

# ***The Normative Mind***

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## I Summary

Much of our conscious mental life consists in the formation or revision of beliefs, intentions (or desires), emotions and evaluations. We acquire new, and revise old, attitudes in response to what we take to be facts. Facts matter for our formation of attitudes because – and to the extent to which – they speak for or against having those attitudes (Dancy, 2004; Dokic, 2001; Kolodny, 2005; Scanlon, 1999). Examples abound. We judge that it is turning night because we see that it is getting dark outside. Physicists gave up their idea of an aether in the light of the results of the Michelson-Morley experiment. We decide to give food to a homeless man in response to recognising that he is indeed penniless and hungry. Art critics admire and value a painting because they notice its historically novel and effective use of illumination. A natural way of describing this feature of facts is to say that they provide us with reasons for forming or changing the respective attitudes – or, in the case of intentions, perform the intended actions (Dancy, 2000; Kolodny, 2005; McDowell, 1998b; McNaughton and Rawling, 2004; Parfit, 1997; Perner and Roessler, 2011; Schaber, 2005). The first main goal of the proposed research is to *investigate the relationship between reason-providing facts, our awareness of them and our formation of attitudes.*

The other chief aim is to *get clearer about the intimate connection of reasons to norms and values.* Reasons for attitudes give rise to norms governing the latter's formation. When we have reason to form a certain attitude, we are either permitted or required to develop it; and when we lack reason for it, we are not allowed to acquire it (or are obliged to give it up if we already have it). If the facts favour the view that it is nighttime, then we should not believe that it is daytime; and that the homeless is in need obliges us to help him (Parfit, 2011; Scanlon, 1999). This is in line with our practice of holding people responsible (i.e., praising or blaming them) not only for what they express or do, but also for what they believe, intend or value (Owens, 2000; Wallace, 1994). Part of what is wrong with racist views, say, is that they are held despite the facts speaking against them both evidentially and morally. The respective subjects reveal a certain lack of moral character and intellectual conscientiousness because they are not sufficiently sensitive to reasons.

Moreover, normativity is partly grounded in value. It is generally beneficial for us to have knowledge-constituting beliefs, moral intentions, appropriate feelings, and so on, because they help us to find our way within our complex natural and social environment and, ultimately, to survive and lead a fulfilled life. Now, conforming to reasons and the corresponding norms is our standard way of acquiring such valuable attitudes and avoiding their disvaluable counterparts. Believing that it is turning night on the basis of noticing that it is getting dark generates knowledge; deciding to aid a man in response to his genuine need leads to a moral intention (and, hopefully, moral action); admiring a painting for its original use of light constitutes an emotionally adequate response. Accordingly, part of the point of adhering to reasons and norms is that it aids us in our quest for certain fundamental values.

The first part of the research (cf. project A: section 2.2.1) intends to show that a proper account of the justification of attitude formations has to incorporate both internalist and externalist elements. More specifically, it is argued that the formation or revision of an attitude is justified only if it conforms both with the reason-providing facts and with our subjective take on them. This account of justification is supplemented by *experiential rationalism*, an account of rational motivation in terms of relational phenomenal awareness: we recognise facts as reasons by being phenomenally aware of our factive perceptual or judgemental representations as reason-providing. The second part of the research (cf. projects B-E: section 2.2.2) aims to establish the claim that reasons are normatively more fundamental than norms, and that the favouring character of reason-constituting facts is grounded in their link to fundamental values, such as knowledge, morality, or well-being.

## 2 Research Plan

**Main Project: A.** The philosophy of normativity is spread over various philosophical disciplines (especially epistemology and meta-ethics) and deals with a multitude of different and often independent issues, positions, and arguments. A limited research project like this cannot hope to cover more than a small part of this large field and has to be selective in what it aims to be concerned with. The main line of the proposed research (cf. sections 2.1.1 and 2.2.1) is concerned with the relationship between reason-providing external facts and our attitudes and their formation. More specifically, it centres on the following two questions:

**Justification.** How is the justification of our attitude formations and revisions constrained by (what seem to be) external facts?

**Motivation.** How does the awareness of (what seem to be) external facts move us to form or revise attitudes?

The first answer to be defended is that we are justified in developing or having an attitude only if it conforms both to what the facts objectively are and to what we subjectively take them to be. The suggested answer to the second question is that what moves us to form or change attitudes is our phenomenal awareness of our fact-representing conscious mental states as reason-providing – which involves the relational awareness of the represented facts as reasons.

The resulting disjunctivist position about our recognition of reasons – which I call *experiential rationalism* – combines empiricist and rationalist elements, as well as internalist and externalist ideas. While experiential rationalism stresses the importance of experience for justification and motivation, it assumes this experience to be an experience of reasons which derives its authority from the experienced entities. And while experiential rationalism identifies reasons with external facts, their justificatory power needs to be mediated by our awareness of them.

**Four Additional Projects: B-E.** The central project also provides the background for four additional lines of research (cf. sections 2.1.2 and 2.2.2) that focus on the connection of reasons to norms and values and highlight some of the significant differences among the various kinds of normativity and attitude pertaining to our minds. One main claim to be defended here is that reasons are normatively more basic than norms, but ultimately grounded in values; and another that reasons for (aesthetic) evaluation are by and large epistemic reasons, but with some peculiarities (e.g., in not allowing for the same extent of testimonial or deductive support).

**Personnel.** In accordance with the number of proposed lines of research, the project team is meant to consist of *one research professor* and *four doctoral or post-doctoral collaborators* with different philosophical specialisations in epistemology, meta-ethics, and aesthetics. The current application asks for three of the positions (projects A-C). It is envisaged to request independent funding for the other two positions in conjunction with members of the host department, partly in order to strengthen the collaboration between the research group and the department.

### 2.1 State of Research

#### 2.1.1 Main Line of Research

**Reasons and Justification.** Reasons are, very generally, things or considerations that *speak for or against* the formation or possession of attitudes: they are whatever stands in the favouring or the disfavouring relation to attitudes (Dancy, 2000; Kolodny, 2005; Lillehammer, 2010; Parfit, 2011; Scanlon, 1999).<sup>1</sup> This is, for instance, why we take reasons into account when forming atti-

<sup>1</sup> Strictly speaking, we form intentions in response to reasons that (dis)favour actions, and not the intentions themselves (Kavka, 1983; Pink, 1996). But I continue to speak loosely of reasons for intending.

tudes, or why we refer to them when defending already formed attitudes (Dorsch, 2011b; Dorsch, 2011d). There are two plausible candidates for reasons, that is, for entities that may stand in the (dis)favouring relation to attitudes: actual or counterfactual facts external to the mind (e.g., that it is dark outside, or that I would let him down otherwise), or representations internal to the mind.<sup>2</sup> The mental states concerned may be either representations of how the world is like (e.g., sensations, perceptions, beliefs, evaluations, etc.), or representations of how it should be like (e.g., desires, intentions, etc.).

Now, while *reason internalism* identifies reasons with suitable mental representations, *reason externalism* identifies them with (entities that contain) external facts.<sup>3</sup> Among the proponents of reason internalism are mentalists (Conee and Feldman, 2004), foundationalists (BonJour, 2003), coherentists (Davidson, 1980; Lehrer, 2000) and indicator reliabilists (Alston, 1988; Dretske, 1981), as well as some proponents of virtue- or performance-based views (Sosa, 2007; Turri, 2009; Williams, 1981) and some deontologists (Ginet, 1990; Pollock and Cruz, 1999; Steup, 2000). The group of reason externalists includes disjunctivists about perception, action or knowledge (Campbell, 2010; Dancy, 2008; Haddock, 2010; Hornsby, 2008; McDowell, 1998b; Perner and Roessler, 2011; Williamson, 2000), some philosophers who take reasons to be normatively primitive (Kolodny, 2005; Scanlon, 1999; Skorupski, 2010) or to be value-based (Dancy, 2000; Parfit, 2011; Raz, 2001), as well as some deontologists (Nagel, 1986; Schaber, 2005) and perhaps also some virtue theorists (Hursthouse, 1999).<sup>4</sup>

Reason externalism may be *impure*: namely if it accepts that mental representations may still speak for or against attitudes *in a derivative way*, namely in virtue of their representation of reason-constituting facts. Although impure reason externalism deny that mental representations are ‘objective’ reasons, they allow them – or the seeming facts that they represent – to function like ‘subjective’ reasons for the subjects concerned (Schroeder, 2007; Way, 2009). Impure reason externalists typically maintain that perceptual experiences or beliefs are transparent to, or constituted by, the external facts that they represent (Dorsch, 2010d; M. G. F. Martin, 2002). Accordingly, those mental representations (dis)favour attitudes simply in virtue of making us relationally (or perhaps also intentionally) aware of facts that (dis)favour attitudes. If the facts are assumed to constitute the representations, the result is a disjunctive view on perception and knowledge (Campbell, 2010; Dorsch, 2011c; M. G. F. Martin, 2002; McDowell, 1998b; Williamson, 2000).

Finally, some accounts of justification – like early reliabilist views (Goldman, 1979/2000) – try to do completely without reasons. But, as already noted, reliabilists, consequentialists and virtue theorists tend to accept that reasons play some role in the (first-personal) justification of our attitudes. They just maintain that the favouring character and authority of reasons has to be due to their role in processes of attitude formation that are reliable, lead to good consequences, or manifest virtue.

***Two Conditions on Justification.*** The proposed research is primarily concerned with the relationship between reason-providing (mental representations of) external facts and attitude formation. The various views on how (mental representations of) external facts constrain the justification of attitude formation or revision may be distinguished by reference to whether they

<sup>2</sup> Externalists may also identify (some) reasons with entities that contain (i.e., consist only partly of) external facts – for instance, with facts about our access to external facts (e.g., that I see that it is dark outside; (Haddock, 2010; McDowell, 1998b)), or with normative facts about external facts (e.g., ‘I should keep my promise to her’ (Hursthouse, 1999)). Other potential candidates – notably (true and/or believed) propositions – fare less well as external reasons and are therefore ignored here (Dancy, 2000; Lillehammer, 2010; Turri, 2009; but see Way, 2009).

<sup>3</sup> Further below, I discuss two other common ways of distinguishing internalist from externalist views on reasons (and justification): in terms of accessibility, and in terms of motivation.

<sup>4</sup> In her book, Hursthouse seems to oscillate between facts and beliefs when talking about reasons.

accept none, one or both of the following two conditions on justification:<sup>5</sup>

**(SEEM)** Our formation of an attitude is justified only if it is sufficiently favoured by our perceptual experiences and beliefs about (what seem to be) external facts.

**(FACT)** Our formation of an attitude is justified only if it is sufficiently favoured by the external facts.

The acceptance of (SEEM) and simultaneous rejection of (FACT) leads to reason internalism. The denial of (FACT) rules out external facts as reasons. The best explanation of the truth of (SEEM) is then to take perceptual experiences and beliefs to constitute reasons – independently of whether their favouring character is basic, or instead grounded in some other justificatory relevant factors, such as truth- or happiness-conduciveness, or virtue.

The acceptance of (FACT), on the other hand, leads to reason externalism. While the pure form of this view denies (SEEM), the impure version endorses it. The fact that impure reason externalism is likely to presuppose disjunctivism about perception and knowledge is unproblematic since (SEEM) requires only conformity with perceptual experiences and beliefs that *do* favour or disfavour attitudes. Whether there are also ‘neutral’ experiences and beliefs, that at best *merely seem* to favour or disfavour attitudes, is irrelevant for the truth of (SEEM).

Finally, views that accept neither (SEEM), nor (FACT) tend to be views – like radical versions of reliabilism or consequentialism – that deny reasons any role in the justification of our attitudes.

**The Case For (SEEM).** (SEEM) is accepted by reason internalism and by the impure version of reason externalism, and rejected by pure reason externalism and views that are skeptical about the justificatory significance of reasons. Disagreement about its truth therefore cuts across the traditional divide between internalist and externalist accounts. Instead, the debate about (SEEM) focuses on the issue of whether our subjective take on external facts is (determined by) a factor that is normatively relevant.

*Test Cases.* Some arguments for (SEEM) have been originally intended as arguments for reason internalism which implies (SEEM). The most relevant ones are concerned with whether internal reasons are needed – or instead superfluous – for the explanation of certain examples. Here, I concentrate on a slightly modified version of BonJour (1980)’s reliable clairvoyant Norman.<sup>6</sup>

Norman forms true clairvoyant beliefs about the world completely independently of how he perceives or believes the world to be. Moreover, he has no evidence for or against the actuality or possibility of his status as a reliable clairvoyant. And, finally, he is also clairvoyant with respect to how the world should be like and, hence, able to form good intentions in a way that is conducive to individual or general well-being, without having to consider the facts or engage in practical reasoning. For example, he judges out of the blue that it is night, and intends out of the blue to give some money to a particular person.

It is commonly accepted that Norman’s attitudes are unjustified – at least relative to our own standards (Goldman, 1986). The internalist claim is now that the only absent justification-relevant factor is that his clairvoyant attitudes are not based on, and backed up, by perceptual experiences or beliefs about relevant external facts (e.g., that it is dark outside, or that the person is penniless). By contrast, opponents of reason internalism may point instead to the presence of a defeating

<sup>5</sup> Ideally, memories, sensations, and so on, should be added to perceptions and beliefs. In addition, I stay neutral here on when exactly favouring is sufficient for justification (cf. Owens (2000) for more on this) and also ignore self-justifying and similarly special attitudes, for which these conditions might not always hold.

<sup>6</sup> Other notable cases are the chicken sexer (Pritchard, 2005), Lehrer (2000)’s Truetemp, as well as Conee and Feldman (2004)’s Bob who gains extra perceptual justification for an initially testimonially based belief.

factor, namely that Norman has reason to believe that his attitudes fail to be formed in a value-conducive (or virtuous) manner because he knows them to occur out of the blue (and not to be self-justifying) and because he lacks any evidence for their value-conduciveness (Goldman, 2008).

*Accessibility.* Other arguments for (SEEM) revolve around the claim that justification requires some form of introspective (or reflective) access to *what* justifies us, and perhaps also to the fact *that* it justifies us.<sup>7</sup>

If reasons are mental representations, our introspective access to them (or at least to their conscious manifestations) is straightforward. If, on the other hand, reasons are external facts, we have introspective access to them only in so far as they are phenomenologically salient constituents, or are transparently represented by, our occurrent mental representations (cf. above). In either case, we enjoy access to reasons only through having perceptions or beliefs about how the world is like (as well as through desires or intentions about how the world should be like). Hence, the accessibility condition on justification implies (SEEM).

The accessibility condition is, again, entailed by the claim that the justified attitude formation requires responsiveness to reasons. For responding to reasons presupposes being aware of – that is, enjoying actual access to – both the presence of the reason-constituting entities, and their status as reasons. Now, there are three ways of supporting the claim that justification is in part a matter of responding to recognised reasons.

(i) The first consideration consists simply in the observation that already *motivation* is a matter of responding to subjectively recognised reasons. When deliberating about what to believe, do or value, we recognise and follow the authority of how our perceptual experiences and beliefs represent the world as being because we recognise them as providing us with (access to) reasons (Dorsch, 2012b; M. G. F. Martin, 2002; Owens, 2000).

(ii) Another line of thought is that there are *epistemic* and *practical norms* linking attitudes to how things perceptually or doxastically seem. Assume that you suffer an auditory hallucination of someone calling your name, which you cannot distinguish from a corresponding veridical perception. Although you might not have an objective reason to do so, it would be reasonable for you to form the belief that someone is trying to get your attention, as well as the intention to look out for that person (Dorsch, 2012a). Indeed, we would assess you as being irrational or irresponsible (e.g., as acting against your ‘subjective reasons’) if you were *not* to acquire these or similar attitudes (assuming that you are attentive, do not (have reason to) suspect your experience to be hallucinatory, and have no other pressing practical concerns). This indicates that there are norms of justification – or, indeed, corresponding duties – that require us to form attitudes in line with what we subjectively take our reasons to be (BonJour, 1980; Korsgaard, 2009; Nagel, 1986; Pollock and Cruz, 1999; Steup, 2000).

(iii) Finally, it may be argued that forming a justified attitude – as well as conforming to the related norms or duties – is a substantial achievement for which we are *personally responsible*, just as we are responsible for corresponding cases of failure (Chisholm, 1977; Engel, 2009; Korsgaard, 2009; McDowell, 1998b; Owens, 2000; Velleman, 2000; Wright, 2004; Zagzebski, 1996). But responsibility presupposes the possibility of taking control of our attitude formation. Given that the formation of beliefs and intentions is not subject to the will (Dorsch, 2009b; Owens,

<sup>7</sup> This claim is central to *access internalism*, while *access externalism* denies it. Note that access internalism is compatible with impure reason externalism (Audi, 1998). Among the candidate characterisations of the required access are: (i) the ability to identify the justifying elements and their normative power (BonJour and Sosa, 2003; Chisholm, 1977; Conee and Feldman, 2004; Lehrer, 1997); (ii) the capacity to determine and grasp the nature and status of the related norms (Korsgaard, 1996); (iii) the ability to recognize which seeming reasons would survive (fully informed and) rational deliberation (Railton, 2003; Williams, 1980); or (iv) the possession of basic entitlement to rational projects (Pritchard, 2005; Wright, 2004).

2003; Pink, 1996; Williams, 1973), control should mean here influencing our attitudes by means of higher-order reflection about the available reasons and the pertinent norms (Burge, 1996; McDowell, 1998b; Owens, 2000). But this means, in part, reflecting on how things perceptually or doxastically seem to us, and on whether our attitudes conform to our subjective take on the world.

However, the idea that (SEEM) is true because justification requires the actual recognition of reasons as reasons faces several objections.

*Over-Intellectualisation.* As noted above, our access to mental representations and to the (seeming) facts that they represent is introspective (or reflective). This is standardly taken to mean that we recognise reasons as reasons by means of normative higher-order judgements (e.g., ‘(seeing) that it is dark outside gives me reason to believe that it is night’; cf. footnote 7). But while infants and higher animals lack the required reflective powers and normative concepts, they are perfectly capable of forming justified or unjustified attitudes in response to external facts (Dretske, 1981; Dretske, 1983). Already very young children react to what they see, remember and learn things, have preferences and even can recognise the attitudes of others (Beckers, Vandorpe, et al., 2009; Onishi and Baillargeon, 2005; Perner and Roessler, 2011). The case is perhaps less clear with respect to animals. But even there, we have no problem, say, with assuming that some dogs are wrong in trusting their owners in the light of their past experiences of bad treatment (Glock, 2000; Glock, 2009). And recent evidence suggests that some mammals engage in simple forms of reasoning (Beckers, Miller, et al., 2006; Hurley and Nudds, 2006; Newen and Bartels, 2007). Hence, the required responsiveness to reasons threatens to over-intellectualises justification and attitude formation (Owens, 2000).

*Access to the Favouring Relation.* Recognising reasons as reasons means not only recognising the presence of reason-constituting facts or representations, but also recognising which attitudes they (dis)favour.<sup>8</sup> Assuming that we have access to the favouring relation and its relata by having, or being in the position to form, respective higher-level normative beliefs (Conee and Feldman, 2004) leads, again, to over-intellectualisation. Arguing instead that our awareness of which attitudes are (dis)favoured is already part of enjoying a perceptual experience or understanding a believed proposition raises more questions than it answers (Pappas, 2005; cf. also Conee and Feldman, 2004). In particular, it remains unclear how conscious enjoyment or understanding could involve this form of awareness, especially if over-intellectualisation is to be avoided; or how the proposed account could apply formations of attitudes in response to (many) more than one underlying mental representation.

*Justification vs. Reasonableness.* Finally, it may be insisted that the considerations (i)-(iii) are in fact concerned with something other than value-related justification (or entitlement) – namely what may instead be called *subjective reasonableness*. The idea is that our normative talk and practice (e.g., whom we blame or praise) may indeed be governed by something like (SEEM) and reflect what we take to be (un)reasonable from the first-personal perspective; but that this does not have much bearing on justification (or entitlement), which is still primarily a matter of truth- or happiness-conduciveness (Burge, 2003; Dretske, 1981; Goldman, 1986; Goldman, 1988). Indeed, it may be argued that subjective reasonableness is merely explanatory, and not normative at all – as suggested, for instance, by attitudes that we form in response to false beliefs about what we have reason to believe, do, or value (Dancy, 2000; Kolodny, 2005; Kolodny, 2007; Parfit, 1997). The underlying worry is that there is no straightforward connection between value-based, third-personal entitlement and deontological, first-personal reasonableness (Sosa, 1991; Sosa, 1997; Sosa, 2003; Wright, 2004). The challenge for proponents of (SEEM) is therefore to show that subjective reasonableness is, indeed, concerned with value-conducive justification.

<sup>8</sup> In other words, what matters for coherentist and foundationalist conceptions of justification are not merely mental representations and attitudes, but also the logical or probabilistic connections between them (Pappas, 2005).

***The Case for (FACT).*** (FACT) is accepted by (pure or impure) reason externalism, and rejected by all other views. In epistemology, the main proponents of (FACT) are disjunctivists about perception and/or knowledge (Campbell, 2010; Dorsch, 2010d; Dorsch, 2011c; M. G. F. Martin, 2002; McDowell, 1998b; Williamson, 2000); while in meta-ethics, notable proponents are externalist views which take reasons to be normatively primitive (Kolodny, 2005; Scanlon, 1999; Skorupski, 2010) or base them on fundamental values (Parfit, 2011). Although (FACT) is weaker than reason externalism, there is no plausible interpretation of (FACT) other than in terms of an identification of reasons with external facts. Although the mentioned authors put forward additional arguments in favour of (FACT), here is only space for presenting two considerations that apply equally to the epistemic and to the practical case.

*The Relevance of External Facts.* The first consists simply in the observation that external facts matter normatively for us. Mental representations rationally move us to form attitudes only if they are subjectively indistinguishable from veridical perception or knowledge, and only if we have no doubts about their status as veridical perception or knowledge (M. G. F. Martin, 2002; Millar, 2010; Williamson, 2000). Once we recognise that a mental representation does not provide us with access to the facts (e.g., is hallucinatory or ignorant), we stop relying on it. This would not be the case if the facts would have no normative significance for us. Correspondingly, we primarily defend our attitudes by reference, not to how things subjectively seem to us, but to how things objectively are (or to how we see or know them to be). For example, we justify our decision to give money to someone by pointing out that (we see or know that) he is in need. If we merely said that we have the (veridical or non-veridical) impression that he is in need, we would at best non-normatively *explain* our decision (Dancy, 2000; Kolodny, 2007; McDowell, 1998b; Millar, 2010; Parfit, 1997).

This observation might be supplemented by test cases in which (SEEM) – and the corresponding norms for desires, intentions, and so on – are satisfied, but the resulting attitudes neither constitute knowledge, nor lead to moral or prudential actions. Consider the case of someone who desires, for its own sake, to have future agony or to torture someone; who does not have any competing desires or intentions; and who does not have any perceptions, memories, beliefs, and so on, that disfavour having this desire.<sup>9</sup> Such a person is likely to form more specific intentions concerned with harming himself or the other person, in full conformity with his perceptions and beliefs. But his intentions would not be justified – because, the thought continues, (FACT) is not satisfied (i.e., the facts about agony or torture disfavour the intentions). Insisting that the person would give up his intention, once he believed those facts, just strengthens this externalist explanation: what matters are what the person takes to be the facts. However, there is still the alternative explanation that the intentions are unjustified because they lead to actions with bad consequences – and not because they do not conform to external facts.

*Value and Justification.* The second consideration exploits the intimate connection of justification to fundamental objective values. In forming attitudes, our aim is generally to acquire knowledge, be moral, achieve well-being, and so on (Burge, 2003; Owens, 2000; Parfit, 2011; Pritchard, Millar, and Haddock, 2010; Velleman, 2000; Williams, 1973; Williamson, 2000).<sup>10</sup> It is also commonly accepted that justification matters because forming justified attitudes is the best (or even only) method for attaining those values (Burge, 2003; Goldman, 2008; Greco, 2010; Grundmann, 2009; Hursthouse, 1999; Parfit, 2011). Now, the question is whether succeeding in forming a justi-

<sup>9</sup> Parfit uses this example to argue against desire-based views of reasons, which however may accept (FACT) – for instance, by taking full informativity to be essential to the sound deliberation needed to recognise one's reasons. See also Williams (1973)'s gin example, and Sosa (2003)'s example of a person that is hardwired to affirm the consequent.

<sup>10</sup> Even philosophers, who doubt that belief formation always aims at truth, tend to accept that it always aims as some value, such as some practical value (Dretske, 2000; Papineau, 1999).

fied attitude requires forming it on the basis of *factive* mental representations (rather than, say, merely reliably formed ones). Here are two considerations in favour of a positive answer, one concerning epistemic and the other concerning practical justification.

(iv) Skepticism about our perceptual access to the external world depends on the premiss that the perceptual beliefs of a seeing subject are justified to the same extent as the perceptual beliefs of a systematically hallucinating subject (e.g., a brain in the vat). Assuming that its other premisses cannot be undermined, the only way to avoid this kind of skepticism is to argue that the beliefs of the two subjects differ in justification. So, the thought continues, justification has to depend on their other main difference: their possession or lack of factivity (M. G. F. Martin, 2002; M. G. F. Martin, 2006; McDowell, 1986; McDowell, 1995; McDowell, 1998b; Williamson, 2000). An obvious objection to this line of reasoning is that the perceptual beliefs of the two subjects differ already in other relevant aspects, such as their reliability (Goldman, 2010).

(v) If I do not know where I am and where I live, or if I do not see and recognise the landmarks on the way, I will have no chance – other than by sheer luck – to succeed in acting on my intention to walk home. Accordingly, relying on false beliefs or non-veridical perceptions is not a proper method for attaining my practical goal (Hawthorne and Stanley, 2008; Williamson, 2000). While relying instead on factive mental representations does not ensure success, it at least promises to lead to success in a non-accidental manner.<sup>11</sup> One challenge to this view is that it does not apply to all kinds of action, such as those without success conditions (e.g., going for a walk). Another objection maintains that the method of relying on veridical perceptions or states of knowledge is identical with the method of relying on hallucinations or states of ignorance (given that the two are of the same mental kinds: perceptual experience and belief) and, hence, should have the same connection to value, and the same chance of success (Goldman, 1986; cf. also Comesana, 2005).

**Motivation.** Both internalists and externalists about reasons face the further problem of explaining why the awareness of (apparent) facts is actually capable of moving us to form respective attitudes. This issue is usually not discussed outside of meta-ethics (Owens (2000) is a notable exception). But that it arises for all kinds of attitude is revealed by cases in which people respond with different – or no – attitudes to exactly the same facts (and despite not being akratic or otherwise irrational in their response to which attitudes they take themselves to have (most) reason to form). Not everyone who notices that another person is in need becomes thereby committed to help her; and people may disagree about which theory to endorse, or how much to value an artwork, although they base their conclusions on the same pieces of evidence (Budd, 1999; Dorsch, 2007; McDowell, 1978; Parfit, 1997; Van Fraassen, 1980). Accordingly, merely becoming aware of certain (apparent) facts does not suffice to determine whether rational subjects are moved to acquire attitudes, or which in particular.

One possible answer to this problem is that whether we decide to help someone in response to recognising that she is in need, say, depends on our general causal dispositions (Bratman, 1987; Broome, 2005). But this does not help us to understand in which sense attitude formation is a response to *reasons*, and why it matters, from our first-personal perspective, whether the facts speak for or against certain attitudes. This need for explanation is especially pressing in cases where we are wrong about the facts, and where it would consequently be better in view of our aim to attain knowledge, morality, and so on, not to respond to our take on things (Kolodny, 2007).

It therefore seems more promising to assume that motivation requires us to recognise the (apparent) facts concerned as providing us with reasons – and with most reason to form a particular

<sup>11</sup> Indeed, Williamson (2000) and Hawthorne and Stanley (2008) require knowledge, while Silins (2005) suggests that non-accidental veridicality might suffice as well. Both are enough to establish (FACT).

attitude (McDowell, 1978; Owens, 2000).<sup>12</sup> Indeed, the recognition of facts as reasons may very well be taken to be sufficient for motivation because of what it means for a fact to be a reason for us. But while some proponents of this sufficiency claim maintain that we are motivated to form a particular attitude because we notice that the fact in question *favours* that attitude (Kolodny, 2007; McDowell, 1995; McDowell, 1998b; Scanlon, 1999; Wedgwood, 2007), others argue that our motivation is due to one of our already existing *specific desires* which, together with the awareness of the reason-providing fact (as well as other facts), leads via sound deliberation to a desire to form the attitude in question (Williams, 1980).<sup>13</sup> A third alternative denies the sufficiency claim and insists instead that motivation presupposes not only the recognition of which attitude we have most reason to form, but also the *general desire* to form those attitudes (of a certain kind) that we have most reason to form (Parfit, 1997).

However, the three views just sketched face the same two general objections.

(vi) Because they presuppose that motivation requires the recognition of facts as reasons, the views threaten, again, to over-intellectualise our formation of attitudes. In particular, they assume that the recognition of reasons presupposes special reflective and conceptual capacities since they take it to be a matter of conceptual experience (McDowell, 1998b; McDowell, 1998c), sound deliberation (Williams, 1980) and/or reflective normative judgement (Parfit, 1997; Parfit, 2011; Wedgwood, 2007). The only way to meet the challenge is to provide an account of motivation in terms of a non-reflective and non-conceptual form of reason awareness and sensitivity.<sup>14</sup>

(vii) The three views also have difficulties to provide a unified account of motivation. They do not apply easily to the whole range of attitude formation (e.g., epistemic as well as practical motivation). And they cannot identify the common motivational element among the different types of motivation involved – notably the highly reflective formation of beliefs or intentions in deliberate reasoning (Owens, 2000; Shah and Velleman, 2005), and the non-inferential formation of perceptual beliefs, basic aesthetic judgements and similar attitudes (Dorsch, 2011b; Owens, 2000; Sibley, 1965/2001).

### 2.1.2 Additional Lines of Research

There is a long-standing debate about which of the three normative elements (if any) is the most fundamental one, from which the others derive their normative status and authority: reasons, values, or norms? Since the proposed research is primarily concerned with the normativity of reasons, it concentrates on two more specific questions: whether reasons are more, or less, basic than norms; and whether reasons are more, or less, basic than values.

**Reasons vs. Norms.** Views, that take either reasons or rational norms to be normatively fundamental (and perhaps also primitive), share a deontological and first-personal outlook: they concentrate on norms of reason or norms of rationality that matter in first-personal (and second-personal) deliberation (Kant, 1788/2003; Kolodny, 2005; Korsgaard, 1996; Scanlon, 1999).<sup>15</sup>

The recognition that we ought to, or have most reason to, form an attitude enjoys authority

<sup>12</sup> Note that expressivists like Blackburn (1984) and Gibbard (1990), too, have to choose one of the options discussed in the main text, depending on whether they accept the justificatory and motivational relevance of reasons.

<sup>13</sup> Both explanations are *motivationally internalist*. (and differ from the *motivationally externalist*, third alternative presented below) in so far as they assume there to be an inseparable connection between reasons and motivations. But they differ in whether the truth-value of the statement ‘we have reason to form some attitude’ depends solely on external facts and our rational capacities, or also on current desires (Korsgaard, 1997/2008; McDowell, 1995).

<sup>14</sup> See Owens (2000) on the need for non-reflective reason recognition. The issue about non-conceptuality concerns primarily whether the motivating recognition of reasons requires the possession of *normative* concepts. Small children and higher animals might possess rudimentary non-normative concepts (Newen and Bartels, 2007).

<sup>15</sup> The priority of norms over reasons is also defended by expressivists about normativity (Gibbard 1990; 2003).

over our rational attitude formations (Burge, 1996; Kant, 1788/2003; Kolodny, 2005; Korsgaard, 1997/2008; Owens, 2000).<sup>16</sup> But those views differ in what they assume to be normatively basic. While reason-based views maintain that all norms derive from reasons (Kolodny, 2005; Kolodny, 2007; Parfit, 2011; Raz, 1999; Scanlon, 1999; Skorupski, 2010), rationality-based views deny this by arguing instead that all norms – as well as all reasons – derive from rationality (Kant, 1788/2003; Korsgaard, 1996; Korsgaard, 2009). The two kinds of norm differ most notably in that they assess different aspects of attitudes: how they conform to reasons, and how they cohere with each other independently of reasons.

Now, one thing that speaks against deriving norms of reasons from norms of rationality is that the former – but not the latter – are substantial (i.e., not formal) in that their satisfaction depends on contingent aspects of the situation concerned (Parfit, 2011). Whether I should be jealous and react in a certain way towards my partner depends on (my access to) the facts and cannot simply be a matter of having consistent attitudes, being instrumentally rational, and so on.

Another challenge is that it remains unclear why we should try to be rational in *particular* instances of attitude formation.<sup>17</sup> For example, why should we care about consistency among our attitudes when forming a certain attitude? Although making our attitudes consistent may lead us closer to knowledge, morality, and so on, in the long run, it may actually lead us away from those values in particular instances (e.g., one way of getting rid of the inconsistency between two beliefs is to give up the true one and retain the false one). Consistency is also not a fundamental value in itself, unlike knowledge or prudence. Furthermore, consistency is not necessary for being a rational agent: we are all rational agents, despite suffering some inconsistencies in our beliefs, intentions, and so on. Finally, although *aiming* to be consistent may be partly constitutive of being a rational agent (Korsgaard, 2009), this just shifts the question to why we should try to act like rational agents in the first place.

By contrast, the fact that conformity to reasons leads to a consistent state of mind does permit an explanation of the authority of the norm of consistency in terms of the authority of reasons: we try to render our minds more consistent simply as a side-effect of trying to conform to reasons. The idea is that, in cases of recognised inconsistency, we come to believe – through higher-order reflection – that we have reason to change or give up one or several specific attitudes; and that we then revise them in response to this normative belief (Kolodny, 2007). However, because of the reflective nature of the recognition of reasons, the resulting account cannot capture instances of unreflective or akratic attitude formation, in which we still try to render our attitudes consistent, despite forming or revising them against – or completely independently of – our opinions about which attitudes reason recommends to us most (Dorsch, in progress[c]; Shah, 2008). Korsgaard raises a further objection against reason-based views, namely that they cannot capture hypothetical imperatives and the underlying means-end principle (Korsgaard, 1997/2008). However, these norms are – as norms of rationality – structurally similar to the norm of consistency and therefore promise to be dealt with in the same way (Kolodny, 2008; Raz, 2005).

**Reasons vs. Values.** Values are normative in so far as bearers of values are meant to be good, but may fail to be so (Burge, 2003; Dretske, 2000). Beliefs aim at truth, but may be false or instances of ignorance (Burge, 2003; Owens, 2003; Velleman, 2000; Williams, 1973). Similarly, intentions may lead to immoral or imprudential actions; admiration may be directed at the deplorable; or

<sup>16</sup> In my sense, norms are deontic just in case they are concerned with what rational subjects *should* do (cf. also Olson, 2004). Others restrict deontic norms to those that are imperative, that is, concerned with what rational subjects *must* do (Skorupski, 2007). Here, my concern is with distinguishing norms of either kind from evaluations which, by themselves, are deontic in neither sense.

<sup>17</sup> Kolodny (2005) and Broome (2007) disagree about whether norms of rationality are always wide scope, and whether the norms can be traced back to reasons. But they agree on the problem of the normativity of such norms.

subjects may fail to be virtuous. Furthermore, it seems that values matter deontologically and first-personally (e.g., that we ourselves ought to avoid false beliefs or immoral actions) only to the extent to which their presence or absence counts for or against some attitude – and to the extent to which we recognise their corresponding authority over us.

The majority of epistemological and ethical views take values to be more fundamental than reasons (if they assume there to be reasons at all). Standard versions of reliabilism or consequentialism, for instance, account for justification in terms of conduciveness to truth, happiness or similar values (Brandt, 1996; Goldman, 1979/2000). The same is typically true of coherentist, foundationalist or contextualist theories of epistemic justification. Virtue theorists, on the other hand, take justification to be a matter of the subject's epistemic or practical virtues – which, again, are virtues primarily because of their conduciveness to knowledge, morality, and so on (McDowell, 1979; Sosa, 2007; Thomson, 2008; Zagzebski, 1996). Even those deontological views, that take rationality to be normatively fundamental and primitive, may be understood as assuming that what is in fact most basic – and commands respect – is the value of being a rational agent (Kant, 1788/2003; Korsgaard, 2009).

By contrast, the main defender of the primacy of reasons is the buck-passing account of value. According to this view, the property of having a certain positive (or negative) value is identical with the higher-order property of providing sufficient reason for adopting a certain positive (or negative) attitude towards itself (i.e., the object concerned).<sup>18</sup> Objects possess the higher-order property of justifying certain attitudes in virtue of possessing lower-level features, the instantiation of which counts in favour of having those attitudes. The painting is beautiful because its original use of illumination gives us reason to admire it and to preserve it for posterity. Furthermore, attitudes can be positive (or negative) in very different ways: they can be pro-attitudes (e.g., desires, preferences, or feelings of respect and admiration), higher-order normative judgements (e.g., that we have some reason to believe, do or value something), or intentions to perform actions that express or bring about pro-attitudes (e.g., treating someone with respect, or bringing oneself to admire him or her; Skorupski (2007)).<sup>19</sup>

To capture moral value, it may be best to combine the buck-passing account of value with a contractualist approach to morality. This may require amending the account in several ways: (i) by defining rightness as the opposite of wrongness; (ii) by specifying wrongness not in terms of the presence of reasons for a negative attitude, but in terms of the absence of reasons for a positive attitude; (iii) by identifying the relevant positive attitude towards an action with the rejection of any set of general norms that disallows the action; and (iv) by extending the range of reason-providing features beyond the features of the actions themselves (e.g., to properties of the 'victims' and their situation). Thus, we get the contractualist thesis that an action is immoral because of its higher-order property of being unjustifiable (to us or others): that is, because there is no reason (for us or others) to reject any set of norms that disallows it (Scanlon, 1999).<sup>20</sup>

At least three things speak in favour of the buck-passing account (Scanlon, 1999). First, it cap-

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Olson (2004); Scanlon (1999); Skorupski (2007). Some writers (Crisp, 2005; Schroeder, 2009a; Väayrynen, 2006) take the buck-passing account to be the conjunction of this positive claim the negative claim that values do not themselves give rise to reasons. With respect to the issue of normative fundamentality, it suffices to discuss the positive thesis, which leaves room for the possibility that not all values are basic, and that, in particular, possessing a less fundamental value may be a matter of possessing a more basic value that speaks in favour of some attitude.

<sup>19</sup> Some discussions focus solely on pro-attitudes and actions (Heuer, 2011; Scanlon, 1999; Suikkanen, 2009).

<sup>20</sup> There is no space here to spell out Scanlon's motivation for adopting this view on moral rightness in any more detail. But central to his considerations is the (buck-passing) claim that human (or rational) life is valuable because the possession of rational capacities gives us reason to treat their bearers in certain positive ways – including that we owe it to them to justify our actions to them. Unjustifiable actions are therefore immoral because they do not manifest the right kind of attitude towards the value of human beings (Matravers, 2003).

tures the fact that what matters for the provision of reasons (as well as for the realisation of values) are largely non-evaluative facts, rather than instantiations of value. Second, it captures the fact that the normatively relevant facts differ greatly from case to case and need not have anything significant in common. Different artworks are to be admired, or count as beautiful, for very different reasons (Dorsch, 2011b; Sibley, 2001). Third, values (e.g., aesthetic ones) are arguably not open to experience or intuition, but need to be recognised by some form of principled or unprincipled reasoning (Bender, 1995; Dorsch, 2007; Dorsch, 2011b). In other words, the recognition of values requires the prior recognition of reasons (Heuer, 2004; Raz, 2001; Scanlon, 1999).

But the account has also been challenged on several counts. Most notably, it has been objected that not all reasons give rise to value. I have a reason to keep my promise, even if doing so would be bad – for instance, because I know that it would lead to the death of innocent people (Crisp, 2005; Rabinowicz and Rønnow-Rasmussen, 2006).<sup>21</sup> Similarly, if I am threatened with torture if I do not admire a lousy performance of a violin concerto, I have reason to show admiration towards the performance, despite its badness (Skorupski, 2007).<sup>22</sup> The buck-passer's reply to the first case should be that only *sufficient* reasons establish value, while the reason to keep my promise is merely pro tanto (Skorupski, 2007). And the buck-passer can accommodate the second case by distinguishing reasons for *rationality* forming a certain attitude from reasons for acting in such a way as to *causally* bring it about that one has a certain attitude. Accordingly, I do not have reason to admire the *bad performance*, but instead reason to actively do something that causes the *good fact* that I admire the bad performance to obtain (Raz, 2009; Skorupski, 2007). This reply – plus the assumption that favouring is normatively primitive – are also enough to answer the challenge (raised, for instance, by Heuer (2011)) of distinguishing the two kinds of reason in a non-circular way: they simply favour different things (i.e., attitudes vs. actions).

## 2.2 Detailed Research Plan

### 2.2.1 Main Line of Research

**A. The Normative Mind.** The central aim is to defend *impure reason externalism*, which endorses both (SEEM) and (FACT). On the one hand, views that deny reasons any role in justification are to be rejected because of their inability to capture the first-personal (and second-personal) aspect of justification. On the other hand, the two reason-friendly competitors – reason internalism and pure reason externalism – are inadequate because of their exclusive focus on just one of the two normatively relevant elements. Pure reason externalism is deficient in that it does not capture the link of justification to our subjective perspective, given that it does not take into account how things perceptually or doxastically seem to us. Reason internalism, on the other hand, fails to connect justification to the attainment of objectively valuable ends, given that it ignores the potential mismatch between what we take to be our reasons and what our reasons in fact are.

Impure reason externalism circumvents both problems by assuming that justification is a matter both of the facts and our subjective take on them. Moreover, the particular view to be defended here can avoid the objections to (SEEM) and (FACT) by adopting *experiential rationalism*: the view that we recognise reasons in virtue of being phenomenally aware of the rational role of our conscious mental states. The proposed research thereby builds on my previous work on perception, judgement, self-knowledge, and aesthetic experience (cf. section 2.3 below).

**A1. Experiential Rationalism.** Two aspects are distinctive of our conscious mental states, that

<sup>21</sup> Heuer (2011) also objects that the buck-passing account cannot make sense of difference in truth-conditions between the beliefs 'there is a reason to do A' and 'doing A would be good' (Williams, 1980). The buck-passer's reply to this is, of course, that what is at issue is not the value of the action, but the value of the object acted upon.

<sup>22</sup> Similar examples have been put forward by Rabinowicz and Rønnow-Rasmussen (2006) and Heuer (2011).

is, of the episodes in our stream of consciousness (Eilan, 1998). First, they possess a *phenomenal character*: there is something it is subjectively like to enjoy or be in them (M. Martin, 2010; Nagel, 1974; Nida-Rümelin, 2007; Williamson, 1990). Second, they possess a certain *rational role*: they provide us with access to reasons and/or are responsive to reasons. Seeing that someone is in need gives us reason to judge that he needs help, and also reason to decide to help him. The resulting judgement and intention may rationally ground further beliefs or decisions. And we may revise all of them in response to becoming aware of further relevant facts (e.g., that the person is just pretending to be in need). Now, the central tenet of experiential rationalism is that these two features of mental episodes are essentially linked: *the phenomenal character of our conscious mental states is determined by and reflects their rational role.*

One goal of the project is to spell out in more detail what this means: namely that these mental episodes are phenomenally marked as providing us with access to reasons and/or as being formed in response to reasons. In particular, three things need to be vindicated. First, the proposed experience is non-conceptual. This is due to the fact that, more generally, our basic awareness of phenomenal character is experiential and non-conceptual (Dorsch, 2012a; Dorsch and Soldati, 2005). In particular, the subject concerned need not be able to conceptualise the phenomenologically salient rational role of her mental episodes. Second, the fact that mental episodes are phenomenally marked as being a certain way is best understood as a token-reflexive aspect of the phenomenologically salient presentationality of the mental episodes concerned – they present themselves as being that way (e.g., as providing or responding to reasons) (Dorsch, 2010d; Dorsch, 2012a; Dorsch and Soldati, 2011; Soldati, 2011). Third, the phenomenal awareness of mental episodes as reason-giving or reason-providing involves the awareness of reasons *as reasons* (Dorsch, 2009b). More specifically, we recognise facts as reasons – that is, as having a (dis)favouring character – by being phenomenally aware of our perceptions or occurrent beliefs about those facts as reason-providing (Dorsch, 2010c; Dorsch, 2012b).

Now, facts typically (dis)favour a multitude of specific attitudes. That a person is penniless speaks for the belief that he is poor, the belief that he needs help, the intention to help him, and so on. Perhaps only a few – and certainly not all – of these favouring relations make a phenomenal difference. For example, a perceptual experience of the greenness of a tree is typically not marked as providing us with a reason for believing that the tree is green or owned by me, although the fact about the tree provides some rational support for this disjunctive belief. But some favouring relations are basic in the sense that they cannot fail to be phenomenologically salient. That the perceptual experience brings us into direct contact with the fact that the tree is green suffices to ensure that it is phenomenally marked as providing us with a reason for believing that the tree is green; and that a conscious desire presents some end as to be attained suffices to ensure that it is phenomenally marked as providing us with a reason for trying to attain that end (Dorsch, 2010c; Dorsch, 2012b). Which other favouring relations are phenomenologically salient – that is, how rich the phenomenal character of the respective episodes is – depends on the sensitivity of subjects to reasons (i.e., their rational ‘perspective’ on things), which is open to change and improvement through experience and training (McDowell, 1998b; McDowell, 1998c).

It is also to be argued that one straightforward advantage of experiential rationalism is that it explains the non-contingency of the co-extension of phenomenal differences and differences in rational role among our mental episodes (e.g., between seeing, visually remembering and visualising; cf. Mulligan, 1999). Besides, the research will reinforce my previous replies (Dorsch, 2009b; Dorsch, 2012b; Dorsch and Soldati, 2005) – as well as those of others (Crane, 1992; Doherty and Pacherie, 2007; Siewert, 1998; Strawson, 1994) – to skepticism about the phenomenality of thought (Carruthers, 2011), and about the compatibility of rationality and non-conceptuality (Brewer, 1999; McDowell, 1998b).

**A2. *Over-Intellectualisation and Motivation.*** Experiential rationalism accepts the idea that what moves us to form attitudes is our awareness of (what seem to be) our reasons. But it departs from the more traditional way of understanding this claim in terms of reflective normative judgements by arguing instead that our canonical form of access to reasons is phenomenal. Since the phenomenal awareness of reasons requires neither specific conceptual or linguistic capacities, nor the ability to reflectively consider reasons or point them out to oneself or others, it can already be present in infants and animals – as long as they are able to consciously perceive, believe, desire, intend, and so on (Dorsch, 2012a).

Moreover, the unity of motivation can be preserved, given that it always happens in response to our phenomenal awareness of our – first- or higher-order – conscious states as providing us with reasons for belief, action or evaluation. The motivational force of reflective normative judgements (e.g., ‘(seeing) that p gives me reason to believe that p’) is dependent on whether the judgements are phenomenally marked as reason-giving – which may be partly a matter of whether the normative concepts employed are used in a special first-personal manner. The main thought is that our phenomenal awareness of reason-provision is *perspectival*: reasons are presented as *ours* by being presented *to* our implicitly given rational ‘point of view – that is, our sensitivity to reasons. By contrast, the mere thought that we have reason to form an attitude presents the relation between us and the reason in a non-perspectival manner: the rational ‘perspective’ concerned is explicitly presented through being *thought of* by us, rather than implicitly through being *occupied* by us (Dorsch, 2012a; Dorsch, in progress[b]).<sup>23</sup>

Finally, to be able to accommodate the various kinds of reason-provision, experiential rationalism has to maintain that there is a difference in how we are phenomenally aware of *prima facie* reasons (i.e., reasons that are sufficient for the formation of an attitude, but are open to be defeated) and of *pro tanto* reasons (i.e., reasons that lead to the formation of an attitude only via some form of balancing of reasons). The suggestion to be developed is that at least part of this difference is due to the distinction between sensory (i.e., objectual) and intellectual (i.e., propositional) awareness of facts. Seeing makes objects and their features manifest to us and can lead directly to the formation of certain attitudes (Austin, 1962; McDowell, 1998b). Believing, by contrast, represents facts through the endorsement of a proposition and leads to further attitudes only by means of some (minimal) form of reasoning (with the exception, perhaps, of cases like those in which judging that p and q leads to judging that p).

**A3. *Defending (SEEM).*** The general strategy of dealing with the test cases put forward by reason internalists is to agree with their critics that the examples do not suffice to establish reason internalism since they do not rule out the normative relevance of external factors (Goldman, 2008), but also to argue that the test cases still support the endorsement of the weaker (SEEM).

The reliabilist response to the case of Norman is insufficient because they ignore that Norman himself will question the standing of his clairvoyant attitudes, not for reasons to do with value-conduciveness, but for phenomenological reasons. For him, they are unlike his other beliefs and intentions in not having been formed in response and conformity to his subjective take on the facts. This is due to the fact that it is part of the phenomenologically salient nature of beliefs and intentions that they are in need of rational support (Dorsch, 2009b). Thus, his clairvoyant attitudes count as unjustified – both in Norman’s world and in the actual one – in line with (SEEM).

In addition, the reliabilist response wrongly assumes that the absence of evidence for value-conduciveness amounts to the presence of evidence against value-conduciveness. Hence, Norman has no reason to doubt the value-conduciveness of his attitudes, at least not more than with

<sup>23</sup> Compare the structurally similar case of the visual perspectivalness involved in perception (Dorsch, in progress[d]; Eilan, 1996; Hopkins, 1998; M. G. F. Martin, 2002).

respect to, say, his memories – especially since his value-conducive attitudes will largely agree with his other mental states and lead to successful action.

The problem of over-intellectualisation has already been addressed. Experiential rationalism has also no difficulties to ensure that we have non-reflective access – that is, simply by having perceptual experiences or occurrent beliefs – to the favouring character of facts. In addition, the view can accommodate cases, in which only a set of more than one recognised facts (dis)favour the formation of a certain attitude, by developing the idea that the phenomenal character of a complex of mental episodes (e.g., an instance of conscious reasoning involving many premisses kept in the fore- or background of the conscious mind) is more than the sum of the phenomenal characters of the individual episodes (Dorsch, in progress[e]). In particular, the character includes a phenomenal aspect that marks the rational role of the complex of episodes as a whole.

However, the acceptance of both conditions on justification gives further strength to the worry that we might actually be dealing with two unconnected kinds of normativity, justification (or entitlement) and reasonableness. In response, the aim is to adopt what has been labelled a *naïve realist* stance on our awareness of reasons: namely that it always matches the facts (Fish, 2009; McDowell, 1998b; McDowell, 1998c). As will be shown, this is best done within a so-called *disjunctivist* framework (Dorsch, 2010d; Dorsch, 2012a; M. G. F. Martin, 2002; M. G. F. Martin, 2006). According to disjunctivism, subjectively indistinguishable pairs of mental states – such as veridical perceptions and perfect hallucinations, states of knowledge and mere beliefs, or moral intentions and mere commitments – belong to distinct mental kinds because the first members of the pairs (i.e., the ‘good’ cases) are essentially relations to external facts, while the second members (i.e., the ‘bad’ cases) are not. Applied to the current case, disjunctivism maintains that being phenomenally aware of a reason implies the actual presence of a reason; while, if things go wrong, we are not really aware of reasons, it just seems so to us. One consequence is that phenomenal awareness may be misleading.<sup>24</sup> More important, however, (SEEM) and (FACT) turn out to coincide and concern the same kind of value-conducive, but still first-personally relevant justification.

**A4. Defending (FACT).** The disjunctivist approach is also central to the defense of (FACT). This defense requires, in particular, the refutation of the reliabilist or consequentialist objections to the test cases and arguments in favour of (FACT). These two views are the main competitors since they agree with the necessity to identify external factors as relevant for justification, but disagree whether these factors should – as defended here – include facts about external objects.

The attempt to capture the difference in epistemic standing between normal subjects and brains in the vat in reliabilist terms is misguided because it underestimates the significance of factivity for the rebuttal of skepticism (McDowell, 1986; McDowell, 1993; McDowell, 1995). The skeptical challenge is to show not merely that a seeing subject is perceptually *more* justified than a brain in a vat, but also that she is *sufficiently* justified for knowledge. The skeptic assumes that neither can be done because the seeing subject and the brain in a vat enjoy the same kind of perceptual experience, which provides at best inconclusive warrant for belief since it does not entail the presence of corresponding facts in the world. The reliabilist agrees about the sameness in perceptual experience, but argues that the difference in reliability still makes a difference in justification. However, even a high degree of reliability cannot close the gap between experience and reality: the skeptical worry still applies. The only way out is to accept that seeing is factive, that is, entails the obtainment of the experienced fact (Millar, 2008; Neta and Pritchard, 2007; Pritchard, 2008). Indeed, this is just a reflection of the underlying fact that whether we possess perceptual

<sup>24</sup> This further supports the idea of understanding the kind of phenomenal awareness in question as presentational (cf. above; Dorsch, 2012a; Dorsch and Soldati, 2011).

justification (and enjoy an experience of seeing) is not a matter of relevant alternatives (e.g., of how many fake instances are around). Rather, perceptual justification is a matter of our particular epistemic relation to some particular fact (Campbell, 2010; Dorsch, 2011c; Dorsch, 2012a). This is still compatible with the fallibility of perception: not all employments of our perceptual capacities need to lead to factive experiences (McDowell, 2010; Millar, 2010).

A similar reply is in order with respect to the relation between knowledge and successful action. The method of relying on veridical perceptions and states of knowledge differs from the method of relying on hallucinations and states of ignorance, because the mental states concerned are of different mental kinds with different justificatory power (despite their potential subjective indistinguishability). Arguing for this claim means, in part, rehearsing and defending some of the arguments put forward in favour of disjunctivist approaches to perception and knowledge (Campbell, 2010; Dorsch, 2011c; M. G. F. Martin, 2006; Williamson, 2000). In addition, it does not matter whether actions have explicit success conditions. Going for a walk does neither aim at, nor end with, the achievement of some state (Crowther, 2010). But it still may fail in many ways (e.g., we may fail to move our legs, or constantly bump into objects); and knowledge (or at least non-accidental veridicality) is important to avoid at least some of these ways.

### 2.2.2 Additional Lines of Research

There are four additional projects of research, each of which will be pursued by a doctoral or post-doctoral researcher in close connection to the main line of research. The last two projects are meant to be funded by additional grants or scholarships.

**B. Reasons and Norms.** One project is concerned with the issue of how reasons are connected to norms, especially norms of rationality. The contention of the project is that – contrary to, say, (Korsgaard, 1996) – is that *reasons are more fundamental than norms* (Kolodny, 2007; Parfit, 2011; Raz, 2005; Scanlon, 1999).

As noted above, one of the main problems with explaining the authority of norms of rationality (like consistency) in terms of the authority of reasons has been that it cannot deal with instances of unreflective or akratic attitude formation – if it is assumed that the recognition of reasons involved is reflective in nature (Kolodny, 2007). But if we allow for first-order phenomenal awareness of reasons, unreflective cases are no problem any more. Moreover, the above considerations about the non-instrumentality and one-dimensionality of epistemic normativity arguably show that what we believe cannot be under the direct control of practical reasons (Dorsch, 2009b; Engel, 2009; Owens, 2000; Owens, 2003). The conclusion to be drawn is that akrasia consists in the *non-reflective* formation of attitudes that goes against our reflective judgements of which attitudes we have most reason to form (Hookway, 2001). Again, experiential rationalism can accommodate this kind of attitude formation.

Another important issue to be discussed is how best to account for norms of rationality in terms of reason-constituting facts. Two options are on offer with respect, say, to the question of why we are rationally required to render our attitudes consistent by giving up attitude A (rather than attitude B). According to the transparency account, we are required to give up A just in case we (experientially or doxastically) *seem* to have reason to give up A (Kolodny, 2005; Kolodny, 2007; Scanlon, 1999); while, according to the subjective reasons account, we are required to give up A just in case we actually *do* have reason to give up A (Parfit, 2011; Schroeder, 2007; Schroeder, 2009b). The two accounts differ notably with respect to whether they take rational requirements to be always genuinely normative (i.e., coming with the authority of reasons): the subjective reasons account says yes, the transparency account says no (Kolodny, 2005; Way, 2009). This is due to the fact that the transparency account includes cases in which it *merely seems* to us as if we

have a reason to give up A, but this is in fact false. Some have argued that it is a disadvantage for the transparency account that it has to accept that rational requirements are not under all circumstances authoritative (Southwood, 2008; Way, 2009). In response, the project aims to insist that the two accounts agree on when rational requirements are backed up by reasons; but that the transparency account has the advantage of being able to explain why we accept the authority of such requirements even if they are not authoritative (Kolodny, 2007).

Besides, the sub-project will also address other issues pertaining to the nature of rationality and the source of the normative force of rational requirements – such as the scope of such requirements (Broome, 2007; Reisner, 2011), or the possibility of amoralists and similarly non-rational subjects (Korsgaard, 1996; McDowell, 1978; McDowell, 1995; Parfit, 2011; Smith, 1994).

**C. Reasons and Values.** Assuming that reasons are prior to norms and generally constituted by facts, it needs to be asked why certain facts – but not others – (dis)favour attitudes. The proposed answer is that facts speak for (or against) having certain attitudes in so far as forming the attitudes in response to those facts renders it more (or less) likely than not to reach some important value (e.g., knowledge or morality), or to avoid the corresponding disvalue (e.g., ignorance or immorality). For example, that it is turning dark outside renders the truth of judging that night has come probable; while deciding to support a genuinely needy person is conducive to moral action. In addition to spelling out this view in more detail, the sub-projects needs to strengthen the arguments against, and weaken the arguments for, the buck-passing account.

One objection to be raised is that the buck-passing account cannot capture some of the most basic values, notably the values of knowledge, truth and well-being (as well as, perhaps, individual or species-related survival). Whether a mental state is true or constitutes knowledge is not a matter of whether its other features give us reason to react positively to that mental state (e.g., by relying on it in deliberation). In particular, it is not clear which other features would be relevant, especially in the case of truth. As argued above, that a belief coheres with others, for instance, does not give us reason to treat it as if it were knowledge, or even true. Similarly, knowledge or truth is not a matter of whether people can reasonably reject the belief in question. Finally, there do not seem to be very many ways in which beliefs can be knowledge, or true. Perhaps there is a substantial distinction between being knowledge in a non-inferential or in a inferential way, or between being an apriori or an aposteriori truth; but not much more. Indeed, some buck-passers seem to accept this shortcoming of their theory by restricting it to attributive values (e.g., the goodness of evidence as evidence; Skorupski, 2007).

This does not mean that the buck-passing account may not be true of some non-basic values. In particular, aesthetic value may very well be a matter of the features of artworks that give us reason to admire or otherwise value them, given that artworks are beautiful, or masterpieces, in very different – and often unique – ways (Budd, 1999; Dorsch, 2011b; Sibley, 2001). This may also explain why, in those cases, our access to reasons is more fundamental than our access to values. But, in general, this epistemic priority does not imply a metaphysical or normative one (Raz, 2001). Indeed, that the consideration of epistemic reasons (e.g., through observation, experimentation, deduction, and so on) is the best (and only) method to come to know whether a given belief constitutes knowledge is partly due to the fact that the favouring character and authority of epistemic reasons is ultimately a consequence of their knowledge-conduciveness (as well as of the fact that the issue of whether we know that p is transparent to the issue of whether p; Shah and Velleman, 2005).

The buck-passing account also does not fit very well with our best metaphysical and scientific pictures of the world, in which the favouring relation has no obvious place, at least not as a primitive. By contrast, taking values to be the ultimate source of normativity opens up the possibility

of locating the latter in the natural world, given that evolutionary psychology and biology promise an account of why knowledge, morality, well-being, and so on, are fundamental values (Harris, 2010; Kornblith, 2002; Papineau, 2003); and given also that there are well worked-out naturalist accounts of value (Lewis, 1996; Railton, 2003). Finally, taking values to be more fundamental than reasons enables us to answer another important question, namely why reasons have *authority* over us in deliberation. The key thought is that they matter for us because following them is our main way of attaining what is important to us.

**D. Kinds of Normativity.** So far, the proposed approach to the normativity of the mind has abstracted from any differences between epistemic, practical and aesthetic normativity. But it is important to identify these differences and see how they fit into the more general account. This not only allows for a more detailed classification of our attitudes (Mulligan, 1999), but also helps to explain certain phenomena which involve the interaction between two or more kinds of normativity (e.g., epistemic akrasia, or the involuntariness of belief).

One central task will be to highlight that *epistemic* and *practical* normativity differ in several important respects (Haddock, 2010; Harman, 1986; Kelly, 2003; Owens, 2000; Owens, 2003): (i) while practical reasons speak for or against doing something independently of whether there are other competing reasons, epistemic reasons do not (i.e., the former are *pro tanto*, while the latter are *prima facie*); (ii) while there is a multiplicity of competing practical values, knowledge (or, alternatively truth) is the sole epistemic value; (iii) only practical rationality is instrumental and allows for incompatible means to the same valuable end; and (iv) solely practical reasons are reasons for attitudes (e.g., intentions to act) only in so far as they are reasons for actions. Especially the third difference is crucial in accounting for the fact that we cannot form beliefs at will (cf. section 3.3 below).

Another vital, but often neglected issue is which *aesthetic* norms obtain, and how they differ from non-aesthetic ones. First of all, it needs to be vindicated that there are no distinctively aesthetic norms governing actions (e.g., that we should create or preserve artworks). Preserving a beautiful Renaissance fresco is not a proper aesthetic response to it, even though it may be appropriate from another perspective. Then, the project intends to identify three kinds of norm pertaining to the realm of the aesthetic: (i) epistemic norms governing our aesthetic evaluations and the underlying experiences of the objects concerned (e.g., that we should seek true aesthetic judgements); (ii) norms governing our emotional or similar responses towards the experienced and evaluated objects (e.g., that we should admire them); and (iii) norms governing our imaginative engagement with representational artworks (e.g., that we should imagine Sherlock Holmes to live in Baker Street 221b). All three kinds of norm are theoretical (i.e., governing attitudes rather than actions). But norms of type (iii) are doubly special. First, they concern attitudes towards fictional rather than real entities. Second, while (i) and (ii) are not distinctively aesthetic (e.g., they also obtain in moral cases), (iii) are uniquely characteristic of play and art (Walton, 1990).

**E. Evaluations and Emotions.** There are also important differences in how the various kinds of attitude are related to reasons. In particular, evaluations stand out in not allowing for testimonial and deductive support; while emotions are special in being only partially sensitive to reasons. Both facts are in need of explanation.

It has often been noted that it is normally better to rely on our own acquaintance than on the testimony of others when evaluative matters are concerned (Cuyppers and Douven, 2009; Hopkins, 2007; Hopkins, 2010; Kant, 1790/2009). The suggested explanation is that testimonial knowledge of values and of the underlying facts does not suffice to experientially recognise the latter as reasons for ascribing the former because it does not help us to better understand why the object concerned possesses its value (Budd, 2003; Dorsch, 2011b). This also fits well with another

idea to be defended, namely that our *canonical access to objective values* is neither perception, nor emotion, but instead some form of reasoning in response to non-inferentially recognized reasons (Dorsch, 2007; Dorsch, 2011b; Thomas, 2007; see also Deonna, 2006). More needs to be said, however, about which kind of reasoning is suitable when. For instance, it has been convincingly argued that aesthetic judgment and evaluation cannot be the result of deductive inferences (Budd, 1999; Sibley, 2001). Accordingly, the plan is to argue that we recognise aesthetic – and possibly other – values by abduction or informed guessing (Bender, 1995). On this view, we determine the merit of objects in the same way in which we, say, estimate the number of spectators in a stadium just by looking and guessing.

That *emotions* should not ground objective evaluations does not mean that they have no central role to play in the assessment of objects. The research is intended to champion the idea of assigning to them the function to draw our attention both to subjectively important values (i.e., to what matters for us personally), and to some of the underlying features of objects that are responsible for – and evidence of – their merit (Betzler, 2009; Brady, 2010). The last aspect is also intimately linked to the fact that, although emotions are partly resistant to the impact of reasons, they are not fully immune to their influence (Dorsch, 2007; Goldie, 2000). It shall be argued that our emotional responses to objects, despite not constituting grounds for evaluations, are none the less sensitive to reasons for assessment and subject to corresponding norms (Goldie, 2004). That a drawing by Matisse is elementary, elegant and effortless, say, is a reason not only to find it beautiful, but also to admire it.

### 2.3 State of Personal Research

My current research – which, among other things, led to my recent Habilitation thesis (Dorsch, 2011a) – is focused on the nature and interaction of main aspects of our first-personal perspective onto the world (i.e., consciousness, intentionality and rationality), as well as its relationship to the third-personal perspective of the sciences and related issues pertaining to the dispute between realists and anti-realists about values, colours and similar properties (Dorsch, 2009a; Dorsch, 2010a; Dorsch, 2010c).

As part of my current SNF-funded research project *Experiential Rationalism* (2009-2012), I have started to develop and defend experiential rationalism with respect to perceptual experiences, judgemental thoughts, imaginings and mental actions, and self-knowledge (Dorsch, 2009b; Dorsch, 2010d; Dorsch, 2012a; Dorsch, in progress[a]); and to use the resulting insights to provide a classification of kinds of mental episode in terms of their phenomenologically salient rational role (Dorsch, 2010c; Dorsch, 2012b).

In my work on perception and hallucination, I am arguing for a version of epistemological disjunctivism that is compatible with intentionalism about perceptual presentation; as well as for an account of phenomenal character – partly in terms of token-reflexive intentionality – that allows for the possibility of phenomenal awareness to mislead us about the non-phenomenal (e.g., rational) aspects of the nature of mental episodes (Dorsch, 2011c; Dorsch, 2012a; Dorsch, in progress[d]; Dorsch and Soldati, 2011). Besides, I have provided a description of the phenomenal character of perceptions, judgemental thoughts and similar mental episodes (Dorsch, 2009b; Dorsch, 2010c; Dorsch, 2012b; Dorsch and Soldati, 2005) and have investigated the perspectivalness of visual experience and consciousness (Dorsch, 2012a; Dorsch, in progress[b]).

Some of my work currently under review or in progress is concerned with the relationship between aesthetic reasons, values and norms (Dorsch, 2011b; Dorsch, 2011d), as well as between theoretical reasons and norms – the latter not only with respect to the normativity of perception and belief in cognition (Dorsch, in progress[c]), but also with respect to the normativity of sensory

and intellectual imagining in imaginative projects or engagements with works of fiction (Dorsch, 2010b; Dorsch, 2011e; Dorsch, in progress[f]).

Furthermore, I have recently begun work on the distinction between non-inferential and inferential access and justification, notably with respect to colours and aesthetic properties (Dorsch, 2010a; Dorsch, 2011b; Dorsch, in progress[g]). And I have been defending a rationalist approach to aesthetic experience, which assumes that the recognition of aesthetic qualities and values (and similar higher-level properties) is largely a matter of (unprincipled) reasoning (Dorsch, 2011d), rather than experience or emotion (Dorsch, 2007; Dorsch, 2011b).

## 2.4 Schedule

### 2.4.1 Main Line of Research

Year	<i>A. The Normative Mind (Book Project)</i>	Planned output
1	Motivation & experiential rationalism	Two articles
2	Defending (SEEM) & disjunctivism about reason awareness	Two articles
3	Defending (FACT) & disjunctivism about perception and knowledge	Two articles
4	Finishing the monograph	One monograph

### 2.4.2 Additional Lines of Research

Year	<i>B. Reasons and Norms (PhD)</i>	<i>C. Reasons and Values (Postdoc)</i>
1	Epistemic akrasia & unreflective motivation	Values and the favouring relation
2	The nature & authority of norms of rationality	Against the buck-passing account
3	Further issues of interest and connections between the projects	
4	Writing up (output: PhD thesis)	Writing up (output: four articles)

Year	<i>D. Kinds of Normativity (PhD)</i>	<i>E. Evaluations and Emotions (Postdoc)</i>
1	Epistemic vs. practical normativity	The epistemology of evaluations
2	The special case of aesthetic normativity	The normative role of emotions
3	Further issues of interest and connections between the projects	
4	Writing up (output: PhD thesis)	Writing up (output: four articles)

### 2.4.3 Major International Conferences

Year	International Conferences – Topic	Planned output
2	The Motivational Role of Reasons in Epistemology and Ethics	One volume
4	The Justificatory Role of Facts in Epistemology and Ethics	One volume

## 2.5 Importance of the Research

### 2.5.1 The Importance of the Expected Research Results

The view that disjunctivism about perception and knowledge holds the key to a satisfactory theory of justification and normativity is not new (McDowell, 1998b; Williamson, 2000). But the application of disjunctivism not only to our awareness of facts, but also to our awareness of reasons has – to my knowledge – not been explicitly considered in the literature. The same applies to experiential rationalism, the view that the phenomenal character of our mental episodes re-

flects their rational role; and to the related proposal that our awareness of reasons is phenomenal, non-conceptual and perspectival in nature.<sup>25</sup>

What makes it worthwhile to pursue this novel account of justification and motivation is that it points to a solution of at least some of the problems facing its more standard competitors – such as the problem of over-intellectualisation, or the problem of how our awareness of facts can be motivationally efficacious. In addition, the proposed view promises to deal with issues of normativity on a general level, and also to bridge the gap between two pairs of opposing views and thereby to avoid some of the difficulties of either view, while benefitting from some of their advantages:

(i) The recent philosophical debates about reasons, norms and values typically treat the relevant kinds of attitude separately. In particular, it is common to discuss the normative dimension of *beliefs* independently from that of *intentions* or *evaluations* (e.g., Harman (1986) and Scanlon (1999) manifest this contrast), although both show important commonalities (as noted by a few exceptions to the rule, such as (Audi, 2001; Gibbons, 2010; Hookway, 2003; Owens, 2000; Skorupski, 2010)). The proposed research aims to partly remedy this situation by adopting a more general approach and trying to identify some of the common strands in the more specialised debates on the normativity of attitudes within *epistemology* and *meta-ethics* – as well as, to a lesser degree, within *aesthetics* and *the philosophy of mind*.

(ii) It is also standardly the case that philosophers strictly oppose *internalist* and *externalist* approaches to justification and defend one at the expense of the other (again with some notable exceptions, such as McDowell (1998a); McDowell (1998b)). In particular, it is popular to distinguish two kinds of justification or knowledge – one externalist, the other internalists – that are not assumed to be closely linked to each other (Goldman, 1988; Sosa, 2003; Wright, 2004).

(iii) The proposed research stands in a similar relation to the traditional contrast between the *empiricist* and *rationalist* approaches to the mind: while it acknowledges that experience and how things seem to us are central to justification and motivation, it also argues that this is so precisely because experience and our subjective take on the world reflect objective reasons and their relation of (dis)favouring to our attitudes.

### 2.5.2 The Planned Publications and Research Meetings

As the tables under point 2.4 have already illustrated, the main means of dissemination of the envisaged research results will be one monograph and about fifteen research articles, both to be published by publishing houses or philosophy journals of the highest international standard. In addition, two sub-projects are meant to lead to successful defenses of PhD theses.

It is also planned to hold two large conferences with the participation of international experts in the field, which are intended to lead to the publication of collections of high-quality essays on the respective topics. These conferences will continue the tradition of recent major philosophy conferences in Fribourg organised by the main applicant (the volume linked to the first of these conferences is currently under review at Oxford University Press).

Besides, there will be regular talks and small workshops with invited speakers, as well as meetings with other research groups, notably from Geneva, Bern and Zürich, but also from abroad (see the attached document for further details about the planned local and international collaborations).

All meetings are to be organised in close collaboration with the *'Experience & Reason' Research Group on Mind and Normativity* ([www.exre.org](http://www.exre.org)) based at the philosophy department of the Uni-

<sup>25</sup> There are some affinities, however, between these views and some of the ideas to be found in the writings of the early phenomenologists (notably Husserl, 1901/1984, Pfänder, 1911 and Ach, 1935).

versity of Fribourg, to which the research project and its team would be affiliated.

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