical framework prevents us from applying it also to the internalist analysis. I shall next discuss two cases in which this is achieved.

Paul knows that he is competent to tell whether that painting is a genuine Vermeer or a counterfeit. He can volunteer or recommend himself as an informant whenever someone needs to decide this. Before volunteering, he needs to evaluate *himself* as a good informant. When performing self-evaluation, he would be engaging in an internalist practice. Paul is a reliable informant: he *knows* whether a painting is genuine Vermeer or not, and *he knows that he knows*.

The police are searching for a burglar, and John was the only one who happened to be close to the crime scene. John witnessed the burglary and saw the perpetrator. Having in mind that no-one else but John saw the burglary and that John is confident of his cognitive capacities and judgment, John could volunteer as an informant to aid the police. He is a reliable informant and *knows* who is the burglar. This is how the *first-person* perspective can also enter the genealogical view of knowledge. The more important the issue, the stronger the motivation to get our beliefs right.

To summarize, if an inquirer needs important information from someone else, then the epistemic process acquires externalist features, and if an inquirer judges his own cognitive capacities, then the epistemic process acquires internalist features. Then internalist and externalist intuitions are not connected in a way that internalist evaluation also requires the externalist evaluation. Therefore such modification makes the problem of strong knowledge go away.

Internalism and externalism may be combined in complementary fashion and on a par, depending on the situation and the concern. Both first and third person perspectives fit into the overall picture of genealogical view of knowledge; there is no hierarchical relationship between these perspectives. Craig claims that self-assessment of being a good informant is only 'in the neighbourhood of internalism', because there is no need to build this condition into the concept of knowledge. In externalist cases, the informant is someone else, in the internalist – the subject himself. Just as when the subject S in $\text{Kn}(S, p)$ is female does not entail that '$\text{Kn}(., .)$' is female, when S assesses herself as a good informant does not entail that the ensuing conception of knowledge is internalist.

To summarize, Craig's genealogical story makes room for both internalist and externalist intuitions to co-exist in one concept of knowledge. A merit of this account is its intrinsic sociality, which lies at the core of the genealogical compatibilism and brings it closer to everyday epistemic practices. However, Craig's view of knowledge is hypothetical and it would be beneficial to make it compatible with empirically-informed theories. Also, it does not require any partitioning of the concept of knowledge. In his account Craig is explicitly dealing

with Skeptical and Gettier problems but leaves other epistemic problems outside the scope of analysis. In what follows I shall compare three compatibilist views of knowledge with respect to several epistemic problems. On the basis of that, I shall evaluate each one's advantages and disadvantages.

VII. Compatibilisms and the Internalism-Externalism Debate

VII.1 Preamble

After analyzing several compatibilist positions, I end my thesis by summarizing and comparing three compatibilist accounts with respect to: (1) how they deal with the controversial issues in the Internalism-Externalism debate (mainly the externalist side of it, except for the Gettier problem); and with respect to (2) what other advantages and disadvantages they have besides the shop-worn problems. As we shall see, different compatibilist accounts will not turn out to be equally successful in solving different problems under discussion.

VII.2 Foley's Compatibilism

Foley builds his position by distinguishing between two theories: (*a*) an externalist theory of knowledge and (*b*) an internalist theory of justified belief. A motivation for that is to reconcile internalism and externalism and allow each of the theories some room to co-exist in epistemology. This is a significant advantage of all compatibilist accounts in general. Instead of seeing internalism and externalism as competing theories with respect to the theory of knowledge, Foley sees them as dealing with two different questions: externalism tries to answer the question what knowledge is and internalism deals with the questions when we have good evidence to believe a proposition (or how t keep our intellectual house in order).

This division has important implications for solving the Gettier problem. To remind, Gettier cases are targeted specifically to the sufficiency of justified true belief for knowledge. If the logical connection of sufficiency between these two epistemic states is broken, and knowledge is articulated on externalist terms, then the Gettier problem does not seem to arise. More generally, Gettier counterexamples are targeted against the JTB account of knowledge, of which the justification condition is internalist and is restricted to logical relations between propositions. Recall the example about Jones owning a Ford: Smith has formed a justified true belief 'Someone in the office owns a Ford' on the basis of seeing Jones driving a Ford and offering Smith a ride, but not because Jones owns a Ford (which Smith however

believes), but because someone else in the office happens to own a Ford (of which Smith is not aware). According to Foley's internalist theory of justification, Smith has the true and justified belief that someone in the office owns a Ford. According to Foley's externalist view of knowledge, Smith does not know that someone in the office owns a Ford because his epistemic state is not externally connected to the right state of affairs.

Externalism saves knowledge from Gettier problems by maintaining that instead of subjective justification, knowledge requires that a reliable causal connection between the belief that p and that a relevant state of affairs described by p factually obtains. If we articulate knowledge in these externalist terms, we can avoid promoting situations where the relation between a true belief and a relevant state of affairs is accidental, to give rise to knowledge. This is the standard externalist strategy to avoid Gettier problems.

While we can see that such account avoids Gettier problems, it can hardly help us with the other standard epistemic problems. If we investigate how well this account is dealing with the standard problems, we shall see that Foley's account cannot provide an answer to them. Foley's proposal is rather general and does not give us more details about what particular shape externalism or internalism should take in order to complete a sound version of compatibilism. Due to this fact, I proceed from very general characterisation of externalism, namely that knowledge is true belief produced by a reliable cognitive process. If we assume the mainstream externalist explication of knowledge, then it is safe to maintain that Foley's concept of knowledge is susceptible to two of the three standard problems for externalism: the generality problem and meta-incoherence problem (see **Ch. III**.3). In order to make this sort of compatibilism stronger, we would need to inquire deeper into the afore-mentioned externalist problems. When it comes to the skeptical problem, Foley's account can offer some positive status to the victim of the Evil Demon, although he does not state this explicitly. Since justified false belief, possessed by the victim, cannot qualify as knowledge, it may still be justified. If, as Foley argues, theories of knowledge and justification are separated, then from the point of view of the theory of justification, the victim's belief still deserves a credit.

Foley is generally known as a proponent of internalism, so his compatibilist view is rather new and deserves further interest and elaboration. Some philosophers, such as A.R. Booth[121], have taken an initiative to do so. He focuses on the notion of justification which, according to him, can be regarded separately from knowledge as based on the *deontic intuition* that we should believe responsibly, i.e. along

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[121] Booth, Anthony R., 'The Theory of Epistemic Justification and the Theory of Knowledge: A Divorce.' *Erkenntnis* (forthcoming), DOI 10.1007/s10670-010-9264-9, on line December 2010.

with the evidence. If we see epistemology merely as a theory of knowledge resilient to the Gettier problems, something important seems to be missing. And that is an intuition that we should believe along with our evidence. Booth calls it a 'deontic intuition', as different from the necessary condition of knowledge. Justification does not have to participate in the enterprise of knowledge as a condition that turns true belief into knowledge, but it would be counter-intuitive to ban justification outside of epistemology completely. Booth writes:

> I propose that it is the intuition that if it is our fate to be believers, then we ought to believe responsibly, that we have obligations/duties/requirements with respect to our beliefs. We feel that we are obliged to believe in accordance with the available evidence, for instance, and only when we do so are we epistemically justified in having a particular belief; such that we feel, for that reason, that the beliefs of Holocaust deniers, creationists, and members of the flat earth society (for example) are epistemically unsalutary. In short, we feel we ought to have justified beliefs and we want to know how. Call this the deontic intuition.[122]

Thus we can create some space to accommodate internalism into epistemology without making it a competitor to the theory of knowledge. Such form of compatibilism does change the face of epistemology and the internalism-externalism debate. The rivalry between the two positions is dissolved, creating two independent epistemic theories dealing with different questions and intuitions. The divorce of knowledge and justification might then facilitate a peaceful relationship between internalism and externalism.

It is not clear yet whether the proponents of internalism would agree not to have a theory of knowledge, because in the traditional epistemology knowledge is primarily internalist (yet susceptible to the Gettier problems). As discussed in the **Ch. V**, Sosa's compatibilism is aiming at providing separate kinds of knowledge, so I am turning to it now.

VII.3 Sosa's Compatibilism

Sosa's solutions to the standard problems have been discussed earlier. His idea to distinguish *animal* and *reflective* knowledge emerges as an attempt to deal with the main problems for externalism. It is worth repeating that, contrary to Foley, Sosa is arguing for the interconnection between the two kinds of knowledge (for which he is criticized by

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[122] Ibid.

Foley: not being radical enough), because reflective knowledge is only possible when there is also animal knowledge. In other words, we need reliably caused beliefs for animal knowledge (externalism) and we need to know that the source of our belief is reliable for reflective knowledge (internalism). The solutions to the standard problems for externalism and one or two concepts of knowledge have already been discussed in **Ch. V** Sections 3-5. I shall mention them therefore only very briefly. The Gettier problem has however not been discussed yet, so I shall spend more time on it and start with it now.

Gettier Problems. Sosa attempts to deal with the Gettier problem by implementing the AAA account for determining the aptness of a belief, which stands for: Aptness, Accuracy and Adroitness. To remind ourselves: *accurate* beliefs are the ones that are on target (they are true); *adroit* beliefs are the ones that manifest intellectual virtue or competence; *apt* beliefs are the ones that are both accurate and adroit. To remind ourselves also of an example: an archer shoots an arrow and it hits the target, but one the way to the target, a gust of wind blows it off the correct path, and another gust of wind blows it back onto the right track. The shot is accurate, but this accuracy is not achieved by its adroitness (which may well be present), but by the gusts of wind that blew it to the right direction. This is why Sosa does not stop at just enumerating the conditions; he also states that it is important *how* the AAA elements are related to each other. In other words, apt belief should not only be accurate and adroit, it should be accurate *because* adroit; the truth should be achieved not because of the accidental factors (epistemic luck) but because of the intellectual competence of the subject. This is why for a belief to be apt, it has to be accurate *because* adroit.

We see how Sosa tries to avoid accidentally true beliefs and thus solve the Gettier problem. Only apt beliefs qualify as knowledge, i.e. only those beliefs which already have a special condition to prevent luck from entering the conditions of knowledge. To return to our example, the situation where the archer's shot hits the target, but does that in virtue of accidental gusts of wind, cannot amount to knowledge. It is not: accurate because adroit.

This is a quite elaborate solution. An interesting thing to note is that the AAA account seems to function on the level of animal knowledge without requiring the condition of reflective knowledge. However, that is not the case with respect to other problems we take an interest in. It does not only state the conditions, it also attempts to avoid falling into the gap of epistemic luck. Sosa avoids that by requiring a factual connection between the truth of belief and the subject's intellectual competence.

Now, when we turn to the other, externalist problems and inquire into how Sosa deals with them, we see that the solutions involve both animal and reflective knowledge. This I have already discussed before, so we settle here for a brief reminder.

The solution to the *generality problem* is partly covered by the introduction of the normality constraints relative to one's epistemic group. If a belief is generated by some odd process, which does not fall within the range of normality peculiar to one's epistemic kind, the belief is not likely to qualify as knowledge. Furthermore, to ensure the proper focus of the subject's reliable belief-generating processes, Sosa claims we need to fit a belief within the subject's *epistemic perspective*. Such a combination of both internalist and externalist conditions makes for strong conditions of knowledge that would leave many knowledge-prone beliefs outside the reach of knowledge. For many beliefs on the level of animal knowledge, it would be impossible to acquire such an internalist perspective. It would be too much to require.

The second problem for externalism, the *meta-incoherence problem*, is addressed by Sosa again by an appeal to the distinction between animal and reflective knowledge. If we require that a belief fits the internal perspective of the subject, having a clairvoyant belief can hardly be regarded as so fitting. To put it another way, the subject will not be able to explain how clairvoyant belief coheres with other beliefs, which are already attributed the status of knowledge. In this case, the internal perspective condition solves the problem. But, as we have seen before, such a condition is often too strong to be fulfilled on a regular basis.

The *skeptical problem* is solved first and foremost by implementing the distinction between the actual (evil demon) and assumed (human) environment, which enables one to judge the demon victim from the point of view of the human environment due to the fact that the victim is identical to a normal human being. Because of that, we can assign some epistemic credit to the victim's belief even though it does not amount to knowledge. Maybe that does not sound like a full-fledged solution of the skeptical problem, yet partially it gives a certain answer and enables us to retain the positive epistemic regard with respect to the demon victim.

Finally, Sosa introduces a form of compatibilism with the *two concepts of knowledge*, animal and reflective. As indicated above, most of the aforementioned solutions are based on such distinction. However, ideally compatibilism provides a single conception of knowledge, independent of whether epistemic states originate in different sources.

To conclude, we can compare Sosa's compatibilism with Foley's. Sosa's compatibilism is more elaborate in addressing the problems that

haunt externalism. In his writings, Sosa is thoroughly addressing all of them, while in Foley's case we are left wondering which precise variety of internalism and externalism he adopts; in Sosa's case, the details of the both sides of controversy are quite thoroughly developed and tested against various epistemological problems. I doubt that all of them are addressed in a satisfactory fashion, but the attempts are interesting and thought-provoking, in particular the solutions to the generality and the sceptical problem. The latter two problems are solved with the help of the social elements of knowledge. That I consider as an added value of this account, because it brings theory of knowledge closer to the real life situations. Humans, according to Sosa, are 'information-sharing species', so an appropriate account of knowledge should take into account this fact. Craig's genealogical compatibilism has even more emphasis on social elements. I now turn to summarizing the results of this account.

VII.4 Craig's Genealogical Compatibilism

Finally, I want to take a brief look into the Craig's solutions to the problems we are interested in. As with the two previous accounts, we shall see how well this account deals with the Gettier and standard externalist problems.

Gettier problems In an attempt to deal with the Gettier counterexamples, Craig tries to go to the heart of the problem and explores *why* exactly such cases arise. In any case, in anticipation, I can say that 'to deal' is quite an ambiguous term in this context, because Craig's 'solution' actually lies in avoiding the very analytical framework that is conducive for generating Gettier counterexamples. Without propounding sufficient conditions for knowledge, advancing Gettier cases is pointless. Perhaps *dissolution* rather than *solution* is the right term here.

If we try to analyze the concept of knowledge in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions by adding a further specific condition to true belief *Bp*, that does not guarantee that *Bp* will amount to knowledge, as we know by now. Due to the fact that we can imagine further situations which are in accord with the third or justification condition yet, if added, they considerably decrease the credibility degree of the belief *Bp*. In mainstream epistemology, as soon as a certain analysis of knowledge is presented, in order to prove the insufficiency of such an analysis, philosophers start offering counterexamples where the fulfilment of the third condition becomes accidental. Gettier cases

are also made using the same strategy, where the justification condition is satisfied yet the belief does not amount to knowledge. The probability of p being correct is not increased by the way the justification is generated. And indeed, the difference between merely true belief and a true belief-cum-the third condition is that the function of the third condition is to provide such a high probability. If that is the case it will always be possible to master a counterexample that would make any analysis of knowledge insufficient. To recapitulate, Craig's concern with all main epistemological accounts is that they aim for an explication of the concept of knowledge, and test proposed explications by playing the game of example and counterexample, whether the proposed criterion is internalist or externalist. There seems no end to this game and therefore Craig refuses to play it, and devises his genealogical view of knowledge by focussing on the *purpose* of possessing the concept of knowledge in our lives rather than the conditions for its attribution.

On the other hand, if we introduce the 'no false lemma condition', i.e. the requirement that blocks Gettier-style counterexamples from entering the analysis of knowledge, the conditions of knowledge will become too strong. The 'no false lemma' may look as a desirable anti-luck condition because is it aiming at eliminating the falsehoods from the process during which a knowledge claim is generated, but despite its initial appeal the no-false lemma principle does not help to save the analyses of knowledge articulated in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions. In fact, it contains some self-defeating tendencies because humans as limited beings cannot be aware of all the possibilities that might undermine the justified true belief's chances to become knowledge. The answer that Craig gives to the Gettier problem is that it is insoluble: on the one hand, there is always at least a theoretical possibility that even if all the necessary and sufficient conditions are met, it will still be possible to create counterexamples. Furthermore, the 'no false lemma' condition does not improve the situation either because it makes the conditions of knowledge too strong. So, the Gettier problem is not solvable, epistemic luck cannot be fully eliminated, but the question is: do we have to worry about that? From the point of view of the genealogical account the answer is 'No'.

Craig's dissolution of the Gettier problem is somewhat similar to *contextualism*. He argues that the conditions of knowledge are flexible and involve concerns and purposes of inquirers, which vary from situation to situation (context to context). A lot in the knowledge-attribution process depends on the particular information and conditions related to the content of the belief in question. To use Craig's example,

when we hear that Dancing Brave has won his last five races against top-class opposition and was clearly in the best of health at exercise yesterday, we regard it as very probable that he will win again this afternoon. If we add to that evidence the further statement that Big Nig was seen in his stable this morning tipping some white powder into his drinking-water, we cease to regard a win this afternoon as likely. If we learn that the white powder was only glucose we change back. If we hear that on his way out Big Nig passed a bundle of bank notes to the prospective jockey we lower the probability again, and so on. (p.51)

What Craig wants to show by this example is that likelihood is dynamic and it is often possible to find additional information that affects the likelihood of a belief rather drastically.

If we compare Craig's answer to Foley's or Sosa's, the first is also aiming at the dissolution by tearing apart the JTB account of knowledge, the second is trying to refine the account of animal knowledge by adding the 'A-A-A' structure. Both Foley and Sosa are faithful to the necessary and sufficient conditions framework of analysis. Craig and Foley are similar because they both try to dissolve the Gettier problem, although the solutions they offer are different.

When it comes to the other two standard problems for externalism, Craig does not discuss either the *generality* or the *meta-incoherence* problems. However, in contrast to Foley, Craig explores at least a couple of externalist versions, that of Nozick counterfactual tracking analysis and Goldman's causal reliabilism. But the focus of his attention is not on the afore-mentioned problems. Craig wants to show that even the externalist accounts, as long as they are framed in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions, cannot escape the menace of the Gettier cases. My own preference remains with Sosa's relativization of a belief to one's *epistemic group* and using that for predicting when a belief is likely to originate from a reliable source. This part of Sosa's account is quite similar to Craig's sociality assumption of knowledge except for the fact that the former is using this to generate solutions to two standard problems for externalism, and the latter leaves them aside the discussion.

The Skeptical problem. In contrast to the two problems just indicated, Craig spends some time to discussing the *skeptical problem*. I was already hinting at skepticism when discussing Craig's concept of objectivisation. Evil demon or Cartesian scepticism (see also **Ch III**.3.1) compels ambiguous reactions – on the one hand, it presents intellectual

challenge to give a conclusive answer to skepticism; on the other hand such a situation sounds so improbable that it may require second thought to undertake the task. No matter what, there is something intuitively appealing about the skeptical scenario. Craig argues:

There may be, in other words, some features of the everyday concept which generate pressure towards scepticism, or opportunities for it, and there might be something in our philosophers' metaphysic or *Weltbild* which inclined him to emphasize that feature.

…it can hardly be the case that the explanation lies wholly insulated from everyday practice, depending solely on the properties of various thought-structures in which only a tiny fragment of humanity has ever taken any interest. That would make it look too much of an accident that scepticism tends to be expressed in terms of the words 'knows' and 'knowledge'. (p.106.)

Skepticism is often considered a phenomenon to be discussed exclusively in philosophy seminars. On the other hand, it is difficult to say that the skeptical scenario is completely at odds with the conceptual practice: it seems to make sense that skeptical scenario is not completely accidental. To completely deny it would probably mean to assume a standpoint of an absolute certainty. But it clearly is the case that humans are not immune to error. That is because of this essential fallibility that skeptical scenarios enter the epistemological scene. If we speak about human knowledge and articulate it in terms of social epistemic practices, then we are concerned about skepticism not in terms of fancy sceptical scenarios but with the 'practical' skepticism – the failures that happen in our everyday judgments. We are concerned with the situations and degrees when we can attribute knowledge to particular beliefs.

Skepticism has two driving forces that come from different directions – one is derived from everyday cognitive practice and the other from philosophical inquiry into very specific skeptical possibilities. The latter suggests that we should find some additional aspect of cognitive practices that is not captured by the concept of objectification, which prevents the inquiry from venturing too far from reality. Craig's account assumes that an informant should be reliable over the range of the relevant possible worlds and that he does not know the peculiarities of each particular situation of an inquirer. That serves as an impetus to set high standards to satisfy the most demanding situations.

From such considerations it is compelling to jump to a conclusion that the only acceptable standard would be to give an impeccable true

answer in all (not only relevant) possible worlds. Therefore the main question that makes or breaks the objectivisation account is the deed of giving an acceptable picture about the mechanism that enables the process of objectification to stop at an appropriate level. It may seem as if skepticism might have a very practical and honorable purpose of guarding against the acquisition of falsehoods through withholding of beliefs. But, on the other hand, if our need for true beliefs is remotely derivative from our basic needs for survival, then the skeptical withholding of beliefs would pose a serious threat.

Craig does explain *the origins* of skepticism on the basis of his genealogical view of knowledge. If we think about knowledge originating from the human interests and needs of survival, such scenarios such as the *evil demon* do not seem to occur in our ordinary epistemic practices. Basically anyone we could consider a good informant on certain issues would fail the evil demon test, just because human competence does not extend to such cases. As Craig puts it,

A decision isn't called for; no-one raises the question, no-one even entertains it, let alone seriously considers allowing such a test to affect the formation of his [informant's] beliefs. Societies have laws; but no society has a law against doing something which it never enters anyone's head to do. (p.116).

Skepticism is an easy position to take, yet in the long run it is not practically constructive. You can always be dissatisfied with solutions due to the essential imperfection of human judgment. What is important for present purposes is to find to develop an account of how to maximize our main epistemic goals, i.e. the acquisition of true beliefs on matters that are important.

Again, this move, instead of being a solution, is more appropriately called '*a dissolution*' of the problem. As we have discussed before, skepticism for Craig arises from the practical purpose to establish a high enough standard for knowledge so that it would satisfy even very demanding inquirers in all circumstance for all concerns. Skepticism as such, not necessarily in the form of the evil demon scenario, is indeed an important topic for Craig with respect to his concept of objectivisation. Otherwise the requirement of high standards might stretch *ad infinitum*, which would make his concept of knowledge hardly ever attainable by ordinary human beings. Craig does recognize the tension between practicality and high quality of epistemic standards. However that should not motivate us to stop any judgment whatsoever. The strongest antidote against venturing too far into the realm of skepticism is the test of reality: we need to act on our beliefs

and the need for action requires us to identify true beliefs. The concept of knowledge originates *there.*

The skeptical challenge still exists for the genealogical account, yet the discussion of it is diverted from evil demon scenarios, which are considered too remote to pose a real challenge for the concept of knowledge, to the question about the boundaries of epistemic standards in the process of objectivisation. It is an important question to ask where to draw a line, and Craig's answer that we need true beliefs for survival, and hence the pressure to look for reliable informants, states an important point against skepticism. Craig understands that it is difficult, if not impossible, to define a universal standard equally valid for all cases of knowledge. He advocates some level of indeterminacy or vagueness in relation to that question. Understandably, such statement generates difficulties for Craig's genealogical account. Even if it is unavoidable, I suggest Craig would profit from a more detailed specification like, for example, Sosa's range of normality.

To wind this section up, as major merits of Craig's compatibilism I would distinguish his change of the framework of analysis and introducing the genealogical theory of knowledge. Such theory opens the possibility to introduce social aspects to the very core of epistemic theory. Although, as noted earlier, Craig's account is merely hypothetical (which is indeed a pity) but at the same time it opens a trajectory where further work needs to be done. Combining both internalist and externalist elements under the one umbrella concept of knowledge is another merit which is especially relevant to our present compatibilist concerns, and which can also be developed further. Internalism and externalism belong to the same genealogical story; they are not mutually exclusive rivals. Finally, his treatment of skepticism also deserves to be mentioned. Craig shows that skepticism is not only a privilege of philosophers but results from the primary concerns to set relevant standards for knowledge-attribution.

Here I am stopping the discussion about different kinds of compatibilism. In order to summarize the findings of the dissertation and get a concise overview how the views discussed deal with various epistemological problems, I suggest you to take a look at the final section and a table below.

VII.5 Conclusions

In this table you will see the solutions each compatibilist view gives to the selected epistemic problems I focused on in this dissertation. This table shows which of the compatibilist views has been most extensively developed and which ones still possess the gaps that yet need to be developed.

Table 1. Varieties of compatibilism and the standard epistemological problems

Problem	Foley	Sosa	Craig
The Gettier Problem (GP)	Dissolves GP by separating knowledge and justification	Solves GP by introducing the A-A-A structure into the conditions of knowledge (See **Ch V**.1)	Declares GP insoluble, unless the 'necessary and sufficient conditions' analysis is rejected.
The Skeptical Problem (SP)	Can be used to solve the SP by maintaining that the Victim's belief is justified but does not qualify for knowledge. (not discussed by the author)	Solves SP by introducing the concept of assumed environment as a standpoint of evaluation	Dissolves by introducing pragmatic perspective. Skeptical test is not relevant to the pragmatic explication of knowledge.
The Meta-Incoherence Problem (MiP)	No solution offered	Partly. Introduces the Animal-Reflective knowledge distinction to solve MIP. (for criticisms of the distinction see **Ch**. **V**.6)	No solution offered
The Generality Problem (GeP)	No solution offered	Partly. Introduces the Animal-Reflective knowledge distinction to solve GeP. (for criticisms of the distinction see **Ch**. **V**.6)	No solution offered
One or two concepts of knowledge	Division of labour between knowledge and justification. The solution is only partial because internalism does not qualify for knowledge.	Introduces two concepts of knowledge, Animal and Reflective	Defends an account of one concept of knowledge based on prototypical cases and the function of the concept in epistemic practices.

Now I want to come back to the leading questions of the dissertation I formulated in **Ch. III**.4 To quote them once again, there were two major groups of questions:

1. What are the possible relationships between Internalism and Externalism in epistemology? Can they somehow be combined or are they destined to be rivals about one and the same concept of propositional knowledge?

2. When several kinds of epistemological views of propositional knowledge that do justice to both internalism and externalism are possible, is there one that stands out as the current best view?

I shall divide my conclusions into two categories to match the groups of the leading questions.

The answer to the first question is rather easy. Starting from the **Ch. IV**.3, I was trying to show that despite the mainstream view of Internalism and Externalism as adversaries, there indeed are some philosophers who rise to the challenge to combine those two views of knowledge. In this thesis I focused on:

1) Foley's separation between the theory of knowledge and the theory of justified belief;

2) Sosa's distinction between the two types of knowledge; and

3) Craig's genealogical account of knowledge, which combines Internalism and Externalism in a single concept of knowledge.

To be fair, these are not the only versions of epistemic compatibilism, but my thesis must end somewhere. After answering the first group of questions in the affirmative, we can move on to answering the second group of questions. I shall evaluate the different versions of compatibilism on the basis of: (1) the solutions they offer to the standard epistemological problems; (2) *how* each view combines internalism and externalism; (3) how these views can be developed further to solve more problems and address more issues. So let me move to answering the second question now.

The second group of questions already presupposes an affirmative answer to the first question and states that there are different versions of epistemic compatibilism. However, as I tried to show, they are not equally good. In the **Table 1** we see that Sosa's compatibilism is the

most thoroughly developed: he addresses all the issues that are under scrutiny in this thesis. Also, Sosa gives the most attention to the question of compatibilism between internalism and externalism. That gives him the edge over the other compatibilist views studied in this dissertation. On the other hand, as indicated, it is not a perfect view, because the distinction between animal and reflective knowledge is not made very precise and reflective knowledge turns out very difficult to attain.

Craig's account comes in second. Although Craig himself does not focus so much on the question of compatibilism, his position offers a lot of potential to bring in social and empirically-informed aspects to epistemology. The account provides us with interesting insights into the Gettier and the skeptical problems but does not answer the central epistemic problems. One more important merit of this view is that it combines internalist and externalist features into one concept of knowledge.

Foley's view comes in third. The major merit of this position is its dissolution of the Gettier problem and clearly delineating territories for internalism and externalism. Also it can provide a clue to the Skeptical problem. On the other hand, the view itself is still more of an invitation for further inquiry and obviously needs further elaboration.

To conclude, epistemic compatibilism is a live and still promising possibility.

Summary

The main interest of this dissertation is the possibility to reconcile the two views of knowledge. Internalism and externalism in epistemology are traditionally perceived as rival views with respect to the concept of knowledge. According to Internalism,

(Int) knowledge entails justification, i.e., giving and asking for reasons. Justification relies on the assumption about the accessibility to the internal contents of the mind.

Externalist account defines
(Ext) knowledge as true belief, which is a result of a reliable cognitive process. This definition does not require the subject to have a direct access to the internal contents of the mind.

In this dissertation I inquire whether the relationship between internalism and externalism is that of peaceful co-existence rather than mutual exclusion. I defend the thesis that the first option holds and epistemic compatibilism is possible. The term 'compatibilism' designates a non-contradictory co-existence of the two views of knowledge. The inquiry can be divided into two groups of leading questions of this dissertation:
1. What are the relationships between internalism and externalism in epistemology? Are they destined to be rivals or can they be reconciled with respect to the concept of propositional knowledge?
2. Although several varieties of compatibilist epistemological views are possible, is there one that stands out as the current best view?

These questions are guiding through the seven chapters of this dissertation, which I am going to summarize in turn.

The first Chapter is the Introduction to the thesis. It starts from the very basic definitions of propositional knowledge or 'knowledge that', which is the main object of research in epistemology. This concept of knowledge is usually analyzed in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions, which I am discussing in the introduction. The traditional definition of knowledge has three conditions: (i) belief, (ii) truth and (iii) justification. I discuss each of them separately and show what function they have in the analysis of knowledge. Although truth and belief conditions are relatively unproblematic, it is the justification condition that is the most troublesome. I mention the Gettier cases, which challenge this set of conditions in a way that there are cases where all three conditions are met yet a belief does not qualify for knowledge. Those cases show that the justification

condition is the most problematic condition. To remind, the function of the justification condition is to block true beliefs that are acquired by luck. This is precisely the condition which internalists and externalists disagree about. What constitutes justification: should it be directly accessible on reflection or should it be regarded as an 'external' (to the mind) causal link between a belief and a state of affairs the belief is about? That is where I leave the Introduction and start discussing the essential traits of internalism (**Ch.II**) and externalism (**Ch.III**)

As mentioned, I define internalism as a view that knowledge requires justifiers that are readily available to the subject upon reflection. On the basis of this definition I distinguish three essential features of internalism:

    (1) Internalist assumption;
    (2) Accessibility requirement;
    (3) Deontological nature of justification.

To put it briefly, ever since Descartes internalists assume that knowledge requires internal justification. It is so because the subject is able to access the contents of his mind directly upon reflection. We all have experience of thinking about our thoughts when no-one else knows what we are thinking about. Since humans have this capacity, they can reflect and correct their beliefs. In other words, the gift of reason comes together with the responsibility to believe what is true and not to believe what is false. This duty-bound account is called the deontological feature of justification. In analyzing these features, I draw mainly on the works of such classics as Descartes, Locke and Clifford as well as some contemporary philosophers (BonJour, Foley et al.)

In the same **Ch. II,** I am also discussing two criticisms of this view of knowledge. The first is the Gettier problem, which shows the insufficiency of justified true belief for knowledge. The traditional account does not rule out epistemic luck, whereas we want to rule out lucky knowledge and Gettier cases usually are cases of lucky knowledge. The second criticism emerges from the Quinean project of naturalized epistemology. Quine criticises the traditional analysis of knowledge by being guided solely by epistemic norms, instead of paying attention to empirical research in cognitive psychology.

These two criticisms motivated the rise of the externalist theories of knowledge, which I discuss in the **Ch.III**. Externalism is a view which defines knowledge as a true belief produced by a reliable cognitive process. I discuss three essential features of externalism:

(1) External connection
(2) Reliability of cognitive processes
(3) Counterfactuals

Externalists argue that many of our beliefs are formed impulsively without any awareness of justifying reasons, like in the case of perception. Cognition is far too complicated, so it is not even possible to monitor the process at the level of neurons. Therefore, accessibility requirement is not necessary for knowledge. What is important is that the belief-generating process be reliable, i.e. produce true beliefs most of the time. The reliability of cognitive processes also depends on an environment in which a particular process is supposed to function. For example, vision is not very reliable in the absence of light. Because of that it is necessary to specify relevant counterfactual situations in which cognitive processes function reliably. In discussing these issues, I mainly rely on the work of Alvin Goldman and Richard Nozick. In **Ch. III**, I also discuss three standard criticisms of externalism: (1) The Skeptical Problem (Evil demon), which questions the necessity of reliability for knowledge; (2) The Meta-incoherence Problem (BonJour's Clairvoyance), which questions the sufficiency of reliability for knowledge, and (3) The Generality problem, which questions the relevant scope of a reliable process required in order to produce reliable beliefs. After giving an overview of internalism, externalism and their critics, I also formulate the leading questions of this dissertation, which were presented at the beginning of this summary.

In the **Ch.IV**, I start investigating the relationship between internalism and externalism in order to find out whether they are compatible. For that I need to define the very concept of compatibilism, and I am doing that at the section IV.1. I define compatibility as absence of contradiction. Compatibility can be achieved to different degrees, depending on the amount of concepts they share together.

(a) If there are no common concepts, then the degree of compatibility is 0. This type of compatibility is not very interesting, as it talks about things that are totally unrelated to each other; (b) If there is one common concept, the degree of compatibility is 1; (c) If there are 2 common concepts, the degree of compatibility is 2, etc. Internalism and externalism share the concepts of 'belief' and 'truth', therefore epistemic compatibilism should be compatible to degree 2.

Equipped with this concept, I distinguish three types of relationships between internalism and externalism:

(1) *Hostile*: Internalism and Externalism are mutually exclusive (BonJour, Goldman);

(2a) *Friendly*, Indifference: Internalism and Externalism are compatible, but they are talking about two different (although possibly related) epistemic concepts: knowledge and justification (first case: Foley), different types of knowledge (second case: Sosa);

(2b) *Friendly*, Harmony: Internalism and Externalism are compatible; they are about one concept of propositional knowledge (Craig).

I then go on to investigate into the merits and challenges of all these views: (1) the hostile relationship, and (2a) the friendly indifference relationship.

Ch.V is devoted to the analysis of the second case of friendly indifference (2a) – Sosa's *virtue perspectivism*. **Ch. VI** deals with Craig's genealogical compatibilism. In **Ch.VII,** I compare the compatibilist views in two respects: (i) how they deal, if at all, with the Skeptical, the Generality and the Meta-incoherence problems and whether they adhere to one concept or more concepts of propositional knowledge; (ii) what is their contribution to combining internalism and externalism; (iii) what is the potential of each view, and what still needs to be developed.

In **Conclusions**, I present the **Table 1**, which summarizes the findings of the comparison between the three compatibilist views, and compare these views in order to find out which view stands out. This answers the leading questions of this dissertation. My conclusions are:

1. Sosa's compatibilism is the most thorough version of compatibilism. All the problems explored in the thesis are explicitly addressed in this view. Sosa devotes a lot of attention to the relationship between internalism and externalism when discussing the distinction between animal and reflective knowledge. The main drawback of this view is that the distinction is not precise enough and that reflective knowledge, as it is defined by Sosa, is very difficult to attain.

2. Craig's genealogical compatibilism is the second best available view. He thoroughly explores the Gettier and Skeptical problems, but does not consider the other problems (generality and meta-incoherence). Another merit of his account is that it allows for a harmonious compatibilism between internalism and externalism. In other words, this is the only compatibilist view which relates internalism and externalism in a single concept of knowledge. The third merit of this view is its intrinsic social nature. It allows for an epistemology that is closer to real epistemic practices. However, the last mentioned aspect also has a dark side – Craig

offers us merely hypothetical story about the origin of our concept of knowledge. A suggested improvement is to make it compatible with empirically-informed theories of cognition.

3. The merits of Foley's version of compatibilism are the following: a solution of the Gettier and Skeptical problems and a separation of internalism and externalism, by restricting them to different epistemic territories. Externalists should focus on the theory of knowledge and internalists on the theory of justification. While it looks like a peaceful co-existence of both epistemic views, it is not clear whether internalists would be satisfied merely with justification. Traditionally, the concept of knowledge is stronger than that of justification, so it is likely that an internalist conception of knowledge is also desirable for internalists. Another drawback of this theory is that it does not attempt to solve the other standard epistemic problems. It clearly can be improved further by defining more precisely which specific versions of internalism and externalism it adheres to, and how to solve these other problems.

All in all, epistemic compatibilism is a promising area, which opens new opportunities for further inquiry.

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Giedrė Vasiliauskaitė
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