

## Horwich on the Value of Truth

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*Abstract:* On the normativity objection to Horwich’s minimalist theory of truth, his theory fails to capture the value of truth. In response to this objection, he argues that his minimalist theory of truth is compatible with the value of truth. On his view, the concept of truth is not constitutively normative, but the value of true beliefs can be explained instead by the belief-truth norm that we ought to want our beliefs to be true, and the value of true beliefs expressed in this norm is a moral value. I accept a deflationary theory of truth, according to which truth is too thin a concept to be constituted by any substantial norms. Thus I agree that the concept of truth is not constitutively normative. In this paper, however, I argue that the alleged value of true beliefs can be better explained in terms of epistemic normativity rather than moral normativity.


*Keywords:* Horwich; deflationism about truth; the value of truth; moral values; epistemic values.

### 1. Introductory remarks

According to Paul Horwich’s minimalist theory of truth, the meaning of the truth predicate ‘is true’ is fixed by our underived acceptance of instances

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of the equivalence schema, ‘The proposition *that p* is true if and only if *p*.’ One important problem with this view is the so-called ‘normativity objection to minimalism.’ Many philosophers such as Michael Dummett (1959), Crispin Wright (1992), Hilary Putnam (1994a; 1994b), and Robert Brandom (1994) argue that our concept of truth is constitutively (or intrinsically) normative. On their views, we *ought* to speak and believe the truth, and so the concept of truth is to be understood in normative terms such as ‘what one *ought* to believe.’ But it seems that Horwich’s minimalism cannot capture this kind of *evaluative* character of truth. The reason is straightforward. Instances of ‘the proposition *that p* is true if and only if *p*’ merely tell us *when* beliefs possess the property of being true, and so these instances are completely silent on the question of whether its possession is *desirable* or *valuable*. Therefore, it seems that Horwich’s minimalism fails to capture the value of true beliefs (cf. Dummett 1959, 230–31; Brandom 1994, 17).

However, Horwich (2010; 2013) argues that his minimalist theory of truth is compatible with the value of truth. On his view, the concept of truth is not constitutively normative, but the value of true beliefs can be explained instead by the belief-truth norm that we ought to want our beliefs to be true, and the value of true beliefs expressed in this norm is a moral value. Many epistemologists take true beliefs as having a fundamental epistemic value rather than a moral value (see, e.g., Goldman 2001; Sosa 2001; Alston 2005; David 2014; Sylvan 2018). Thus, it is well worth examining whether true beliefs are indeed morally valuable.

I accept a deflationary theory of truth, according to which truth is too thin a concept to be constituted by any substantial norms (see Lee 2017). Thus, I agree with Horwich that the concept of truth is not constitutively normative. In this paper, however, I argue that the alleged value of true beliefs relevant to the normativity objection can be better explained in terms of epistemic normativity rather than moral normativity.

This paper proceeds as follows. In section 2, I introduce Horwich’s view that the value of true beliefs relevant to the normativity objection is moral. In section 3, I argue that the alleged value of true beliefs can be better explained in terms of epistemic normativity rather than moral normativity. Finally, in section 4, I address some possible objections that Horwich could raise against my alternative proposal.

## 2. Horwich's defense for the value of truth as a moral value

As pointed out before, on Horwich's minimalist theory of truth, the meaning of the truth predicate 'is true' is fixed by our underived acceptance of instances of the equivalence schema, 'The proposition *that p* is true if and only if *p*.' On this deflationary conception of truth, there is complete cognitive equivalence between the left-hand side of the biconditional and its right-hand side, and there is nothing else to say about truth other than what the truth predicate does; and the truth predicate serves only as a device of generalization, semantic ascent, and certain other logical or expressive functions, and so truth is not a substantial concept. In particular, on Horwich's view, the truth predicate is not an empirical predicate—such as 'red,' 'tree,' and 'magnetic'—which expresses a substantial, naturalistic property, but rather a logical predicate which expresses a non-substantial, logical property, which has no underlying nature (see Horwich 1998, 37; 2010, 15, 21, 31, and n. 23; and 2013, 25-26). To put the point another way, truth is too thin a concept to have an underlying nature, and so it is not the kind of thing that is constituted by some substantial norms.

How, then, does Horwich explain the alleged value of true beliefs? Horwich in his 2010 book titled *Truth-Meaning-Reality* argues that true beliefs are desirable, not because truth is constitutively normative, but because true beliefs are not only practically valuable but also non-instrumentally valuable. In his 2013 paper titled 'Belief-Truth Norms,' however, Horwich gives up the view that the value of true beliefs is partly due to instrumental desirability. He writes:

First, it often happens that a person's true belief leads him to a decision that turns out *badly*, and he would have been better off with a false one (e.g. the man who dies from an operation that he correctly thought had a 99 per cent chance of success). And second, there are certain kinds of belief that appear to have no potential for practical import. [...] [Furthermore] there are various kinds of belief that we can be pretty sure will have no instrumental/pragmatic significance whatsoever. Think of certain views in metaphysics (e.g. that there's a plurality of concrete possible worlds), in esoteric areas of set theory (e.g. that every category

has an appropriate Yoneda embedding), or in normative domains (e.g. that lying is wrong). Surely there can be no pragmatic explanation of why we should want our beliefs in these domains to be true. Assuming this to be so, we must conclude that the kind of desirability at issue in our general ‘*OUGHT*’ norm isn’t *instrumental* desirability. (Horwich 2013, 24)

What Horwich calls our general ‘*OUGHT*’ norm is the following:

(‘*OUGHT*’) We ought to want our beliefs to be true.

On his view, the value of true beliefs can be articulated by this norm, and the value of true beliefs expressed in this norm is moral; in other words, it is from a moral point of view that we ought to want our beliefs to be true. For example, he writes:

Respect for truth is commonly recognized as *a virtue*. And this suggests that we regard the non-pragmatic value of truth as *moral*—that is, it’s from a moral point of view that a person ought to want each of his beliefs to be true (including those whose truth could never promote the satisfaction of his desires). (Horwich 2013, 25)

And he continues to argue that the ‘*OUGHT*’ norm is explanatorily fundamental, so that we cannot explain why it is true, although we can explain our commitment to this norm. Furthermore, he does not take this norm as an absolute norm. He writes:

‘*OUGHT*’ does not aim to specify an *all-things-considered* obligation for us to want our beliefs to be true, but merely states one of the normative pressures on our belief-oriented desires—a presumably *epistemological* pressure. [...] But the belief-truth ‘*OUGHT*’-norm is not thereby falsified; it remains valid *pro tem*, purporting to specify just one of the factors that bear on our overall appraisals. (Horwich 2013, 19)

In the remainder of this paper, however, I argue against Horwich’s view that the value of true beliefs relevant to the normativity objection is moral.

### 3. The alleged value of true beliefs and our respect for truth

On Horwich's view, it is from a moral point of view that one ought to want one's beliefs to be true, and so we can explain the value of true beliefs as a moral value expressed in this belief-truth '*OUGHT*' norm. In this section, however, I argue that the alleged value of true beliefs relevant to the normativity objection can be better explained in terms of epistemic normativity rather than moral normativity.

First of all, all living animals need information about the world necessary for their survival; and they also have to do something in order to deal with some practical problem or other in their lives. We are no exception. Unlike mere animals, however, we are rational beings. On Kant's view (1996), it is our conception of ourselves that we are rational beings who can engage in theoretical and/or practical reasoning in order to determine what to believe and/or what to do. What then is our distinctive way of obtaining information about the world as rational believers? We acquire information about the world in a way that is bound by the norms of theoretical reason (or epistemic norms). In other words, unlike mere animals, we are by nature such rational beings whose beliefs are bound by the norms of theoretical reason. For example, our beliefs are bound by modus ponens. Thus, if you believe not only that if  $p$  then  $q$  but also that  $p$ , and if you care whether  $q$ , then you ought to believe that  $q$ . Of course, someone can believe in a way that violates some epistemic norm such as modus ponens. But unlike mere animals, such a person can be subject to rational criticism. In a similar way, we are rational beings whose actions are bound by the norms of practical reason (or practical norms) as well. For example, our actions are bound by the following means-end reasoning: if you ought to achieve end  $E$ , and if doing  $A$  is a means implied by your achievement of  $E$ , then you ought to do  $A$ . Due to this distinctive rational nature of ours, we engage in theoretical and/or practical reasoning in order to determine what to believe and/or what to do.<sup>1</sup>

Second, as pointed out before, on the deflationary view of truth, truth is too thin a concept to be constituted by any substantial norms, and so

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<sup>1</sup> For a detailed discussion and defense of this view, see (Lee 2018).

there are no substantial norms of truth on the basis of which we can evaluate a belief as true or false. Besides, we cannot step outside our conceptual framework to judge whether a belief is true. At this point, it is important to recognize that, as Kant (1996) insists, it is our conceptual framework that provides the norms, criteria, or rules for defending (or criticizing) any claim. Therefore, it is inevitable to address any demand for justification on the basis of our conceptual framework. In other words, we have no other way but to rely on our conceptual framework to justify something. Hence, we have no other way but to evaluate whether a belief is true on the basis of our norms of epistemic justification. To put it another way, when we evaluate whether a proposition ' $p$ ' is true, what we are really doing is to evaluate whether it is epistemically justified; and if it is epistemically justified, we can thereby assert (or believe) that it is true. In this regard, it is worth recalling the equivalence schema, according to which to say that  $p$  is equivalent to saying that ' $p$ ' is true. In short, we have no other way but to evaluate whether a belief is true on the basis of our norms (or standards) of epistemic justification.

Third, epistemic justification is different from moral justification. How then can we distinguish between the two? As pointed out before, we are rational beings who can engage in theoretical and/or practical reasoning in order to determine what to believe and/or what to do. When we try to determine what to believe by engaging in theoretical reasoning, we take the *epistemic (or theoretical) point of view*, which is concerned with having true beliefs (and avoiding false beliefs). At this point, it is important to note that from the deflationist point of view, 'the claim that  $p$  is true' and 'it is a fact that  $p$ ' are equivalent ways of expressing the same thing. Thus, we may say that when we try to determine what to believe from the epistemic point of view, we are concerned with having beliefs which reflect how the world really is. By contrast, when we try to determine what to do by engaging in practical reasoning, we take a *practical point of view*, which is concerned with bringing about what is desired or desirable. For this reason, epistemic justification and moral justification (as a species of practical justification) are fundamentally different kinds of justification. For the former is concerned with having beliefs which reflect how the world really is, whereas the latter is concerned with bringing about what is morally desirable.

On the basis of the above considerations, we may also distinguish between epistemic and moral values in the following way. As previously argued, we have no other way but to evaluate whether a belief is true on the basis of our epistemic norms. And if we can assert that a belief is justified in this way, we can also assert that it is true. Moreover, if one holds a belief in a way that violates an epistemic norm, then one can be subject to rational criticism. Along these lines, we may argue that to evaluate a belief as epistemically justified is to evaluate it positively from the epistemic point of view, whereas to evaluate a belief as epistemically unjustified is to evaluate it negatively from the epistemic point of view. And to evaluate a belief positively from the epistemic point of view is tantamount to taking it as having a positive epistemic value (or as being epistemically valuable). Similar remarks apply to moral values.

To begin with, we have no other way but to evaluate whether a certain thing is morally good on the basis of some relevant moral norms (or standards). In this context, it is worth considering Kant's famous claim that there is no moral goodness prior to and independent of the moral law. As he puts it, "the concept of good and evil must not be determined before the moral law [...] but only [...] after it and by means of it" (Kant 1996, 5:63). Therefore, when we evaluate whether a certain thing is morally good, what we are really doing is to evaluate whether it is morally justified on the basis of our moral norms; and if it is morally justified, we can thereby assert that it is morally good.<sup>2</sup> In addition, to evaluate a thing as morally good (or justified) is to evaluate it positively from the moral point of view. This is, in turn, tantamount to taking it as having a positive moral value (or as being morally valuable). On the basis of these considerations, we can argue that epistemic and moral values are different kinds of values.

There is one more thing to note. We have no good reason to think that the alleged value of true beliefs is a moral value. In this regard, three things are worth emphasizing. First, when we evaluate whether a proposition '*p*' is true, what we are really doing is to evaluate whether it is epistemically justified from the epistemic point of view, which is concerned with having beliefs which reflect how the world really is. By contrast, when we evaluate

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<sup>2</sup> For a detailed discussion and defense of this view, see (Lee 2018).

whether a thing is morally good, what we are really doing is to evaluate whether it is morally justified from the moral point of view, which is concerned with bringing about what is morally desirable. Second, a moral property is supposed to be a substantial property. By contrast, the deflationary view of truth denies that truth is a substantial property; besides, there are too many trivial and unimportant true propositions which are not worth caring about. Third, the alleged moral value of a true belief does not play any significant role in Horwich's view except that it addresses the normativity objection to his minimalism.

If what I have argued so far are on the right track, there is no good reason to think that a true belief is morally valuable for its own sake; and the alleged value of true beliefs can be better explained in terms of epistemic normativity, namely that we ought to believe in accordance with our epistemic norms.

At this point, Horwich could retort that one's respect for truth is commonly recognized as a *moral* virtue. As I will argue in the remainder of this section, however, there is a better way to explain our alleged respect for truth. As has been emphasized, truth is a deflationary concept, so that we have no other way but to evaluate whether a belief is true on the basis of our epistemic norms. Therefore, we ought to determine what to believe in accordance with our epistemic norms. And our concern for true (or justified) beliefs is manifested by the fact that we determine what to believe in accordance with our epistemic norms and we do revise a belief of ours if it turns out to be unjustified. Let me illustrate this point.

Suppose that a truly evil person possesses a lot of knowledge about the world. Suppose also that he really cares about seeking knowledge, because knowledge is necessary for doing morally bad things in a clever way. Thus, we can say that he really wants his beliefs to be true. In this regard, it is worth noting that it is one thing to possess knowledge, and it is quite another to make use of knowledge for getting what one wants or desires. Suppose further that his knowledge includes the cure for an epidemic disease from which a lot of people are suffering. But he does nothing to save those people because he has no desire whatsoever to help others. After all, he is a truly evil person. In this case, he is morally blameworthy, especially because he cannot excuse himself on the grounds that he does not know the



cure. And we could not regard him as displaying any moral virtue at all. Nonetheless, we could still regard him as displaying an epistemic virtue, because he really cares about seeking knowledge, and so he always holds beliefs in accordance with correct epistemic norms.

We can admit that we do care about having true beliefs. If what I have argued so far are correct, this is not because truth is morally valuable for its own sake. Our concern for true beliefs can be better understood in the following way. When we try to determine what to believe from the epistemic point of view, we are concerned with having true beliefs (that is, beliefs which reflect how the world really is). And we have no other way but to evaluate whether a belief is true on the basis of our epistemic norms. Thus, we (as rational believers) ought to believe in accordance with our epistemic norms. As a consequence, our concern for true (or justified) beliefs is manifested by the fact that we determine what to believe in accordance with our epistemic norms and we revise a belief of ours if it turns out to be unjustified.<sup>3</sup>

Here I do not mean to claim that my arguments in this section refute Horwich's view. Nevertheless, if what I have argued so far are on the right track, then our alleged respect for true beliefs can be better explained in terms of epistemic normativity rather than moral normativity.

#### 4. Possible objections

In this final section, let me address some possible objections that Horwich could raise against my alternative proposal.

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<sup>3</sup> Someone might motivate the claim that true beliefs are morally valuable in the following way. There are things which we morally ought to care about. And we need true beliefs to successfully deal with those things. Thus, we morally ought to care about having true beliefs. This line of argument is unavailable to Horwich, however. On this line of argument, true beliefs are valuable because they help us to bring about something else that is morally valuable, so that true beliefs are only instrumentally valuable. But there are many trivial true beliefs which have nothing to do with things which we morally ought to care about. More importantly, Horwich upholds the view that true beliefs are morally valuable for their own sake, rather than being instrumentally valuable.

In the previous section, I have argued that our concern for true beliefs is manifested by the fact that we determine what to believe in accordance with our norms of epistemic justification (henceforth, simply ‘justification’) and we revise a belief of ours if it turns out to be unjustified. Horwich has a different view on this matter, however. On his view, we should not tie our respect for true beliefs to our norms of justification. The first reason he gives is this. Imagine a community whose members deploy very different norms of justification from ours. The members of the community are convinced that their norms of justification promote true beliefs. And their concern for true beliefs is no less than ours. Unfortunately, however, their norms of justification are defective to the effect that most of their beliefs are not likely to be true. Even in such a case, it is from a moral point of view that they still ought to want their beliefs to be true. This line of thought suggests that their commitment to their norms of justification might not be best explained by their concern for true beliefs. And we could be in a similar situation as the members of this imagined community (see Horwich 2013, 28). As I will argue below, however, this kind of possibility does not pose a serious problem for the usual view that our concern for true beliefs is tied to our norms of justification.

Let us consider the aforementioned possibility that many of our norms of justification do not promote true beliefs, contrary to what we think. As argued in the previous section, we have no other way but to evaluate whether a belief is true on the basis of our norms of justification; if we can assert that it is justified in accordance with these norms, we can also assert that it is true; moreover, to evaluate a belief as justified is to evaluate it positively from the epistemic point of view, whereas to evaluate a belief as unjustified is to evaluate it negatively from the epistemic point of view. In addition to these, recall that when we try to determine what to believe from the epistemic point of view, we are concerned with having beliefs which reflect how the world really is. As a related point, recall also that from the deflationist point of view, ‘the claim that  $p$  is true’ and ‘it is a fact that  $p$ ’ are equivalent ways of expressing the same thing. Accordingly, we should understand our epistemic aim of having true beliefs in a way that does not invoke a substantial concept of truth. One typical way of doing this is to understand our epistemic aim as that of determining, for any proposition

'*p*,' whether *p*. To put it another way, our epistemic aim is to determine what to believe in such a way that our beliefs reflect how the world really is. And we have no other (rational) way but to evaluate whether *p* by evaluating whether '*p*' is justified. Along these lines, we can argue that epistemic justification is directly tied to our epistemic point of view, which is concerned with having true beliefs.

One more thing to note is that we can, at least in principle, evaluate any given norm (or standard) of justification in terms of whether it promotes true beliefs. Our assessments of justification are relative to the evidence available to us, and some contrary evidence might be available only in the future. Thus, a belief which is currently taken to be justified could lose its positive justificatory status later by virtue of some future evidence to the contrary. In addition, in a similar way that our beliefs can be subject to rational criticism, our norms of justification can be subject to rational criticism as well. As noted, a belief can lose its positive justificatory status if some relevant contrary evidence becomes available to us. In a similar vein, a norm of justification can lose its positive justificatory status if we come to have overwhelming reasons to think that it does not promote true beliefs. For this reason, if we are given some compelling reasons to think that a certain epistemic norm of ours does not promote true beliefs, we should give up the norm; and if we come up with a better epistemic norm for having true beliefs (that is, beliefs which reflect how the world really is), we can adopt it as our new norm of justification for the sake of promoting true beliefs.

If the above considerations are on the right track, Horwich's objection above does not pose a serious problem for the usual view that our concern for true beliefs is tied to our norms of justification.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Horwich (2010, Chapter 10, esp. 220-23) argues for what he calls the 'no theory' theory. On this theory, the correctness of our basic epistemic norms cannot be explained, roughly, for the following reason. We can explain less basic epistemic norms in terms of more basic ones. But we cannot repeat this process forever, and so, in the end, we are bound to reach the most basic epistemic norms, which are explanatorily fundamental; and we cannot explain the correctness of those truly-basic epistemic norms. It is beyond the scope of this paper to refute this theory. Thus, let me confine myself to briefly explaining why I do not accept it. As I have argued

But Horwich provides us with another reason against the usual view. He writes:

Still, it may be thought that someone's concern for truth is revealed merely by there being *some* norms of justification that he respects. For the following explanation appears to hold no matter which particular constraint on belief is substituted for *C*:

S believes that imposing *C* promotes truth.

S wants his belief to be true.

Therefore, S imposes *C*.

But I would suggest that this explanation is defective, in that its desire-for-truth premise is redundant. For the first premise alone suffices to reach the conclusion. In other words: if S thinks that constraint *C* is truth-promoting, then we can already see why he imposes that constraint, without needing to assume, in addition, that he wants his beliefs to be true. [...] Thus it's a reasonable conjecture that our commitment to our familiar collection of doxastic constraints is neither explained by, nor a manifestation of, our respect for the value of truth. (Horwich 2013, 28)

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elsewhere (Lee 2019a; 2019b), we can avoid the aforementioned regress problem by appealing to a coherence theory of justification. On the foundationalist theories of justification, the infinite regress of justification is impossible, and so we must admit that there are basic beliefs, which constitute a free-standing body of beliefs in the sense that they can justify other beliefs, but they are justified without recourse to other beliefs. Along the lines of a coherence theory of justification, however, we can argue that there are no such things as basic beliefs. Notice that even alleged basic beliefs such as perceptual beliefs are not exempt from being rationally criticized. For any belief, if it turns out that it does not help us to promote our epistemic aim, it can be rejected for the sake of our epistemic aim. A similar point applies to epistemic norms. The criteria for accepting an epistemic norm are not fundamentally different from the criteria for accepting a belief about the world. Hence, if it turns out that a certain epistemic norm of ours does not promote our epistemic aim, then we can reject or revise it. Along these lines, we may argue that for any epistemic norm, we can evaluate whether or not it is justified in a coherentist way. For a detailed discussion and defense of this view, see (Lee 2019a; 2019b).

On Horwich's view, if S believes that imposing constraint *C* promotes truth, then we can already see why he imposes *C*, without needing to assume the desire-for-truth premise. If S believes that imposing *C* promotes truth, then he will think and act in accordance with this belief. Admittedly, this role of the belief does not depend on the fact that S wants the belief to be true. However, a belief alone is not sufficient for generating an action. In this regard, it is important to recognize that imposing *C* is an action rather than a belief, and also that some relevant desire (or intention) is also required to generate an action. For example, if S wants a glass of water, and if he also believes that the clear liquid in the glass in front of him is water, then he will reach over to get the glass. If, however, S does not want a glass of water, we cannot expect that he will reach over to get the glass, even if he believes that the clear liquid in the glass is indeed water. A similar point applies to Horwich's claim above. Suppose that S does not want to promote true beliefs. In this case, we cannot expect that S will impose *C*, even if S believes that imposing *C* promotes true beliefs. Thus, consider the following alternative explanation:

S ought to promote true beliefs. He can promote true beliefs only by imposing *C*. Therefore, S ought to impose *C*.

Suppose that S understands the validity of the above argument. Suppose also that he endorses its two premises. In this case, S will intend to promote true beliefs, and we can expect that he will impose *C*, because he believes that he can promote true beliefs only by imposing *C*. Thus, we can explain why S imposes *C*. Here notice that if S did not want to promote true beliefs in the first place, then he would not impose *C*, even if he believed that he can promote true beliefs only by imposing *C*. For this reason, S's desire (or intention) to promote true beliefs is not redundant for the explanation of why he imposes *C*. In addition, as has been emphasized, we have no other way but to evaluate whether a belief is true on the basis of our norms of justification. Consequently, we are justified in asserting (or believing) that *p* only when we have adequate reasons for '*p*'; and if we can assert that *p*, then we can also assert that '*p*' is true. Therefore, if we are justified in asserting that *p*, this is not because '*p*' happens to be true, but rather because we have adequate reasons for '*p*'. And we can rationally promote true

beliefs only holding beliefs in accordance with our norms of justification. Moreover, we can express our concern for true beliefs by holding beliefs in this way. Hence, Horwich's second objection above also does not pose a threat to the usual view that our concern for true beliefs is tied to our norms of justification.

Finally, let me briefly consider whether what I have argued so far can be affected by Horwich's claim that the aforementioned belief-truth '*OUGHT*' norm is not an absolute norm. On his view, the '*OUGHT*' norm does not aim to specify an all-things-considered obligation, but instead it purports to specify just one contribution to the overall value of a belief. Consequently, the desirability of a true belief is not absolute, and so there can be circumstances in which a false belief is to be preferred on balance. Therefore, on Horwich's view, despite the fact that '*p*' is not true, it is possible that, all things considered, it is more valuable for S to believe that *p* than not to believe that *p*. To put it another way, a moral value for wanting one's belief to be true can be overridden by some pragmatic value for holding the belief.

To begin with, Horwich's claim that the '*OUGHT*' norm is not an absolute norm is problematic. Let us assume, for the sake of argument, that the value of true beliefs expressed in the '*OUGHT*' norm is moral, as Horwich insists. But moral values are presumably categorical values, which are valuable to each and every rational being, whereas pragmatic values are not categorical, because such values can vary from individual to individual. And it is widely accepted that moral values, which are categorical values, are not overridden by any pragmatic values, which are non-categorical values. Thus, Horwich owes us an explanation of why and how categorical values can be overridden by non-categorical values. The burden of proof in this case lies on his shoulders. In addition, if what I have argued in section 3 are on the right track, we have no good reason whatsoever to think that the value of true beliefs is moral, even if we grant that the '*OUGHT*' norm is not an absolute norm. For one thing, moral values are presumably substantial values, whereas the deflationary view of truth denies that truth is a substantial property. In particular, Horwich holds the view that truth is a sort of logical property. Thus, he owes us an explanation of why and how such a logical property can be morally valuable. The burden of proof in this case lies on his shoulders as well.

## 5. Concluding remarks

On the normativity objection to minimalism, Horwich's deflationary theory of truth fails to capture the value of truth. Horwich addresses this objection by arguing that truth is morally valuable for its own sake. If what I have argued in this paper are on the right track, however, we can better explain the alleged value of true beliefs (or our alleged respect for truth) in terms of epistemic normativity rather than moral normativity.

First, on the deflationary view of truth, truth is too thin a concept to be constituted by any substantial norms, and so there are no substantial norms of truth on the basis of which we can evaluate a belief as true or false. Thus, we have no other way but to evaluate whether a belief is true on the basis of the norms (or standards) of epistemic justification. To put it another way, when we evaluate whether a proposition ' $p$ ' is true, what we are really doing is to determine whether it is epistemically justified; and if it is epistemically justified, we can thereby assert (or believe) that it is true. In this regard, it is worth recalling the equivalence schema, according to which to say that  $p$  is equivalent to saying that ' $p$ ' is true.

Second, epistemic justification and moral justification (as a species of practical justification) are fundamentally different kinds of justification. For the former is concerned with determining *what to believe* for having beliefs which reflect how the world really is, whereas the latter is concerned with determining *what to do* for bringing about what is morally desirable.

Third, we care about having true beliefs. But this is not because truth is morally valuable for its own sake. Our concern for true beliefs can be better understood in the following way. When we try to determine what to believe from the epistemic point of view, we are concerned with having true beliefs. And we have no other way but to evaluate whether a belief is true on the basis of our epistemic norms. Thus, we (as rational believers) ought to believe in accordance with our epistemic norms. As a consequence, our concern for true (or justified) beliefs is manifested by the fact that we determine what to believe in accordance with our epistemic norms and we revise a belief of ours if it turns out to be unjustified.

Fourth, we have no good reason to think that the alleged value of true beliefs is moral. In this regard, it is noteworthy that the alleged moral value

of true beliefs does not play any significant role in Horwich's view except that it addresses the normativity objection to his minimalism.

Along these lines, contrary to what Horwich claims, we can argue that the alleged value of true beliefs can be better explained in terms of epistemic normativity rather than moral normativity.

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