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Two reasons why epistemic reasons are not object-given reasons

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Abstract

In this paper I discuss two claims; the first is the claim that state-given reasons for belief are of a radically different kind to object-given reasons for belief. The second is that where this last claim is true, epistemic reasons are object-given reasons for belief (EOG). I argue that EOG has two implausible consequences: (i) that suspension of judgement can never be epistemically justified, and (ii) that the reason that epistemically justifies a belief that p can never be the reason for which one believes that p.

1. The Two Kinds of Reason Thesis

It has become very popular among people working on reasons and normativity (both in ethics and epistemology) to invoke a distinction between state-given reasons and object-given reasons about propositional attitudes¹. Object-given reasons are considerations that count in favour of an agent's holding a given propositional attitude (paradigmatically, a belief that p) because of the considerations' having the right kind of conceptual relation to the content of that attitude. For instance, because I cannot consider a mental state of mine a belief if I do not consider its contents to be true, indications that a belief is true must uniquely be the sort of thing that can count in favour of whether to believe that p. State-given reasons (sometimes dubbed "the wrong kind of reason") are considerations that bear not on the objects of a given propositional attitude, but on the propositional attitude qua state. As such,

¹ See for instance: Danielsson and Olson 2007, Hieronymi 2005, Kolodny 2005, Olson 2004, Reisner 2009, Shah 2006, Way forthcoming. The terminology 'state-given' and 'object-given' seems unanimously held to have been introduced by Derek Parfit (see Parfit 2001).

state-given reasons tell us, for instance, whether having a particular belief state would be beneficial from a certain point of view, or given one's set of ends.

Those who make this distinction are typically not just saying that state-given and object-given reasons can come apart, but that they are two radically different *kinds* of reason. According to Shah's influential account, for instance:

...*only* evidence for and against the truth of *p* is relevant to answering the doxastic question of whether to believe that *p*, whereas *only* the desirability of believing that *p* is relevant to answering the practical question whether to bring about the belief that *p*.
(Shah 2006, p. 498) [my italics].

Let us call the thesis that state-given reasons are of a radically different kind to object-given reasons the two kinds of reason thesis (TKR). According to TKR, for instance, a state-given reason to believe that *p* cannot answer the question of whether to believe that *p* and an object-given reason to believe that *p* cannot answer the question of whether to bring about the belief-state that one believes that *p*. The discovery that a state-given reason to believe that *p* can also be an object-given reason to believe that *p*, or vice-versa, would thereby refute TKR. To see this better, consider that according to the proponent of TKR what makes reasons belong to different kinds is the sort of relation they bear to the thing they are meant to be a reason for. So, supposing that reasons are propositions (for instance)², a proposition *q* is a state-given reason in virtue of making it desirable to believe that *p* from a certain point of view. The proposition is an object-given reason in virtue of indicating that the belief that *p* is true. It is not an intrinsic property of a proposition that determines what kind of reason it is, but a

² You might think that reasons are mental states instead, if so, just substitute 'mental state' for 'proposition'.

relational property³. As such, the claim is that a reason is not *just* a proposition (though being a reason is a property that a proposition has); being a reason is a property a proposition has in virtue of standing in a particular relation to a propositional attitude, or its contents. To say that reasons are propositions, then, is to say that *propositions* (as opposed to something else) can bear certain properties (in virtue of which they have the property of being a reason). So although one proposition can stand in the required relation to a belief-state and to the content of that state, there nonetheless can be, according to TKR, two reasons: the proposition qua reason in virtue of standing in a given relation to the belief-state, and the proposition qua reason in virtue of standing in a given relation to the contents of that state. To say that an object-given reason to believe that p is the same as a state-given reason to believe that p is thus to say that a proposition is a reason because it stands in the *same* relation both to the belief state and its propositional object. TKR denies that it is possible for a proposition to stand in that same relation.

Note that to deny TKR is just to claim that state-given and object-given reasons can come together. It is not to claim that state-given and object given reasons are identical. That is, one could hold that there is only *one* reason relation and that sometimes it obtains in ways that lead us to call the relevant propositions ‘state-given’ reasons and sometimes it obtains in ways that lead us to call the relevant propositions ‘object-given’ reasons. That does not entail the thought, of course, that state-given and object-given reasons are identical, since one could hold that whatever in virtue of which the reason relation obtains is divergent vis-a-vis the two.⁴

³ For a helpful discussion on this see Reisner 2009.

⁴ Thanks to Andrew Reisner for encouraging me to make this clarification.

Are epistemic reasons state-given reasons, or object-given reasons? The overwhelming orthodoxy seems to be that they are object-given reasons⁵ since it seems natural to suppose that epistemic reasons are considerations that indicate the truth of a belief that *p*, rather than the desirability of having a belief. Perhaps because belief has a constitutive norm of correctness, or necessarily aims at truth, or perhaps because of the direction of fit belief has as regards mind and world. To see whether the standard picture allows there to be state-given epistemic reasons, we would need a full taxonomy of what people take epistemic reasons to be. I do not have the space here to give such a taxonomy, nor am I going to evaluate the arguments in favour of the claim that epistemic reasons are exclusively object-given reasons where TKR is true (call this claim EOG). Instead, I wish to demonstrate that despite its initial plausibility, EOG has two implausible consequences; (i) that suspension of judgement can never be epistemically justified, and (ii) that the reason that epistemically justifies a belief that *p* can never be the reason for which one believes that *p*. That it has these consequences should lead us to the conclusion that there are at least two problems with the claim that epistemic reasons are exclusively object-given reasons, where object-given reasons are of a radically different kind to state-given reasons.

2. Justifying Suspension of Judgement

According to the proponent of EOG, epistemic reasons bear on the propositional objects of belief. They indicate that a proposition is true. Because beliefs are propositional attitudes, how it is that considerations that bear on propositions can justify *beliefs* is un-mysterious:

⁵ I do not know of anyone who invokes that distinction that does not hold this view. Reisner 2009 attacks the view that state-given reasons for belief are not reasons at all. It is worth noting that some of the people who appeal to the distinction between object-given and state-given reasons seem to do so with the agenda of denying that there can be no non-epistemic reasons for belief, or at least only object-given reasons for belief (which are the “right”, or only genuine, kind of reason for belief) cf. Hieronymi 2005, Shah 2006, Skorupski 2010.

beliefs, qua propositional attitudes, *express* propositions⁶. So a reason that indicates that a proposition p is true also, un-controversially, indicates that a *belief* that p is true. So there is no difficulty for the proponent of EOG to explain how reasons that bear on *propositions* can justify *beliefs*⁷. They easily do so because by justified ‘beliefs’ we mean, elliptically, justified ‘contents of belief’ or justified ‘belief qua expressing propositional attitude p’ and *not* qua ‘attitude’, ‘belief-state’, or some such thing. If belief turned out not to be a propositional attitude, then the proponent of EOG would have a problem. For if belief did not *express* the proposition that is being justified, then it would not be a belief qua ‘contents of belief’ that is being justified, since there would be no propositional contents to be justified. Suppose, for instance, that by ‘I believe that the dog ate my homework’, I really mean:

(1) Hoorah for the proposition that the dog ate my homework.

So that belief is an attitude toward a proposition, but does not have propositional content in the sense that it expresses a proposition. One might say that (1) could be epistemically justified in virtue of the fact that I have evidence that makes the proposition <the dog ate my homework> likely to be true. But how is it that an epistemic reason *that bears on a proposition* can then justify the *belief* (qua non-propositional attitude)? Perhaps it is because only attitudes that *pertain* to propositions which one has reason to think are true are epistemically justified. But this kind of explanation would show how a ‘belief’ *qua state* (or attitude) could be justified and thus would also show that epistemic reasons could justify bringing it about that one is in a *state* of belief. So this explanation is not available to the

⁶ By ‘a belief expresses that p’ I mean just ‘a belief has the content that p’ as opposed to ‘a belief is an attitude towards that p’. Of course, having the content that p entails having an attitude towards that p, but having an attitude towards that p does not entail that attitude’s having the content p. I use the word ‘express’ simply to try to take on board that difference.

⁷ We might otherwise also wonder how it is that propositions can be the sort of thing that can be justified.

defender of EOG. But if that explanation is not available, the defender of EOG will have to say that the epistemic reason only justifies the relevant proposition; however, that is problematic, since propositions simpliciter do not seem to be the kind of thing that can be justified. So the defender of EOG must be committed to the view that beliefs are propositional attitudes, otherwise she will have a hard time explaining how considerations that bear on propositions can justify beliefs. That is, she will have a hard time doing so without belying her claim that epistemic reasons are not state-given reasons⁸. Of course, beliefs *are* propositional attitudes and so the defender of EOG has not yet been given reason to worry.

The problem I would like to raise is this: there is good reason to think that suspension of judgement is *not* a propositional attitude and so suspension of judgement with respect to *p* does not *express* a proposition. This means that the proponent of EOG would have to say that suspension of judgement can never be epistemically justified. But surely suspension of judgement *is* often epistemically justified (for instance when the evidence *S* has toward *p* is inconclusive). So it looks like EOG faces a problem. Let me now try to convince you that the way to solve it is not to insist that suspension of judgement is a propositional attitude.

In the argument that follows, I assume that suspension of judgement is an attitude towards *p* and not merely the absence of an attitude towards *p*. One might think that this assumption is not harmless, since one could reason as follows: where there is no (known) evidence that increases the probability of *p*, or of $\neg p$, *S* is justified in not having an attitude at all toward that *p*⁹. If the absence of having an attitude toward *p* is synonymous with suspending judgement about *p*, then the above gives us a good rule for when *S* is justified in

⁹ Thanks to Jonas Olson for bringing this point to my attention.

suspending judgement about p (a rule that is consistent with the claim that suspension of judgement is not a propositional attitude). However, I think there is good reason to be sceptical of the claim that suspension of judgement about p just is the absence of an attitude toward p. For instance, as Friedman (forthcoming) points out, Cavemen neither believed or disbelieved the proposition that the Large Hadron Collider would find the Higgs boson, yet it seems wrong to say that Cavemen suspended judgement about it. My parents neither believe nor disbelieve the proposition that Google Chrome is better than Firefox, but it seems wrong to say that they suspend judgement about it¹⁰.

So, working on the plausible assumption that suspension of judgement is an attitude, linguistic data show that suspension of judgement is what can be called a ‘*wh*-attitude’, an attitude that takes the grammar of who, what, where, when, and whether locutions.¹¹ Consider the following sentence:

(2) I suspend judgement on whether the dog ate my homework.

This sounds unproblematic. But contrast (2) with (3):

(3) I suspend judgement that the dog ate my homework.

¹⁰ There may be ways to get round this objection; for instance, one could define suspension of judgement as the absence of an attitude toward p at t where one has considered whether p at t. Again, this definition looks problematic, since in cases where S has merely started considering whether p, it seems wrong to say that S has suspended judgement about p (where S neither believes or disbelieves p). For a full discussion and defence of the claim that suspension of judgement is an attitude and not merely the absence of an attitude (plus some further condition) see Friedman (forthcoming). Since I have nothing important to add to her discussion, I will not discuss the issue any further.

The last locution (3) sounds problematic. Similarly, we do not say:

(4) I believe who ate my homework.

(5) I believe where my car is.

But we do say:

(6) I suspend judgement on who ate my homework.

(7) I suspend judgement on where my car is.

(8) I know who ate my homework.

(9) I know where my car is.

This indicates that locutions about knowledge and suspended judgement can express *wh*-attitudes. But as I will now argue, whereas locutions about knowledge can also express a propositional attitude, locutions about suspended judgement can *only* express a *wh*-attitude.

Knowledge-*wh* is usually said to be reducible to knowledge-that. Whenever one has knowledge-*wh*, one knows a proposition that answers the relevant question denoted by the *wh*-clause. If I know who ate my homework, I know the proposition that answers the question: who ate my homework? So my knowing who ate my homework is reducible to my knowing that, for example, the dog ate my homework.¹² But this reductive analysis of *wh*-attitudes cannot work for suspended judgement. Take:

¹² I might add, as does Schaffer, that to know-*wh* is to know that *p* as an answer to the question denoted by the *wh*-clause. Nothing turns on this for our purposes here.

(10) I suspend judgement on who ate my homework.

For the reductive analysis above to work on (10) there must be a propositional attitude (say a belief) with respect to what is the answer to the relevant question denoted by the *wh*-clause, for instance a belief that the dog ate my homework. But when we suspend judgement we need not have an attitude toward any proposition that might answer the relevant question; we do not have a belief regarding which proposition answers the question¹³. If we did, we would not be suspending judgment. And it is not that I have a belief about who did it, but it just turns out to be a belief in a proposition that does not happen to answer the question. That is not knowing who did it, not suspending judgement about who did it.

So it seems that the linguistic data support both the view that suspended judgement is a *wh*-attitude and that qua *wh*-attitude it cannot be reduced (unlike knowledge-*wh*) to a propositional attitude. But if suspension of judgement is not a propositional attitude, then it cannot be epistemically justified if epistemic reasons bear only on propositions expressed a propositional attitude.

But one might object that, although we cannot say:

(3) I suspend judgement that the dog ate my homework.

We *can* say:

(11) I suspend judgement on the proposition that the dog ate my homework.

It seems that suspensions can somehow *pertain* to propositions, as (11) shows. Suspensions are not attitudes that express propositions, however. If they were, we should have expected to assert (3). So although epistemic reasons could bear on the propositions somehow pertained

¹³ Of course, we might have ruled out that certain propositions answer the question, but that is not having a belief about which proposition answers the question.

to by suspending judgement, if EOG is true, they cannot bear on suspension of judgement itself. This is because suspension of judgement does not have the propositional content that epistemic reasons could justify. The epistemic reasons would (somehow) justify the suspension of judgement qua attitude.

One might instead object that (2) reduces to:

(13) I believe that it is unclear whether the dog ate my homework.

Or,

(14) I believe that the available evidence with respect to the proposition that the dog ate my homework is inconclusive.

Do (13) and (14) show that suspension of judgement can reduce to a propositional attitude? No. It seems perfectly compatible to say that one suspends judgement about x whilst at the same time having no beliefs about whether it is clear that x, as per:

(15) I suspend judgement about whether the dog ate my homework, and I don't have any beliefs about whether it is clear that the dog ate my homework.

Perhaps the person asserting (15) has just never considered whether it is *clear* that the dog ate his homework, but comes to suspend judgement for different reasons. And, similarly, it seems perfectly compatible to say that one suspends judgement about x while at the same time having no beliefs about the evidential status of x, as per:

(16) I suspend judgement about whether the dog ate my homework, and I don't know

whether the available evidence makes it probable or not that the dog ate my homework.

Again, the person asserting (16) might just never have considered the evidence with regard to whether the dog ate his homework and have come to suspend judgement for different reasons – she might think that she is incapable of weighing that evidence adequately in this given case, for instance (so she might even believe that the evidence *is* conclusive). But might not the fact that she considers herself incapable of weighing the evidence bear on whether she considers *her* total evidence E^* (which includes evidence about how one weighs evidence) to be inconclusive? Such that (2) reduces to:

(17) I believe that my evidence E^* with respect to whether the dog ate my homework is inconclusive.

Perhaps there is an incoherence in *asserting*: “I suspend judgement about whether x, but I don’t believe my evidence with respect to x is inconclusive”. I am not convinced that it is, but even if it was, it would not rule out the possibility of someone having come to have the attitude of suspending judgement about whether x without having considered her evidence toward x. In the same way that one can come to believe that p without having considered whether p is true (even if is incoherent to assert: “I believe that p, but $\neg p$ ”).

I think all this gives us good reason to think that the suspension of judgement is not a propositional attitude and that, as such, the view that epistemic reasons are object-given reasons entails the claim that suspension of judgement cannot be epistemically justified. That is a hard bullet to bite, I think. Here is another one.

3. The Epistemic Basing Relation

Consider the epistemic basing relation¹⁴:

EBR: S is justified in believing that p only if a reason R justifies S's belief that p and S believes that p for R.

If one wants epistemic reasons to be able to confer epistemic justification, then one had better make one's account of epistemic reasons consistent with EBR. But it seems to me that TKR is inconsistent with EBR.

One way of understanding the tension is as follows: If epistemic reasons are object-given reasons, then, qua being mere indications that a belief that p is true, epistemic reasons cannot be mental states, but propositions. This is because mental states do not (for most propositions) indicate that a belief that p is true. But propositions are causally inefficacious. A *reason for which* one believes that p explains why one believes that p and as such is a *causal* explanation. So if epistemic reasons to believe that p are object-given reasons, they cannot be reasons for which one believes that p. So claiming that epistemic reasons are object-given reasons is incompatible with EBR. But EBR is true, so epistemic reasons cannot be object-given reasons.

Without denying EBR, one available reply seems to be to claim that construing epistemic reasons as object-given reasons is only incompatible with a certain account of EBR, namely

¹⁴ That the basing relation is required for epistemic justification is to my knowledge unanimously accepted. The debate about the epistemic basing relation has centred not on whether it is necessary for epistemic justification, but on what is the correct account of it: the doxastic, causal, or counterfactual account, for instance?

the causal account. It is not incompatible with a competitor, the doxastic account¹⁵.

Distinguish:

CEBR: S is justified in believing that *p* only if a reason *R* justifies S's belief that *p* and *R* is the cause of (or causally sustains) S's belief that *p*.

DEBR: S is justified in believing that *p* only if a reason *R* justifies S's belief that *p* and S recognises *R*'s justificatory relation toward that *p*.

So one might consider the claim that epistemic reasons are object-given reasons to commit one only to DEBR, not to the denial of EBR. Because epistemic reasons need not themselves cause a belief that *p* then treating them as propositions need not be inconsistent with EBR.

But one might complain that DEBR is problematic. If it is true, then it is impossible for someone to recognise that two reasons justify a belief that *p* but believe that *p* for only one of those reasons. As Turri (2011) shows, however, while such situations may be somewhat irrational, they are not impossible. Suppose that *S* believes that propositions *q* and *r* are reasons for believing that *p*, believes *q* and *r*, and is considering whether *p*. However, *S*, having just endured several fruitless months on the academic job market, and so being in a state of exhaustion and despair, has slightly impaired cognitive abilities which make *S* neglect his evidential judgement about *q* and so merely bases a belief that *p* on *r*. Importantly, we should not understand *S*'s 'neglect' as *S*'s having forgotten about *q* or as *S*'s rejecting the evidential role of *q*; it seems plausible to interpret *S*'s neglect as a case where *S* merely fails to be moved by his evidential belief. According to Turri, the academic job market might be

¹⁵ Cf. Korcz 2000, Kvanvig 2003. The other competitor on the scene is the counterfactual account (cf. Swain 1989). I won't present that account here, since it is clearly inconsistent with the view that epistemic reasons are object-given reasons if the causal account is. The counterfactual account stipulates that reasons could have caused a belief that *p* even if they in fact did not. The claim that epistemic reasons are propositions entails the claim that epistemic reasons can never, so could never, cause a belief that *p*.

such that S is somewhat irrational, but “it’s not bad enough to make him impossible” (Turri 2011, p. 386).

Alternatively, then, one might resist the objection by appealing to factualism about reasons. That is, by denying that reasons are propositions and claiming that they are facts instead. Since facts, unlike propositions, are causally efficacious, the problem does not arise. But again, there seem to be problems with factualism (this time brought out by Turri 2009), chief among them, I think, the issue of “false facts”: the factualist seems committed to denying that one can believe on the basis of things that are not true. It seems appropriate, however, to say of some people, for instance, that they believe that the US should have invaded Iraq on the basis that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, even though there is no such fact.

Perhaps there are ways for the defender of DEBR or Factualism about epistemic reasons to evade the problems just sketched; I do not mean to settle the issues here. But these problems do show, I think, that the proponent of TKR must at least commit herself to a controversial thesis, if she is to keep TKR compatible with EBR.

The second way of understanding the tension between EBR and TKR is as follows. Recall that TKR is a conjunct of the following two claims:

- (i) Only object-given reasons can justify the contents of a propositional attitude.
- (ii) Only state-given reasons can explain why a propositional attitude is held and/or maintained.

Recall Shah’s account of applying TKR to the domain of belief:

...*only* evidence for and against the truth of *p* is relevant to answering the doxastic question of whether to believe that *p*, whereas *only* the desirability of believing that *p* is relevant to answering the practical question whether to bring about the belief that *p*. (Shah 2006, p. 498) [my italics].

We can thus infer (from TKR) that when a reason explains why a belief is held or maintained that it is a state-given reason, and that when a reason justifies a belief's having the content it has, it is an object-given reason. So, as we noticed, to discover that a state-given reason is also an object-given reason, or vice-versa, is to refute TKR. To put it another way: Only state-given (and not object-given) reasons are explanatory if TKR is true, since *only* state-given reasons can answer the question of whether one should come to believe that *p*¹⁶. Under EBR, a reason can only justify S's belief that *p* if it can explain why S believes that *p*, since if a reason *R* is the reason S believes that *p*, then *R* explains why S believes that *p*.

So the tension between EOG and EBR is not to be understood as being down to the fact that propositions are causally inert. The tension is in a way rather more straightforward: on any account of the epistemic basing relation that treats epistemic reasons as object-given reasons, object-given reasons are going to come out as able to function as state-given reasons. This is because TKR treats state-given reasons as the only reasons that can be explanatory. EBR is not in tension with EOG and the claim that object-given reasons and state-given reasons can come apart, but it is in tension with EOG and the claim the two kinds of reason are of a radically different kind, such that a state-given reason can never be an object-given reason and vice-versa. No amount of tinkering with the formulation of EBR can fix that. Thus TKR + EBR is only consistent with the claim that the desirability of having a belief that *p* is what

¹⁶ Of course, there may be other things that explain why one has come to believe that *p* than the state-given reasons. If TKR is true and epistemic reasons are state-given, then only those reasons that are motivated by the epistemic value of getting into the state of belief justify one's belief that *p*.

both explains and justifies a belief that *p*. We can dismiss the question of whether to believe that *p* (in favour of the question of whether to bring it about to believe that *p*) as irrelevant to the question of what justifies a belief, and do so without violating EBR. But we cannot dismiss the question of what explains why a belief is formed or maintained as irrelevant to the question of what justifies a belief without violating EBR.

Let me explain that last claim a bit further. According to EBR, the reason that justifies your belief that *p* must be the reason for which you believe that *p*. EOG says that only object-given reasons justify beliefs. If TKR is true, then EOG entails the claim that a reason that justifies your belief that *p* can never be the reason for which you believe that *p*. Thus TKR in combination with EOG contradicts EBR. What if one says that epistemic reasons are state-given (ESG)? Clearly ESG does not violate EBR, since state-given reasons to believe that *p* can (but do not always) explain why one believes that *p*, i.e. they can be the reason for which you believe that *p*. So one can say, for instance, that it is the desirability of believing truths and avoiding falsehoods that both justifies and explains why one is in the belief state in which one believes that *p*. One could then hold that that is what we mean when we say that “*S* is justified in believing that *p*”, i.e. it translates as “*S* is justified in being in the belief–state of believing that *p*”. So ESG does not violate EBR even if TKR is true.

Thus, either TKR is false, or epistemic reasons are state-given reasons.

This is quite a surprising result, since those who endorse TKR typically do so in the context of denying that there are non-epistemic reasons for belief. Curiously, the argument seems to go: reasons to get oneself into a state of belief *p* (pragmatic reasons for instance) are motivationally ineffective at getting you to believe that *p*, where evidential (object-given reasons) are effective. If a doctor tells me that if I believe I will survive my cancer treatment I will have a better chance of surviving, I am much less likely to believe that I will survive than

if the doctor shows me medical evidence that supports the claim. But only reasons that can actually move me into believing that p can justify a belief that p. So state-given reasons cannot be reasons for belief and, since only epistemic reasons can be object-given reasons, there can only be epistemic reasons for belief. End of argument¹⁷. What is so curious to me about this argument is that it relies on the claim that only reasons that can move me into believing that p can justify for me a belief that p. That claim looks very much like EBR. So it seems that the very considerations that the proponent of TKR uses to establish that there are can only be epistemic reasons for belief back-fire on her. Certainly, at least, there is no question that she can evade the argument by denying EBR.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, I have levied two objections to the view that epistemic reasons are object-given reasons. It is worth noting that the first objection – that it entails that suspension of judgement cannot be epistemically justified – goes through even if TKR is not true. That is, the objection would stand even if state-given reasons were not of a radically different kind but merely not identical to object-given reasons. My target is the claim that epistemic reasons are only ever object-given. That view is compatible with the view that object-given reasons to intend, for instance, could also be sometimes be state-given reasons to intend. Most people who explicitly claim that epistemic reasons are object-given reasons also endorse TKR. And many do so (most notably Shah 2006, Heironymi 2005) with a view to showing that there are no non-epistemic reasons for belief; holding, as they do, that only object-given reasons are the “right” kind of reason for belief and so that if only epistemic reasons can be object-given reasons, then only epistemic reasons are the “right” kind of reasons for belief. So it is also

¹⁷ A very similar argument has been run in favour of the view that there can be no state-given reasons for intending (for discussion see Morauta 2010).

instructive to see that there is a problem for that combination of views (TKR + EOG) – as my second objection with respect to the epistemic basing relation brings up – since it makes trouble for that way of arguing that there are no non-epistemic reasons for belief. That is, it questions the soundness of an argument that moves from TKR + EOG to the conclusion that there are only epistemic reasons for belief. I suspect though that many philosophers are implicitly accepting EOG without endorsing TKR. To them, I offer my first objection as a challenge to either re-think how and what exactly epistemic reasons justify or re-think why it is that suspension of judgement is a propositional attitude¹⁸.

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