

# DO THE EXTERNALISM AND THE INTERNALISM IN THE DEBATE OVER EPISTEMIC JUSTIFICATION HAVE INDEED THE SAME SUBJECT?

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

THE internalist-externalist debate is one of the major themes in contemporary epistemology.<sup>1</sup> It concerns the third condition of knowledge: justification or other property that makes true belief knowledge. The aim of this essay is to consider the internalist and externalist positions in order to determine whether or not, when they argue about justification, they are talking about the same things.

I will argue that they are talking about the same matter, but from different perspectives. Namely, internalism is trying to give an account of justification from the first person perspective, whereas externalism prefers the third person perspective. Moreover, the internalist-externalist distinction is connected with the standard meaning of the internal as “introspectible by subject”. Yet the ambiguities of the debate are a consequence of the fact that both sides might be a matter of degree with respect to the three dimensions of justification (i.e. grounds for justification, adequacy of grounds, and the relation between belief and its ground). It is possible to be internalist or externalist in one, two or three of the dimensions of justification. In my opinion, this distinction offers us a good way to avoid confusions between partly internalist and partly externalist theories of justification.

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<sup>1</sup> The term “externalism” was introduced to epistemology by D. ARMSTRONG ([1973], p. 157). He labeled the causal and reliability theories of knowledge as “external”. These theories had already been proposed (although without this label) by such philosophers as F. RAMSEY ([1929], see [1978], 126), A. GOLDMAN ([1967/2004]) and F. DRETSKE ([1971/2004]). L. Bonjour was using the term “externalism” in 1978. He described the Armstrong’s view as «an ‘Externalist’ solution» (BONJOUR [1978], p. 6). In 1980, in the *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* were appeared papers of A. Goldman and L. Bonjour that in fact have initiated the discussion between internalists and externalists in epistemology. They used Armstrongian label “externalism” and proposed the label “internalism” as its antagonist. «[M]uch of contemporary epistemology takes place in the shadow of the internalism/externalism debate» (FUMERTON [1988], p. 443; see also ZIEMINSKA [1998], p. 54).

In order to achieve this goal, I will explain of the two sides of the debate and present arguments in favour of and against them. During the exposition I will emphasise the two different perspectives of the debate: the first person and third person perspectives. Finally, I will try to offer some kind of systematic order to the debate according to the three dimensions of justification.

## 2. INTERNALIST THEORY OF JUSTIFICATION

### 2. 1. *Cognitive access and first person perspective*

The traditional concept of knowledge, challenged by E. Gettier ([1963/2004]), holds that to be knowledge is to be justified true belief (hereafter JTB). In other words, what distinguishes knowledge from merely true belief, or lucky guessing, is that it is based on some form of justification. That is a reason why the mature debate between internalism and externalism has focused on justification, which traditionally had been interpreted inwardly as internalistic (although without this label). Initially externalists, refusing to accept this traditional, internalistic conception of justification, were refusing to accept also the word “justification”.<sup>2</sup> However the development of externalistic theories of knowledge has led them to formulate a new externalistic conception of justification (as this element, that true belief “epistemizes”, i.e. makes true belief knowledge).

In that context, the debate between internalism and externalism concerns the question of a subject’s cognitive access to justifiers (Goldman [1980], p. 30; Bonjour [1980/2004], p. 180). Internalism is a position, which holds that a believer must have cognitive access to justifiers, i.e. such factors that are justifying her beliefs. Externalism rejects this requirement.

Moreover, the standard internalist theory of justification requires cognitive access to *all* the factors that make a belief justified. There are two possible versions of this condition: (i) the *strong* one, when the believer is required to have *actual* cognitive grasp to factors by reflection, and (ii) the *weak* one, which requires only the *dispositional* grasp, i.e. that a subject be in principle capable of obtaining such cognitive access by the appropriate attention of his reflective faculties (Bonjour [1992], pp. 132-133).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Armstrong, Dretske and Nozick did not use the term “justification”, but only Dretske has refused this term explicitly. Plantinga uses term “warrant” instead of “justification”.

<sup>3</sup> W. ALSTON ([1988/2004]) specifies the three models of internalism, as follows: (PI) Perspectival Internalism: «Only what is within the subject’s perspective in the sense of being something the subject knows or justifiably believes can serve to justify» (p. 219). This is a reconstruction of Bonjour’s position. (CI) Consciousness Internalism: «Only those states of affairs of which the subject is actually conscious or aware can serve to justify» (p. 219). This is a reconstruction of P. MOSER’S ([1985], p. 174) position. Goldman labels this kind of internalism as the “strong” one. (AI) Accessibility Internalism: «Only that to which the

Internalism assumes “the authority of first person point of view” on the matter of her experience. In other words, the believer’s privileged access to her own experiences. In order to evaluate epistemologically our beliefs, we need just these sorts of data, which are available to the subject in introspection or reflection. Therefore epistemic justification should be made from the perspective of the subject, i.e. justification is to be internal<sup>4</sup> to the subject.

This kind of assumption grows up from a deontological conception of justification, i.e. that appeals to epistemic duty or intellectual responsibility: if somebody has to fulfil the duty, she should know the duty (Plantinga [1993], pp. 15-25). Furthermore, it has its roots in Cartesian idea of incorrigible self-consciousness. According to Descartes, knowledge of the external world is exposed to sceptical objections, and therefore the foundation of human knowledge should rest on the “certainty” of the dates of the self-consciousness. The only warrant justification then has is to commence from first person perspective (Kornblith ([2001], pp. 4-7).

There are two models of internalist justification, namely: foundationalism and coherentism.<sup>5</sup> Foundationalism is an intrinsically Cartesian way of avoiding the so-called epistemic infinite regress problem. To avoid an infinite (or vicious) hierarchy of justified beliefs in order to obtain any justified belief, foundationalists argue that there are some self-justifying beliefs or a group of basic (i.e. self-warranting or *a priori*) beliefs. Additionally, they are cognitively accessible by a subject in reflection (or introspection). Other beliefs are justified in virtue of inferential relation with these basic beliefs.

The second model of internalist justification is offered by coherentism. In order to avoid the regress problem in justifying beliefs, the beliefs should co-

subject has cognitive access in some strong form can be a justifier» (p. 219). This can be a reconstruction of R. CHISHOLM’s ([1989], p. 76) position.

<sup>4</sup> The definitions make use of the concept of the internal in the standard epistemological sense as the accessible by introspection or reflection. Sometimes in the internalism-externalism controversy a different concept of the internal appears. It is the internal in biological sense as what is within the organism’s nervous system or simply within the organism. The first epistemological sense of the internal is distinctive for the epistemic internalism-externalism controversy and for the theory of justification. The second, biological sense is distinctive for semantic internalism-externalism controversy in the philosophy of mind and language. Using biological sense of the internal in epistemic controversy could generate some misunderstanding and lead to rejecting the epistemic internal-external distinction as such.

<sup>5</sup> However, it has to be noted, both foundationalism and coherentism do not have to be just internalist. They are broader categories that could be applied to the different distinction over justification. On the other hand, BONJOUR ([1980/2004], p. 179), for instance, claims that foundationalism could be also externalist position or at least lead to such position.

here with each other within the set of beliefs of the subject. In other words, to be justified for the belief *p*, means that the belief *p* coheres with overall set of beliefs. The beliefs are supporting each other in virtue of “well-fitting” into the rest of beliefs (*strong* version), or just not contradicting with the other beliefs (*weak* version) (BonJour ([1980/2004]). A subject who has a cognitive access to the set of beliefs notes the coherence.

## 2. 2. *Objections to internalist justification*

The basic idea behind internalism concerns the cognitive access of the subject to the factors that justified his beliefs. This first person demand bears however some serious difficulties noted by externalists.

The standard objection is the infinitive regress in justification (Dancy [1985], p. 47). In order to obtain the justification for one’s belief in virtue of one’s cognitive access, one has to acquire the cognitive access to the former cognitive access and so on. In other words, one has to gain access to all justifiers on higher levels and *ad infinitum* (Hetherington [1991], p. 247). To avoid this consequence we have to assume some factor, which does not need more justification (i.e. some foundation). But we can do that just in virtue of something external to the believer to protect him against the *vicious* circle (or the mistake of *petitio principii*) in the justification in question. Therefore, in effect, we exceed the internalist requirement of justification (Sturgeon [1991], p. 105). Foundationalism could direct us to the externalism.

But also coherentism, as the second version of internalism, is not able to avoid the criticism. There is a group of so-called “isolation objections” that regards the relation between a set of internal (accessible), coherent beliefs (about the external world) and the external world. The first, the “alternative coherent systems objection”, concerns the lack of criteria for discrimination between coherent sets of beliefs to establish the truth connection with the external world. There is no internal factor, which serves that purpose, and in virtue of only internal justification (accessible by the subject – within the first person perspective) we are not able to determine any external candidate to that function (BonJour [1985/2004], p. 145). Even if we assume the difference between *logical consistency* and *coherence* of sets of our internal beliefs, there is no ground to choose one of the sets of beliefs as more adequate to represent the external world. The beliefs could remain more subjectively justified, but not true, because there is no indication as to which of them are true or objectively justified.

In fact, as it is expressed by the second, “input objection”, the coherence is «purely a matter of *internal* relation between the components of the belief system; it depends in no way on any sort of relation between the system of beliefs and anything external to that system» (BonJour [1985/2004], p. 146).

Justification then is constrained just by internal and accessible factors to the subject. There is no external “input” to this internal world. To substantiate the objection, we can say that there is no possible distinction between subjectively justified beliefs of habitants of the Cartesian demon-world (which deceives us) and the normal world. From the first person perspective it lacks the explanation of the external “input” to our internal world.

The beliefs could be justified in virtue of their coherence, but at the same time be false and inadequate to the objective reality. Therefore, subjectively justified belief does not guarantee knowledge, because it lacks the fulfilment of the truth connection. It is a key point of the third objection – the “problem of truth”. Namely, there is no appropriate connection between internalist justification and the truth, which is the essential element of the standard definition of knowledge (as JTB). The theory is not «truth-conductive» (BonJour [1985/2004], pp. 146-147).

The separate kind of objection regards the general architecture of internalism and is directed against its deontological commitment. To fulfil the high demands of autonomy and responsibility for his beliefs, the subject must have cognitive access to all justifiers. According to Goldman ([1999/2001]) this requirement is too demanding, because it assumes the “guidance and deontological” role of epistemology. That is, if someone has to fulfil his epistemic duty (e.g. to justify his beliefs), he must know or be able to get known the duty, because if someone does not know what is his epistemic duty, we must not expect him to fulfil the duty or his responsibility to it; and therefore, we have to assume the condition of access to justifiers (pp. 207-211). But the requirement of complete justification for all beliefs by subject, just «overintellectualize[s] and overrationalize[s] the notion of knowledge» (Goldman [1976/2004], p. 102), because it is not realistic for human ordinary reasoning.

The ordinary reasoning or “default reasoning” (in terms of K. Bach) does not require such a kind of justification in virtue of cognitive access by the subject (Bach [1985/2004]). In such reasoning, humans are taking most factors for granted and “jump to conclusions” spontaneously. They are justified as long as the believer is able to discriminate the normal belief-forming situation from an abnormal one. Usually the believer does not need any kind of meta-reflection of his beliefs. And only if he notices the changes in his ordinary context of forming the given belief, he has to reflect on his background beliefs.<sup>6</sup> Only in such situations does a subject need to scrutinize his beliefs in order to orient and assess them. It is not necessary to demand an exhaustive first person jus-

<sup>6</sup> It is the issue that seems to be not clear enough in Bach’s case. He assumes that in abnormal belief-forming situations, we are able to scrutinize our beliefs. But in virtue of what are we able to do this? It seems to need some kind of *implicit* cognitive access, but Bach does not label this in that way (see BACH [1985/2004], p. 211).

tification for our ordinary reasoning and actions, because «jumping to conclusions enables us to form beliefs much more freely than explicit consideration would allow» (p. 208).

### 3. EXTERNALIST THEORY OF JUSTIFICATION

#### 3. 1. *Reliabilism and third person perspective*

Externalism is trying to offer a position which avoids all the above mentioned objections. It simply rejects the requirement that *all* factors, which make a belief justified, should be cognitively accessible to the subject. At least *some* of the justifiers could be out of the cognitive grasp of the believer. In other words, we neither have to assume the first person perspective nor, in effect, the privileged access to justifiers in order to obtain the justified belief in question. The most prominent current version of externalism as a theory of justification is reliabilism<sup>7</sup>, although originally externalism was proposed (by Goldman, Armstrong and Dretske) as a theory of knowledge in response to the Gettier's counter examples.

According to Goldman ([1976/2004]), who explicitly formulated a reliabilist theory of justification, a belief is epistemologically justified in virtue of a reliable forming process.<sup>8</sup> Justification of belief depends on the global reliability

<sup>7</sup> The other versions of "justificational" externalism are offered by R. Nozick and A. Plantinga. However, both of them are not directly the theories of justification in standard sense, and thus are not in the scope of this essay. Nozick is the author of the conditional definition of knowledge where two subjunctive conditionals replace internalist notion of justification. If you know that *p*, you have true belief that *p*, and also in the close possible worlds you would accept *p* when *p* is true and you would not accept *p* when *p* is false. Nozick agrees with the sceptic that we do know that we are not brains in a vat. But he claims that we know all the trivial things we think we know. The only way to accept the two theses is to deny the Principle of Closure: I do not know that I am not brain in a vat, I do know that if I am a brain in a vat I am not writing or reading a text. According to Nozick knowledge is not closed under known logical implication. But is it right to deny the Principle of Closure? If we have trivial knowledge, the knowledge implies that the skeptic is wrong. If I know that I am reading a text on Earth, it is not true that I am on Alfa Centauri floating in a tank (NOZICK [1981/2004]). Whereas Plantinga offers the theory of *warrant*, defined as «whatever it is that distinguishes knowledge from mere belief» (BONJOUR [2002], p. 253). He rejects the term "justification" as inwardly internalist, and this as consequently biased in favour of this position (PLANTINGA [1993], pp. 46-47).

<sup>8</sup> GOLDMAN ([1967/2004]), with reference to Gettier's problem, suggests originally adding to the standard definition of knowledge (as JTB) the condition of the proper causal connection between belief and fact that makes it true. But the causal connection is not sufficient for knowledge and the connection can be accidental. In ([1976/2004]) Goldman replaces the simple causal theory of knowledge with some causal-reliabilist one: a true belief is knowledge if it is produced by a reliable process. Recently, GOLDMAN ([1992]) claimed that knowledge is a prototype concept and that analyzing it by means of necessary and

of the cognitive process that has produced the belief (p. 101). A belief-forming process is reliable if most of the beliefs it produces are true. Thus, this approach assumes a strong connection to truth or “truth conductivity”. As we have noted, the internalist theory of justification was charged with the objection that there is no truth-connection. Whereas reliabilism just presupposes that if there were not an adequate connection to truth, the reliable process would not yield a true belief. In order to qualify the belief as knowledge, we do not have to require that a believer have any sort of cognitive access to the adequacy of the belief-forming process. According to Goldman, this kind of requirement is too demanding.

«My theory requires no justification for external-world propositions that derives entirely from self-warranting propositions. It requires only, in effect, that beliefs in the external world be suitably caused, where ‘suitably’ comprehends a process or mechanism that not only produces true belief in the actual situation, but would not produce false belief in relevant counterfactual situations. If one wishes, one can so employ the term ‘justification’ that belief causation of *this* kind counts as justification» (Goldman [1976/2004], p. 101).

A true belief is knowledge if it is produced by a reliable process, that is by process which produces true beliefs in the actual world and which would produce them in relevant counterfactual situations. A believer does not have any evidence for what he knows, simply because he does not have cognitive access to all justifiers. «But his own belief-state, together with the circumstances he is in, could function for somebody *else* (God perhaps) as completely reliable evidence, in particular as a completely reliable sign, of the truth of the thing he believes» (Armstrong [1973/2004], p. 85). The first person point of view is replaced by the third person point of view. There is an evident difference of perspectives in the cases of internalist and externalist justification.

This position offers some advantages in the comparison with internalism. Namely, reliabilism avoids the problem of regress in justification by evoking the external, objective ground for a belief in question. It avoids also the deontological commitment of internalism and the “too demanding” requirements for the subject (i.e. cognitive access to *all* justifiers) in order to justify a belief in question. Thanks to that, reliabilists are able to ascribe knowledge also to higher animals, infants, and unsophisticated adults. This seems to be intuitively true, but in the case of the high standard of the first person perspective, it was impossible to assume that such beings have knowledge. Finally, there is a strong truth conductivity that helps to avoid the difficulties of coherentist’s version of internalism.

jointly sufficient conditions is useless (and proposed “virtue reliabilism”: he replaced reliability with what is considered reliable).

Truth-conductivity is in fact one of the specific features of reliabilist, or externalist in principal, theories of justification (and knowledge). According to Armstrong ([1973/2004]) a belief is knowledge if there is a law-like connection between the belief's subject and belief's object. The subject of knowledge is like a reliable thermometer that shows the right temperature and the laws of nature warrant the truth of the indication (p. 75). But a belief that is a reliable indicator of truth may not be knowledge when a process that is not reliable produces it. In other words, a subject holding a belief in question could be regarded in proper circumstances as a "reliable indicator" of a true fact, which corresponds to a belief in question. This approach assumes the third person perspective, because in order to obtain a reliable connection to truth, we do not need the cognitive access of the subject (from first person perspective): S knows that *p*, if and only if the *p* is the case.<sup>9</sup>

### 3. 2. *Objections to externalist justification*

The above externalist theory of justification meets criticism by internalists. According to them, in the case of reliabilism, the believer lacks the reasons for thinking that a belief is true. Replacement of first person perspective (with cognitive access) with third person perspective results in there being no grounds for charging the believer with responsibility for his beliefs (BonJour [1992], p. 134). The internalist objections are construed in terms of counter examples: when (1) reliabilist condition is not satisfied, but a believer intuitively seems to be justified in holding a belief – the case of Cartesian "demon-evil world", or (2) vice versa – the case of "clairvoyance".

The first objection regards the *necessity* of the fulfilment of the reliabilist requirement for beliefs to be justified. In other words, «whether *only* beliefs that satisfy that condition are justified» (BonJour [2002], p. 246). R. Foley ([1985/2004]) has formulated the counter examples of the "demon-evil world" case<sup>10</sup>: when the reliabilist condition is not satisfied, but the believer seems to be justified in her beliefs. According to that "thought experiment", we can imagine a Cartesian demon-style world. In this world beliefs of given S are false, because they are caused by an evil demon (i.e. her sensory and introspective experience is wholly, carefully controlled by a demon). But at the same time they are presented exactly in the same way as in the normal world. «So, if S somehow were to be switched instantaneously from his actual situation to

<sup>9</sup> It is remarkable that also other externalists, such as Nozick and Dretske, in defining knowledge, are using this kind of strategy: replacing of justification condition in the JTB definition of knowledge with a different kind of counterfactual condition.

<sup>10</sup> A similar formulation of the problem of "evil-demon world" we can find also in COHEN ([1984], p. 283) and GINET ([1985], pp. 178-179).



the corresponding situation in this other [normal – P. Sz.] world, he would not distinguish any difference, regardless of how hard he tried» (p. 168). In other words, the malicious demon's victims have the same grounds for their beliefs as we have for ours, but their beliefs are unjustified in the light of reliabilism as they are produced by unreliable processes (i.e. processes that create mostly or entirely false beliefs). However, these beliefs are indistinguishable (similar) from ours in normal world. But in our world, these sorts of beliefs (in particular perceptual or visual ones) seem to be rationally justified. Therefore, reliability seems not to be a necessary requirement to be justified belief.

The second objection challenges the *sufficiency* of the externalist conditions for belief to be justified. To consider this point, BonJour ([1985/2004]) has proposed to analyze the “clairvoyance case”. Let's suppose that there is a person N (Norman), who possesses the clairvoyance power. However, he is not aware of that fact (i.e. he has no evidence or reason for or against that possibility). In virtue of that power one day a person N comes to belief that the president is in New York. Although, N does not have any evidence do that matter, it is, in fact, the case. So, his belief is true and results from a reliable process only. According to BonJour, if a belief in question satisfies condition of reliabilist justification, but is the case of irrational belief, then we should not assess the belief as justified. In other words, the reliable clairvoyant person meets all the reliabilist conditions and yet his beliefs are irrational and unjustified (pp. 189-192). The third person perspective is not enough. In order to justify a belief, we should require that a believer has some kind of cognitive grasp of reasons for thinking that a belief is true.

The most crucial objection for reliabilism concerns the specification of the (reliable) process that is supposed to confer knowledge and justification. According to reliabilists, a belief is justified in virtue of the reliability of a *general* sort of cognitive process (that forming the belief in question). «But at what *level* of generality should the relevant process be characterized?» (BonJour [2002], p. 250). The problem of *generality* was raised by R. Feldman ([1985]) with respect to Goldman's position. She distinguished between the *token* of a belief-forming process (i.e. the proper sequence of events that results in holding a belief) and the *type* one (i.e. a class of proper belief-forming processes). Reliability seems to be the property of *type* belief-forming processes, not the *token* one, and therefore the *type* processes are responsible for justification. Whereas, the *token* belief-forming process is always an instance of many *types* of belief-forming processes (p. 159; see also Plantinga [1988], pp. 28-29). For instance, a *token* belief-forming process that results in the belief that today, Wednesday, is a sunny day, is a case of many following *type* belief-forming processes: of perception, of seeing, of all that take place on Wednesday, of that result in true belief, and so on. So, although the belief is a result of concrete *token* belief-forming processes, this *token* process could be ranked to many *type*

belief-forming processes. The different *types* have a different range of truth-making, and we do not know which of them result in justifying the belief in question. If *types* processes were chosen too liberally (broadly), then the unjustified belief could be counted as justified. But if they were chosen too rigorously (narrowly), they could have just one case (i.e. exactly the *type* process in question).

Chisholm and Foley express a similar dilemma. Chisholm ([1988/2004]) argues that we are not able to obtain an exhaustive description of the processes, which allow us to ascribe to somebody a true belief (pp. 121-122). We can just offer a description of a process «which is equivalent to the disjunction of all those successful belief forming processes» (p. 121), which provided as many justification as true beliefs. Chisholm gives an example of a man who has arrived at true belief that there are nine planets. But he has acquired this belief «by reading the tea-leaves on a Friday afternoon, twenty-seven minutes after having visited his uncle» ([1982], p. 29). The belief in question then satisfies the reliabilist condition of justification, and moreover, this belief is true: according to reliabilism only justified beliefs are true beliefs. Therefore, as Chisholm concludes, reliabilism misses the difference between true belief and justified belief.

Foley ([1985/2004]) also notices that reliable processes could be specified narrowly or broadly. But when reliable processes are determined narrowly, it effects every single true and justified belief in question as well. According to Folley, this approach is true but trivial, because «any true belief can be construed as being the product of a reliable cognitive process» (p. 175). However, when we specify a reliable process too broadly, reliabilism is challenged by “evil-demon world” counter examples.

#### 4. THREE DIMENSIONS OF INTERNALISM-EXTERNALISM DEBATE

Having presented the positions and arguments, I would like now to give a systematic order of the debate. I presuppose like W. Alston ([1988/2004]) and K. Kim ([1993]) that there are at least three conditions for a belief to be justified: (1) the belief must have grounds, (2) the grounds must be adequate, and (3) there must be a basing relation between the belief and its grounds. Each of those three elements could be the dimension for internalism-externalism debate. Moreover, neglect of these dimensions could result in ambiguities of the controversy itself.

##### 4. 1. *According to the grounds of beliefs*

In respect to the grounds of justification, one can be an internalist or externalist dependently from acceptance of some sort of things as possible grounds for justification. The internalist claims that the only possible grounds are psy-

chological states: doxastic or non-doxastic. Whereas, the externalist holds that for some belief its justifying grounds can be some external fact. The examples of such internalism are Bonjour, Chisholm and also Alston, who claim that the grounds of a belief in justification must be cognitive states of something directly accessible to the subject in reflection. And examples of ground externalism are theories of knowledge proposed by Armstrong, Dretske, Goldman and Nozick. According to Armstrong, what makes true belief knowledge is the belief being related in terms of a nomological relation to the fact that makes the belief true. In Goldman's account, the nomological relation is replaced by a causal relation, and in Nozick's proposal, by a counterfactual. In Kim's opinion, there is no ground externalist theory of justification, because «most ground externalists seem to be interested not in analyzing epistemic justification, but only in describing the conditions under which a true belief qualifies as knowledge» (p. 308). I think that it is true, with the exception of Goldman. In his later works ([1979], [1986]), he explicit offers the reliabilist theory of justification.<sup>11</sup>

#### 4. 2. *According to adequacy of the grounds*

The second dimension of the internalism-externalism debate is the adequacy of the grounds of the beliefs. The question is what is the *criterion* of the adequacy of the grounds. Externalism defends the adequacy of the justifying grounds independently of the mental access by a believer. Whereas standard internalist (e.g. Chisholm) claim that the grounds are adequate when the believer thinks he has belief in question "likely-to be true".

Adequacy externalists are all mentioned above ground externalists and also such ground internalists as Alston. Process reliabilism is adequacy externalism because the criterion of adequacy is reliability as «propensity of producing more true beliefs than false ones» (Kim [1993], p. 309). The criterion is externalist in virtue of non-introspectibility to the subject. Alston (in his hybrid theory) is also an adequacy externalist, because he claims that a piece of evidence is adequate for the justification of belief only if it makes the belief objectively probable (p. 309). Following Kim, we can state that objective probability is probability «independent of the perspective of a cognitive agent» (p. 309).

<sup>11</sup> In order to be a ground externalist it is enough to claim that some justifying grounds can be external. External to believer means not introspectible by her. Unconsciousness cognitive processes are not introspectible. And Goldman's reliabilism accepts this processes as justifiers. So, in my opinion, this position is ground externalism according to justification (not only to knowledge) (see also a similar account in ZIEMINSKA [1998]).

#### 4. 3. *According to the connection between beliefs and their grounds*

The third dimension of internalist-externalist debate is the basing relation between belief and its adequate grounds. As J. Pollock ([1986]) noted, it is possible to have adequate grounds for a belief in question but in virtue of some odd basis:

«A man might have adequate evidence for believing that his wife is unfaithful to him, he might systematically ignore that evidence. However, when his mother, whom he knows to be totally unreliable in such matters and biased against his wife, tells him that his wife is unfaithful to him, he believes it on that basis» (p. 81).

In order to be the ground of a belief, there must be a proper connection between them. In other words, a justified belief should have adequate grounds, and be properly resting on them as well. Internalists sustain that the basing connection is a second-order (or higher-order) belief. This belief concerns the proper relation between a belief in question and its adequate grounds (Kim [1993], p. 311). To be justified in believing, a believer needs a higher-level belief about the basing relation. Whereas, externalists require a causal relation between a belief in question and its adequate grounds. As examples of connection internalism, one could be point Foley, Lehrer, and all other standard internalists. All ground externalists are connection externalists as well. According to them, a belief is connected to an external state of affairs in virtue of some causal (or nomological, or counterfactual) relation.<sup>12</sup>

### 5. CONCLUSIONS

Some epistemologists both on the internalist and externalist sides suggest that internalism-externalism distinction itself is useless. S. Haack, for instance, assesses that the distinction is «not robust enough to carry any serious weight» ([1993], p. 2) and proposes the distinction between “evidentialist” and “extrinsic” theories instead of the former (p. 226). Whereas Goldman confesses that he is finding the categories «“objective” and “subjective” more “useful”» ([1986], p. 72). And Plantinga ([1988]) appears rather to offer the distinction between internalism and reliabilism. Actually, all of them are using the term “reliabilism” and hardly ever “externalism”. According to BonJour «reliabilism is the most prominent externalist view» ([1992], p. 133). “Reliabilism” is in fact a more common term than “externalism” in contemporary epistemology. But intrinsically, it is just a version of the externalism.

<sup>12</sup> Some of the hybrid theories (mainly internalist) could be called as connection externalism. ALSTON, FELDMAN and CONEE ([1985]) accept a causal connection between cognitive states (as a ground) and a belief in question.

As I think, most of these opinions are the consequences of ambiguity, which arises from the different perspectives in the debate between internalism and externalism over justification. They are arguing about the same thing, namely, the factors that make merely true belief knowledge – about justifiers. But they offer different answers and arguments in virtue of the two different points of view. And, therefore, they are talking past each other. Internalism proposes the description of the justifiers from first person perspective and assumes cognitive access of believer to grounds of his beliefs. It is supported by strong intuition that we (as human cognitive agents) should know the reasons of our actions. Therefore it implies also some kind of epistemic deontology.

Whereas externalism is an approach from the third person perspective. In order to justify a (true) belief, we need some kind of truth conductivity that could guarantee the adequacy between the belief and its ground. To that end, the first person perspective is too narrow. To obtain knowledge (as justified true belief) we need something more than just cognitive access to justifiers. We need the criterion that will guarantee the truth connection. The criterion seems to be the reliability of the forming-belief process. This attempt then assumes, the more objective third person perspective. And it is harmonious with the naturalistic tendency in contemporary epistemology (see Quine [1969/2004]). We should rest our description of knowledge on the base of scientific, objective, and verifical evidence. And science is built from third person perspective to guarantee an intersubjectivity of its data.<sup>13</sup>

Additionally, I think that the other reason for the ambiguity in the internalist-externalist debate is connected with the different possible dimensions of the distinction itself. Both internalism and externalism could be a matter of degree. One can be internalist, or respectively externalist, according to grounds of beliefs and/or their adequacy and/or the connection between the beliefs and their grounds. It is possible to join the dimensions from different perspectives and offer some kind of hybrid theory. The classical example of the latter is Alston ([1988/2004]). He is an internalist (he makes the cognitive access a requirement) only on the level of the ground of justification, where-

<sup>13</sup> «Externalism seems to have two sources: post-Gettier analysis of knowledge and Quine's project of naturalized epistemology. Nozick's counterfactual analysis of knowledge and Plantinga's account of warrant as a proper function are first of all attempts to resolve Gettier's problem. They use conceptual analysis without close connection with sciences. But for instance Dretske's and Goldman's accounts of knowledge or justification are closely connected with science (although also connected with Gettier problem). It is possible to be more connected with sciences (CHURCHLAND [1987]; STICH [1983]) and to exclude such connection in direct sense (as internalism seems to do). And externalism, in my opinion, is between those positions. Externalism is an attempt to join them: not to give up traditional epistemological concepts (like belief, knowledge or justification) and to be more scientific» (ZIEMINSKA [1998], p. 68).

as he is externalist (he does not make the access a requirement) on the level of the adequacy of the grounds.<sup>14</sup> In order to avoid the confusion between the different internalist and externalist positions in the debate, we should be aware of these dimensions. However, the different dimensions do not allow us to conclude that internalists and externalists are talking about different things. There is a difference in the perspectives and the approaches, but not in the subject matter.<sup>15</sup>

To conclude, in my opinion the standard versions of internalism and externalism are giving separately just part of the truth about justification. That is a reason why they are passing each other while claiming to offer a complete description of justification. Whereas, in fact, they are in some sense complementary. The antagonists' theories arise from different perspectives. However, these perspectives appear to be equally important components of a complete description of justification. That is, the complete account of justification seems to require both the first person perspective and third person perspective: a believer needs both subjective and objective certifications of his beliefs. And, then, internalism rightly emphasises that the believer, in order to be justified in his beliefs, should have some cognitive grasp of justifiers. At the same time, externalism seems to be equally right when insists that justification (objectively) should rest on a connection to truth. However, while they claim to offer the complete account of justification, they are mistaken. The concept of justification seems to need both of these factors. I think that this intuition lies behind the proposals of so-called hybrid theories, like Alston's ([1988/2004]) for example, which try to combine these two different approaches of internalism and externalism.

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<sup>14</sup> Other hybrid internalist-externalist positions are defended by SWAIN ([1988]), SOSA ([1991]) and SENNETT ([1992]); in some sense also by LEHRER ([1986/2004]).

<sup>15</sup> Internalism-externalism controversy seems to be similar to the older debate between idealism and realism (see VAHID [1998], p. 236). Besides important differences, there is in fact some analogy: both realism-idealism controversy and externalism-internalism one are grounded in similar deeply-rooted intuitions (is the world and justification completely dependent on subject or not) and we can hardly see any perspective to resolve these controversies (PLANTINGA [1993]).

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ABSTRACT: *The internalist-externalist debate is one of the major themes in contemporary epistemology. It concerns the third condition of knowledge: justification or some other property that makes true belief knowledge. The aim of this essay is to consider the internalist and externalist positions in order to determine whether or not, when they argue about justification, they are talking about the same things. I will argue that they are talking about the same matter, but from different perspectives. Namely, internalism is trying to give an account of justification from the first person perspective, whereas externalism prefers the third person perspective. Moreover, the internalist-externalist distinction is connected with the standard meaning of the internal as "introspectible by subject". Yet the ambiguities of the debate are a consequence of the fact that both sides might be a matter of degree with respect to the three dimensions of justification (i.e. grounds for justification, adequacy of grounds, and the relation between belief and its ground). It is possible to be internalist or externalist in one, two or three of the dimensions of justification. In my opinion, this distinction offers us a good way to avoid confusions between partly internalist and partly externalist theories of justification. In order to achieve this goal, I will explain of the two sides of the debate and present arguments in favour of and against them. During the exposition I will emphasise the two different perspectives of the debate: the first person and third person perspectives. Finally, I will try to offer some kind of systematic order to the debate according to the tree dimensions of justification.*