

Judgmental Belief

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What is belief? In order to answer this question, the reconstruction of belief-formation is attempted. It reveals the intertwining of two dimensions. At the upper end, there is truth as the objective teleological goal of belief-formation. This goal is based upon a nested hierarchy of mutually supported sub-goals: objective evidence, transglobal reliability, one's doxastic sensibility, and one's all-in *ultima facie* doxastic seemings. The lower end of hierarchy is subjective and deontic, whereas in the middle, teleological and deontic elements intermingle. Belief-formation external or descriptive ingredients get disciplined through non-instrumental teleology and deontics. Teleology-deontics intertwining in belief-formation reveals that belief shares several characteristics with genuine judgment: phenomenological basis, commitment, sensibility and responsibility. Teleology-deontics intertwining also characterizes quasi-agentive account of intentionality. Belief, such as it is predominantly forthcoming in epistemology and ethics, provides a reduced version of genuine judgment, so that it is able to comply with externalist and descriptivist agenda, doing away with teleology-deontics intertwining. Judgmental belief perspective is revived once as virtue epistemology and virtue ethics obtain their support through one's character.

Keywords: belief, genuine judgment, teleology, deontics, descriptivism.

What is belief? In order to answer this question, the reconstruction of belief-formation is attempted.

Belief is usually treated as a psychological and semantically charged state. When I believe that the cat is on the mat, my belief has a content, which means exactly that, namely that the cat is on the mat. That's my beliefs' semantic ingredient, which may be specified as a representation, whatever the interpretation of that item further on happens to be. Psychological part of the belief account is that there is relation established between myself and that content. Especially in respect to truth as the goal of belief-formation (about this more in what follows) belief provides my psychological connection.¹ There are many things in the world, and one can say that it is true that there are such things. But to most of these, I (happily or unhappily) do not have any relation. And for these about which I do not entertain any psychological relation, there is no chance for me to know anything concerning them, despite that they happen to be true in an objective sense. Once as I form a belief in their direction, this one figures as a necessary precondition for my knowledge in their respect. Belief however is not a sufficient condition for knowledge: I may unfortunately believe many things that aren't true. So according to the just

¹ Notice that psychological connection according to this construal comes after the fact, which is different to the constitutive phenomenology role characterizing genuine judgment.

described account, there is a gap between belief and knowledge, so that this last one only allows for justified beliefs to lead in its direction. Later on, we argue that differences between belief and knowledge are kind of overstated, once as one realizes that they are both forms of judgment.²

Belief is a reduced judgment though, and it was embraced as a substitution of judgment so that descriptivist and externalist, space of causes involving instrumental agenda could come through. Here lies the actual popularity of judgment in philosophy. In metaethics, where moral judgments and their evaluation are the basis of the enterprise, one takes as measure of a judgment being belief or not, choosing among cognitivist and noncognitivist approaches. Strange and indicative perhaps, because we started with judgment in the area of morals. But it complies with an agenda that prioritizes belief in respect to judgment.

There are other issues related to belief, and as well to its negation. Here is a conversational contribution from Facebook (February 2nd, 2017): “Mark Norris Lance said that Belnap just stopped him in the hall at the Pitt one day and said, “You know, the next time someone tells me something is unbelievable, I’m not going to believe it.”” Putting a lot of complexities aside, it seems that Belnap had in mind that at some occasions his judgment is well suited to trump belief.

One could go on accumulating differences between belief and judgment. We have seen that usually, there are two ingredients recognized in belief: a semantic and a psychological one. The first, as we said, has to do with content, and the second with psychological relation. Both of these, we presumed, can then be interpreted to suit the externalist and descriptivist agenda because of which belief gets promoted.³

We propose to take another route though in order to tackle the nature of belief. That’s reconstruction of belief-formation, a kind of dynamics involved enterprise, in respect to its descriptivist static counterparts. In this manner we hope to provide an answer to the question what the belief really is.

Reconstruction of belief-formation reveals the intertwining of two dimensions: teleology and deontology.

We start with realization that belief has a goal and that in its basis it reposes upon some deontic, ethical duty and obligation. If this is the case, then the usual semantic and psychological dimensions of belief will not be in the foreground anymore. Semantics has to do with meaning, and certainly belief has a meaning. It is about a cat or again about something else; a belief without meaning is barely conceivable.⁴ Psychological dimension is another

² Justification according to the usual approach to knowledge or moral assessment in which belief features is whatever helps to bridge the cleavage between belief and knowledge or moral certitude. Justification by itself will not do though, as this is witnessed by Gettier clauses. Justification points into purified externalist (reliabilism) or internalist (evidentialist) directions, which restrict or leave out both teleology and normative deontics.

³ Externalism and descriptivism certainly are closer to the space of causes as compared with teleology and deontics which lean towards the space of reasons. Reasons have directedness (teleology), and they oblige one to take a certain direction (deontics).

⁴ One may say that religious belief may come without a usual semantic meaning, whereas true believers will claim that their path only assures genuine meaning. Seeing religious belief as being without meaning just

characteristics of belief, which may be taken for granted. The goal of belief, its teleological aspect, pulls us in another direction. Indeed, it shows us directedness, aim of belief, which is neither just semantic or psychological, despite that these matters can contribute to its success.

Seeing belief as having an intrinsic goal and being normatively supported thus comes as a response to the descriptive and functional manner to treat it, proposing it as a *reduced* version of what is actually happens to be, namely a kind of genuine judgment.

At the upper end, there is truth as the objective teleological goal of belief-formation.

One forms belief with a *goal*: that it would be a *true* belief. This should be uncontroversial. One would be unhappy realizing that one's beliefs are false. This already shows that beliefs, aiming at a goal, are *normatively*, deontically supported. The support in question, however, is not immediate. It happens in such a manner that one can reconstruct its several stages. Along the hierarchy of the involved stages in belief-formation, one finds both teleological and deontic elements, only that the primary truth goal is dominant at the upper end of the hierarchy.

If one entertains a belief, one aims at its truth. The very fact that one aims at the truth goal in belief formation shows that teleology and deontics are constitutively involved into the enterprise. Striving towards truth, which succeeds automatically and independently of one's will, displays teleology. Belief is directed towards the truth aim. At the same time, such a teleological direction cannot be embarked upon without a certain normative, deontic basis. One aims at truth in one's belief formation only if there is some underlying sensibility and felt obligation to embark upon such a path. Whatever was just said shows that teleology and deontics, at least for belief, come as intertwined. This may not be the case for instrumental teleology that happens in the space of causes, not in the space of reasons.⁵ But it is there where beliefs' psychological ingredients are properly embraced.

Truth goal in belief-formation is based upon a nested hierarchy of mutually supported sub-goals: objective evidence, transglobal reliability, one's doxastic sensibility, and one's all-in ultima facie doxastic seemings.

We claim that truth is the main goal of belief-formation. Such a goal, as we said, should be uncontroversial. And it is supported by an intertwined play of teleological-deontic subgoals, forming a nested hierarchy of goals and subgoals. In order to get to the upper stage in this hierarchy, one should always rely upon the lower stage that immediately supports it. The basic item in this entire construction is the lowest underlying stage. Whereas upper level is of predominantly teleological nature, the lowest basis level is mainly deontic. But there is an interchange between the successive levels which all involve both teleological and deontic elements. Deontic elements are predominant at the basic lower level, whereas teleological elements are stressed upon the upper level of the nested hierarchy.

happens if one sticks to reduction of belief to its descriptive role. Religious belief however does not describe; it offers an engaged deontic, normative, (quasi-) agentic belief perspective. Steadfastness in peer disagreement has a normative root without the usual justificatory foundations.

⁵ Instrumental teleology is a reconstruction of goals in an externalist manner.

Against descriptive and externalism leaning accounts of belief, we now embark upon teleology-deontics supported reconstruction of belief-formation. There is a nested hierarchy of the involved levels, featuring as means-to-ends support.

Belief is a reduced form of genuine judgment. Reconstruction of belief-formation reveals belief vicinity to genuine judgment, actually it genuine judgment nature. Here are stages featuring in the reconstruction of belief-formation:

. (1) *Truth* is the main upper goal of belief-formation.

. (2) *Objective evidence* is the sub-goal, as the means leading to the truth goal. In order to support the truth of one's beliefs, one needs and can rely upon evidence that one has for the belief in question, in an objective manner. The sub-goal of objective evidence thus supports as a means the belief truth goal. One's evidence is the means to deliver support for one's beliefs as being true.

. (3) *Transglobal reliability* is now as next in line as a means towards the objective evidence subgoal. If the evidence is objective, then it should be reliable, supported in an external and objective manner. This starts with realization that reliability is important. But reliability, being externalist (reposing upon the causal basis, such as picking information from the surrounding), encounters several hurdles, which may be overcome by the shift from local to global and then to transglobal environment. Externalist reliability naturally happens in one's local environment. But one can be in error from his or her local perspective, which may be straightened out by the shift to the global environment. But even global environment can encounter skeptical questions, and these may be countered with the shift in direction of transglobal environment.

. (4) *Doxastic sensibility* is the means that is now needed as a support of transglobal reliability intermediate end forthcoming in the nested means-ends hierarchy involved into belief-formation. Externalist would search for an objective, space of causes inhabiting underpinning of one's belief. But one can realize that the needed support rather comes from one's doxastic sensibility. One needs be doxastically *sensible* in which manner one forms one's belief, displaying therewith one's doxastic *responsibility*. This is not the end however; an additional basic stage is needed.

. (5) *All-in ultima facie doxastic seemings* are the ultimate ground of belief-formation. They are *deontic*, *doxastic responsibility* involving matters. This one has to do with *phenomenology*, but as well with *responsibility*.

Forming belief one has ultimately nothing else to rely upon as one's doxastic seemings related to the matter at hand. There may be some causal or evidential means through which the information is gathered. But ultimately, as just said, this all starts with seemings that one forms. These seemings are qualitative situatedness experiences that one relies upon, in respect to a certain matter. *Phenomenology* and *deontology* -- the requirement how one *ought* to form one's beliefs -- are involved.

We said that there is nothing else as one's doxastic seemings that one can rely upon as the basis of one's belief-formation. One can now say that one needs to take what one has as one's belief-formation basis in a doxastically sensible and responsible manner. This may be spelled out by Potrc principle, which is keyed to the phenomenology (seemings) and deontology

(responsibility) intertwining at the very basis of belief-formation. Potrc principle *obliges* you to form belief *in your best faith*, following your *doxastic sensibility*. There is intertwining of *deontics* and of *phenomenology* as the very basis of belief-formation, to which one is *obligated* to stick when forming one's beliefs. *Responsibility* is one dimension, formation of belief *in one's best faith* is another one.

What is taken as belief is not incomplete judgment, but rather it is a form of judgment indeed, as the reconstruction of belief-formation shows. Belief is a currency according to descriptive leanings, which do away with both teleology and deontics. But in fact, teleology-deontics are upheld in belief as a form of *genuine judgment*. The main affirmation is that belief is not so different from judgment, and that it is actually a form of judgment, perhaps a reduced one if the direction of inquiry is descriptive. Stress upon Potrc principle may be provided by belief rationality and phenomenology. Phenomenology comes through the all-in ultima facie doxastic seemings. There are several forms of rationality involved. Each of the stages in belief-formation has a specific rationality keyed to it. All-in seemings means that doxastic seemings are not just my purely subjective beliefs, but rather beliefs that I form as a member of community, or of several specific communities that intermingle and of which I happen to be part.

- . (1) There is *teleological* rationality keyed to the truth goal of belief-formation.
- . (2) Objective evidentialism has objective evidence rationality as the form of rationality that fits to it.
- . (3) Transglobal reliabilism shows intermingling of subjective and objective, internalist and externalist forms of rationality.
- . (4) Doxastic sensibility has prevalence of deontic rationality.
- . (5) All-in ultima facie doxastic seemings provides a blend of deontics-phenomenology keyed rationality.

One question is about the belief-formation ultimate *phenomenology* and *deontics* intermingled rationality. What leads to belief being formed is thus one's *goal*, and as well one's *deontic*, *responsibility* and *doxastic sensibility* involving *rationality*.

Potrc principle stresses *forming one's beliefs in the best faith upon one's available phenomenological seemings supported evidence*. This means that *one's doxastic seemings* involve *deontics*, that in *seemings-phenomenology* there is already⁶ *deontics* involved, such as forming one's belief *in one's best faith upon the available evidence*. Notice that this dimension of Potrc principle puts into question *descriptive* takes on belief, which by the way are the basis of the belief popularity according to the functionalist agenda. Potrc principle should thus be stressed in its *phenomenology (seemings)* and *deontology (responsibility)* involving matters. Notice that descriptivist approach (supporting belief reduction of genuine judgment) involves *avoidance of phenomenology* (truth as direct correspondence is embraced, and truth as indirect correspondence, contextualism-like, is avoided) and of *normativity-responsibility, sensibility* based take.

⁶ Perhaps always already of hermeneutics kind.

Now as this new picture of teleology-deontics intertwined belief-account of belief-formation is sketched, it would be perhaps profitable to add a short discussion of *descriptivist* belief account.

Nested hierarchy of means-to-ends support, as reconstruction of belief-formation reveals that belief is a reduced form of genuine judgment. The reconstruction of belief-formation shows belief vicinity to genuine judgment, actually its genuine judgment nature.

Here is a trial to systematize stages of belief-formation, included into our reconstruction:

Belief-formation	Teleology: means-to-ends support from below	Deontics: support from lower stages	Descriptive approach to belief
(1) Truth	The goal of belief-formation	Contextualist truth as indirect correspondence as the result of deontic involvement (into belief formation)	Truth as direct correspondence: semantics (psychology not in the foreground)
(2) Objective evidence	Means to truth-end goal	Very thin deontics in evidence, but there nevertheless, supporting truth as indirect correspondence	Just description aimed objective evidence
(3) Transglobal reliabilism	Means to objective evidence end	Shifting from local and global environments to transglobal one brings more normativity with it, supporting objective evidence	Descriptive approach to belief dismisses the role of phenomenology (forthcoming in transglobal environment)
(4) Doxastic sensitivity	Means to transglobal evidentialism end	Doxastic sensitivity is a deontics matter leading to responsibility (in belief-formation), supporting transglobal reliabilism	Descriptive approach to belief tends to stay in local environment
(5) All-in ultima facie doxastic seemings	Means to doxastic sensitivity end	Responsibility as constitutive ingredient of phenomenology	No phenomenology, no deontics normativity, so this <i>basic</i> stage in

		-seemings (Potrc principle), supporting doxastic sensibility	belief-formation is completely dismissed by descriptivist approach to belief
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Belief-formation stages may be characterized in respect to the means-end teleological support that they receive from below and from their deontic involvement, as opposed to the descriptive approach to belief.

.(1) Truth is the main goal of belief-formation. Is there any normativity to be recognized in it, given that it seems to be an objective and descriptive matter? Yes, if truth is construed as indirect correspondence, which is a contextually supported approach to truth. Such deontic involvement at this stage is not particularly strong however, and usually it is absent. Descriptive approach to belief namely prefers taking truth as direct correspondence, so that semantics is in the foreground, and not even belief psychology.

.(2) Objective evidence is the teleological means towards the truth-end upper ultimate goal of belief-formation. The deontic contribution at this stage is rather thin, but it is there nevertheless, as truth gets supported as an indirect form of correspondence. Descriptive approach to belief concentrates itself at the only description aiming objective evidence.

. (3) Transglobal reliabilism is teleological means to the objective evidence end. As one shifts from local to global and then to transglobal environment, one brings increased normativity with it, in support of objective evidence. Descriptive approach to belief rather dismisses the role of phenomenology which is forthcoming in transglobal environment. Notice that local reliability starts with externalism, whereas its transglobal form comes with phenomenological evidence character.

.(4) Doxastic sensibility is the means of supporting transglobal evidentialism end. Doxastic responsibility is a deontic matter, leading to responsibility in belief-formation, in support of transglobal reliabilism. Descriptive approach to belief however tends to stay in local and basically non-normative environment.

. (5) All-in ultima facie doxastic seemings provide the ultimate ground for belief-formation. They are means to support doxastic sensibility end. Deontic sensibility is the constitutive element of phenomenology-seemings, as it is stressed by Potrc principle, supporting doxastic sensibility, and obligation to form one's beliefs in one's best faith, given one's available evidence. Descriptive approach to belief, targeting semantics and psychology, does not really show interest in either phenomenology or deontics. This *basic* stage of belief-formation, as revealed by the former reconstruction, is completely dismissed by descriptivist approach to belief.

Our reconstruction of belief-formation stages shows a dynamical intertwining of teleological stages, in a means-to-ends nested hierarchy, and of their mutual support, as opposed to the descriptive and externalist views of belief. The reconstruction brought beliefs

close to genuine judgments, from which they were obtained in a reductive manner, in order to fit descriptive semantics and psychology involving model.

The lower end of belief-formation hierarchy is subjective and deontic, whereas in the middle, teleological and deontic elements intermingle.

The upper end of belief-formation reconstruction presents objective truth goal. The stress in the lower end of the nested means-ends hierarchy however is subjective and deontic. It involves one's obligation to form beliefs in one's best faith, upon the available seemings supported evidence, as the appropriate basis.

Distribution of teleological and deontic elements in belief-formation nested means-ends hierarchy, with its protruding points is relative though. So truth goal, despite that it is predominantly teleological, already contains deontic elements, although in a rather thin manner. And on the opposite location, all-in doxastic seemings already involve teleological elements, in a non-prevalent manner. But teleology is present along the whole nested means-ends hierarchy, by the very fact that means-ends provides teleological entrance. In the middle of the reconstructed follow-up, one finds a mixture of objective and teleological and of subjective and deontic elements. Transglobal reliabilism (3), being in the very middle of the sequence, nicely joins externalist objective reliability with its narrow phenomenological subjective deontology inviting environment. Objective evidence (2) would not have its means-to truth end support without its teleological directedness. Doxastic sensibility (4) clearly involves deontic responsibility coming from sensibility, and it is as well striving towards the objectivity of its teleological engagement, as support of transglobal reliabilism.

Belief-formation external or descriptive ingredients get disciplined through non-instrumental teleology and deontics.

The current popularity of belief, as we have hinted at, is due to its fitting descriptive and externalist mould. Take the belief that the cat is on the mat. Its principal task seems to be to describe some independently existing reality, say state of affairs, in an objective manner. According to this picture, there is an independently existing state of affairs in the world, expressible as that the cat is on the mat. And then there is someone's psychological directedness at this situation, which objectively refers to it. So belief is a psychological support of descriptive, truth as direct correspondence embracing tool, providing one's relation to reality. The ingredients of this relation are external, although the relation itself is psychological.

But reconstruction of *belief-formation* has shown that there is a *goal* of belief-formation, namely the truth of to be formed belief. It has also shown that this goal could not have been aimed and achieved without normative, deontic ingredients, such as the ones involving doxastic sensibility. Further, the simple external descriptive relation proves to be substituted by a dynamical intertwined enterprise featuring teleological and deontic elements along several dimensions, displaying various kind of rationality.

Assessing the situation for a while, one realizes that descriptive and externalist elements of belief get *disciplined* by teleological and deontic ones. One asks why one forms a belief -- to aim at truth about some matter. And one asks why one is *motivated* to form belief, and to feel phenomenological experiential obligation to go into this direction.

Teleology-deontics intertwining in belief-formation reveals that belief shares several characteristics with genuine judgment: phenomenological basis, commitment, sensibility and responsibility.

Now, what is a *genuine judgment*? If I *judge* that the cat is on the mat, this judgment comes from my *phenomenological* data and situation. In fact, there is no other basis to form a judgment as one's seemings, involving phenomenological basis. Judgment has a goal to be objective, and it is in fact forthcoming in a shape that is fitting to this goal. In order to achieve this, one takes judgment as one's *commitment*. If one judges something, one prefers sticking to it and defend one's position. In order to properly react to judgment supporting data, one needs *sensibility* that takes one in this direction. And one feels as well to be *responsible* for such judgment.

Now realize that belief as well has all of these ingredients: phenomenological basis, commitment, doxastic sensibility and *responsibility*. If this is the case, strong difference between belief and judgment disappears. In fact, belief may be seen as a form of genuine judgment.

Teleology-deontics intertwining also characterizes quasi-agentive account of intentionality.

Most of accounts of intentionality tend to be descriptive, thereby following semantic and psychological belief characteristics that we have outlined at the start of our discussion. If I entertain a thought that the cat is on the mat, according to this approach, I am directed at a fitting mental representation. This one provides the meaning of what I am directed at. The very fact of mental directedness of this act of mine cares for what we have called beliefs psychological ingredient. So, just like the kind of belief that we have discussed at the outset, there is directedness at some described, semantically provided reality, and there is psychological relation assuring mental connection to it. Notice that there is not really anything teleologically constitutive, nor deontically undergird in such a project.

There is though a version of *intentionality* account, besides to many others, whose specificity it is to involve *teleological* and *deontic*, normative elements, and their intertwined nature. Such an account methodologically distinguishes Intentionality I and Intentionality II. Intentionality I is practical. Its main cases figure my pushing the doorknob in order to enter the room, or again my activity of hammering. As it is clear from these examples, there is no descriptive underlying plan in such an account of intentional relation. Intentionality II is normative and deontic, we just said: it figures the *recognition* of my hammering activity by community of workers that I form a part. In hammering and thereby producing a chair I am recognized by my co-workers, and by customers, as a skilfull master in this area. There are deontic ingredients in it, such as my responsible skilfull sensibility and commitment to my work, which get recognized by community of my peers. Notice that intentionality, according to this approach, is coming together of Intentionality I and of Intentionality II in an intertwined manner.

Given that intentionality is close to belief, and that its ingredients are that of genuine judgment, we can say that the intentional belief may perhaps be recognized as a kind of genuine judgment itself. Teleology-deontology intertwining is essential in this, in opposition to descriptive and externalist approaches to belief.

Belief, such as it is predominantly forthcoming in epistemology and ethics, provides a reduced version of genuine judgment, so that it is able to comply with externalist and descriptivist agenda, doing away with teleology-deontics intertwining.

There is a cleavage, a gap between belief and knowledge, between belief and the relevant moral judgment. This cleavage happens because of *reduction* of belief to its *descriptive* role, and doing away with its normative-deontic and teleological intertwined roles, so that descriptive agenda could be approached.

In metaethics, as we already said, one takes moral judgments to be belief-states or again non-belief states: one is either cognitivist or noncognitivist, say expressivist. But these are *reductions* of moral judgments to belief, so that an overall analytic goal of descriptive externalist role can be preserved. It is not difficult to realize that such belief-aiming approaches actually target *judgment*.

In epistemology, similarly, one talks about *belief*, namely justified true belief as a definitory way to get to knowledge. But knowledge may be a matter of genuine judgment as well. So we have again reduction of judgmental knowledge assessment to belief. Suspicion here is that such hurdles as one encounters with Gettier cases are consequences of this reduction of knowledge as epistemic judgment to definitory belief environment, fitting to description of the targeted reality.

Judgmental belief perspective is revived once as virtue epistemology and virtue ethics obtain their support through one's character.

There is a way to reappropriate judgmental perspective in such areas as ethics and epistemology if one first adopts *virtue* approach in these areas. Knowledge is then a virtue obtained through one's cognitive background provided by one's character that prompts formation of a judgment, mostly instantaneously, but of course from the rich reasons containing background, in a form of chromatic illumination. Then these genuine judgments supporting matters are illuminating reasons.

Similarly, and perhaps in an even clearer manner, judgments involving defeasible reasons come from the character which assembled them, in the area of ethics.

Realizing that belief is actually genuine judgment, although reduced in the externalist and descriptive roles, comes from integrating belief into one's *character*. Then, belief becomes genuine judgment in virtue epistemology and in virtue ethics.

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