

Expressivism and Mind-Dependence: Distinct Existences

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Abstract: Despite the efforts of meta-ethical expressivists to rebut such worries, one objection raised over and over again against expressivism is that, if the theory is true, matters of morality must be mind-dependent in some objectionable way. This paper develops an argument which not only shows that this is and cannot be the case, but also – and perhaps more importantly – offers a diagnosis why philosophers are nevertheless so often led to think otherwise.

0. Introduction

Despite the efforts of meta-ethical expressivists to rebut such worries, one objection raised over and over again against expressivism is that, if the theory is true, matters of morality must be mind-dependent in some objectionable way.¹ This paper develops an argument which not only shows that this is and cannot be the case, but also – and perhaps more importantly – offers a diagnosis why philosophers are nevertheless so often led to think otherwise. I proceed as follows: Section I. presents expressivism's basic theoretical commitments and section II. the standard expressivist answer to the challenge that the theory is committed to mind-dependence. Section III. then introduces the wide-spread worry that this answer is not sufficient to answer the challenge. Sections IV. and V. show that this worry rests on a misunderstanding of expressivism's theoretical commitments, but a misunderstanding natural for opponents of expressivism.

I. What is Expressivism?

¹ Worries and arguments along these lines can be found in e.g. Brink (1989: 29-31), Bloomfield (2003: 512), Cassam (1986: 451/452), Egan (2007: 210-217), Enoch (2007: 44/45 and 2011: 36/37), Foot (2001: 189), Jenkins (2005: 205-208), Kerstein (2006: 134-142), Moore (2002: 150-153), Peacocke (2004: 208-215), Rasmussen (1985: 185-190), Thomson (1998: 215/216) or Zangwill (1994: 211-217).

Expressivism is a theory about the meaning of moral sentences and the nature of moral thought characterized by two claims.² First, expressivists hold that the meaning of sentences should be understood in terms of the mental states they conventionally are used to express. That is, on the expressivist account, the meaning of sentences is determined by the particular mental states a subject commits herself to be in by using those sentences (see e.g. Gibbard 1990: 84-86 or Schroeder 2008b: 108/109). Expressivism's second distinctive claim is that the type of mental state in terms of which the meaning of moral sentences should be explained is different from the type of mental state in terms of which the meaning of non-moral descriptive sentences should be explained. Expressivists hold that the mental states expressed by using non-moral descriptive sentences are ordinary beliefs, while the mental states that are expressed by using moral sentences are some kind of practical stance (call these, for the sake of convenience, 'conative attitudes').

In addition to these two claims about moral language and thought, expressivists typically also accept what can be called the 'Humean theory of psychology and rationality' (HUM for short).³ HUM consists (at least) in three claims (these remarks draw on Smith 1994: 7-9, Blackburn 1993: 155 and 182-197, 1998: 90/91 and Gibbard 2003: 9-16). First, conative attitudes and beliefs are distinct existences: for any conative attitude C and any belief B, it is always possible to have C without having B and vice versa. Second, beliefs on their own cannot rationally commit someone to having

2 There is an emerging debate concerned with the question of how the claim that expressivism is a theory about the meaning of moral sentences is best understood, which derives from the fact that we need to distinguish two kinds of theories of meaning concerned with very different projects (for the distinction see e.g. Lewis 1970:17 or Speaks 2010). On the one hand, there are *semantic* theories that are concerned with giving abstract models that assigns meanings or contents to sentences in natural languages, models that explain certain features of natural languages such as their compositionality. On the other hand, there are *foundational* theories of meaning that are concerned with the question *in virtue of what* sentences in natural languages have the meanings or contents they have (and so e.g. *in virtue of what* one particular semantic model rather than another is true of some given language). In the past, participants in the debate surrounding expressivism have been unclear about whether they think expressivism is best understood as a semantic theory or as (at least part of) a foundational theory of meaning (this is true even of major proponents of expressivism, such as Simon Blackburn and Allan Gibbard). Only recently have authors made explicit commitments one way or the other and it has become clear that this is a question that is open to debate (that expressivism is best understood as a semantic view is, for example, the position taken by Mark Schroeder (see especially Schroeder 2008a and 2010: 26-30). That expressivism might be better understood as a foundational theory of meaning, on the other hand, is the position taken, for example, by Matthew Chrisman, Michael Ridge or Jussi Suikkanen (see Chrisman 2012, Ridge manuscript and Suikkanen 2009b)). Since everything I argue in this paper should be compatible with both positions I remain neutral on this issue for the purposes of this paper. All the claims I make about expressivism are explicitly phrased in a way that could be read either way.

3 I qualify this claim, because expressivists need not accept HUM. Here, I will only be concerned with expressivist accounts which accept HUM.

conative attitudes (I will ignore what HUM says about rational commitments from attitude to belief): for any conative attitude C and any belief B, one can have B without being rationally committed to having C. Thirdly, this gap of rational commitment can only be bridged by higher-order conative attitudes: Having a belief B rationally commits one to have conative attitude C, only if one has the higher-order conative attitude C* to have C, if one has B.

II. Why Expressivism Is Not Committed To Mind-Dependence

It is a shared sentiment among many of its opponents that expressivism entails that 'the moral truth', 'the moral facts', 'rightness', 'wrongness', etc. are in some objectionable way mind-dependent. Expressivists are challenged to show that this suspicion is false. Expressivists normally deal with this challenge as follows:⁴

First, they provide a general, theory-neutral account of the claims that need to be accounted for in the context of the challenge. It has been noted (originally by Blackburn (1993: 19)) that it is helpful to formulate this in terms of not being committed to certain counterfactuals, such as, 'If we had thought that torture is permissible, then torture would have been permissible'. The challenge can, on these lines, be formulated in more general terms as being able to show that one is not committed to counterfactuals of the following form (where 'x' stands for an object of evaluation and 'M' for a moral predicate):

(1): If we had thought that x is M, then x would have been M.

(2): If we had not thought that x is M, then x would not have been M.

The next step of the expressivists' solution is to give an account of the meaning of these conditionals. Since expressivists want to explain the meaning of sentences in terms of the mental state they express, they should also do so for conditionals like (1) and (2). With regards to what kind of mental state (1) and (2) express, expressivists give the following answer:⁵ The attitude expressed

4 See e.g. Blackburn 1993: 19/20, 153-158 and 172-174 or 1998: 279-312, Gibbard 1990: 164-166, Horgan and Timmons 2006b: 86-95 and Sinclair 2008: 265-272.

5 Providing a plausible general account of the meaning of complex *mixed* sentences, which is one important aspect of

by conditionals of this kind is one towards the regulation of the formation of moral attitudes in response to factual beliefs: it partly answers which non-moral features should be relevant in moral evaluation. This, according to expressivists, is best understood as being *itself* a moral attitude. So, the counterfactuals in question are best understood as being moral sentences, expressing conative attitudes. How does this help expressivists to argue that they are not committed to conditionals like (1) and (2)?

First we need to distinguish claims made on the meta-ethical level and claims made on the normative level. On the meta-ethical level we give a descriptive, explanatory account of ordinary moral practice. However, on the meta-ethical level we only mention, but do not actually use moral predicates. On the normative level on the other hand we make statements in which moral predicates are used. After having introduced this distinction, expressivists can point out that it is normally assumed that nothing (or nothing relevant) follows from meta-ethical accounts for the normative level. Consequently, they can hold that expressivism, as a meta-ethical position, entails no commitment to (1) and (2), since those are moral claims.

III. The Objection

Expressivists hold that (1) and (2) should be understood as moral sentences. And, it seems that if they are read this way, expressivism meets the mind-dependence challenge, because expressivists are not committed to (1) and (2) on this reading. However, many authors worry that expressivists have missed some possible *meta-ethical* reading of (1) and (2) to which they are committed. This kind of challenge was originally posed e.g. by Quassim Cassam and Stig Rasmussen (see Cassam 1986: 450/451 and Rasmussen 1985: 185-191) and has more recently been pressed in print by A.W.

the infamous Frege-Geach Problem, is, of course, notoriously difficult for expressivists. For the purposes of this paper, I will assume that expressivists can solve these problems, at least to the extent required for the discussion of the paper (of course, expressivists *have* offered solutions to these problems, so this assumption is not unfounded. See e.g. Blackburn 1988, Gibbard 1990:83-102 and 2003:60-87, Schroeder 2008 or Ridge 2006a and 2006b). If expressivists cannot solve the Frege-Geach Problem, at least to this extent, mind-dependence should be the least of their worries. Note that the assumption that I will make about mixed sentences are very limited, and so should be compatible with any plausible expressivist treatment of such sentences. I thank an anonymous referee for drawing my attention to problems with my original way of setting aside these worries.

Moore, Christopher Peacocke and C.S. Jenkins (see Moore 2002: 150-155, Peacocke 2004: 208-216 and Jenkins 2005: 199-205). Worries along such lines, however, can be found in many opponents of expressivism.

Now, one kind of meta-ethical mind-dependence claim that expressivists are committed to is the following:

(3): If our moral convictions had been different, then we would have used moral predicates differently.

But, this cannot be what the above authors have in mind, because commitment to this type of claim doesn't seem problematic. Rather, they have the following in mind:

“If, in such reflective moments, one concludes [...] that in order to explain the practice of moralizing it is necessary to refer only to the natural properties of things and natural reactions to them, the thought may seem inescapable that values are the 'children of our sentiments' in a sense that the [expressivist] is committed to viewing as problematic. If, in speaking as if there were a property of things that our sayings describe, we are projecting human emotions, sentiments, and attitudes, then, from this detached perspective, the thought will be tempting that had our attitudes been different, moral facts would also have been different.” (Cassam 1986: 451; original emphasis)

The idea is that the theoretical assumptions of expressivists commit them to there being a *meta-ethical* reading of (1) and (2). Furthermore expressivists are also committed to the truth of (1) and (2) on this reading. But, so the thought goes further, acceptance of such claims on the meta-ethical level would surely reveal the rejection of (1) and (2) on the moral level as somehow mistaken: rejecting (1) and (2) on the moral level would then be talking as if moral matters were mind-independent, although in fact they are not. But this means that expressivists cannot *really* meet the mind-dependence challenge: they are committed to the claim that in fact moral matters are mind-dependent. Let us call this “The Objection”.⁶ What is to be said about The Objection? In the

6 As an anonymous referee rightly suggested, it is important to note that the challenge from mind-dependence this paper is concerned with and which is proposed by authors such as Cassam, Rasmussen, Moore, Peacocke or Jenkins needs to be distinguished from a different kind of challenge recently pressed by Russ Shafer-Landau and Jussi Suikkanen (see Shafer-Landau 2003: 30-33 and Suikkanen 2009a). The line taken by Shafer-Landau and Suikkanen differs from that taken by Cassam et al. in at least two respects. First, rather than arguing that expressivists have *modal* mind-dependence commitments, Shafer-Landau and Suikkanen argue only that expressivists are committed to

following I will first give a quick response which shows *that* The Objection must fail, and then develop a more elaborate response which explains *why* The Objection fails.

IV. A Quick Response to The Objection

Given what we know about expressivism, there are strong doubts that on the expressivist account there could be a meta-ethical reading of (1) and (2) which is not some disguised version of (3) and to which expressivists are committed. This can be shown as follows. Assume that expressivism is true: HUM holds and acceptance of moral statements is having conative attitudes. Now stipulate that The Objection is correct: there is some reading (1*) and (2*) of (1) and (2) which expresses meta-ethical beliefs and assumes that expressivists' meta-ethical beliefs rationally commit them to the meta-ethical beliefs expressed by (1*) and (2*). Now, although we stipulated that (1*) and (2*) are not moral, but meta-ethical claims, surely their consequent is a moral claim. Given the expressivist account, that would mean that acceptance of their consequent is having a conative attitude. Now, conditionals are sentences which, if you accept them and their antecedent, rationally commit you to acceptance of their consequent. So, on the expressivist account, acceptance of (1*) or (2*) would rationally commit one to adopt a conative attitude (the one expressed by the

material “mind-dependence” conditionals, such as “If I disapprove of x, then x is wrong”. Second, the line of argument they take to support this thesis differs from the line of argument that Cassam et al. take: Shafer-Landau's and Suikkanen's argue, very roughly, that because expressivists have to say that the utterance of a moral sentence is appropriate if and only if the speaker has some relevant conative attitude, expressivists must thereby be committed to material mind-dependence conditionals. Now, I agree with the referee that the second kind of challenge differs from the first and I think the referee is right in demanding that I make clear that in this paper I am only concerned with the first, and not the second kind of challenge. So, what follows should be read as being concerned with the challenge from mind-dependence as it is raised by Cassam et al. not as it is raised by Shafer-Landau and Suikkanen. Having made this note, however, I would also like to voice cautious suspicions as to whether the difference between these two kinds of objections would make a relevant difference for the argument of this paper in the end. Note especially, that even though there are important differences between material and counterfactual mind-dependence conditionals, they will have one crucial feature in common on the expressivist account: the expressivist will understand *both* as making moral claims. After all, for an expressivist conditionals such as “If x is F, then x is M”, of which mind-dependence conditionals such as “If we disapprove of x, then x is wrong” are just one instance, will *also* express an attitude towards the regulation of the formation of moral attitudes in response to factual beliefs, which partly answers which non-moral features should be relevant in moral evaluation (compare: “If x maximizes happiness, then x is good”). And the expressivist will understand this as consisting in a *moral* attitude. If that is true then *mutatis mutandis* we might be able to run the same replies I give further below. Developing this argument, however, would take a separate paper explicitly concerned with Shafer-Landau's and Suikkanen's arguments. So, for the purposes of this paper I will remain agnostic as to whether the same response could be made and the same diagnosis applies. I thank the anonymous referee for drawing me out on this issue.

consequent) if one has certain beliefs (the ones expressed by the antecedent). If, as we stipulated and is claimed by The Objection, (1*) and (2*) *themselves* express meta-ethical beliefs, that would mean that one could be rationally committed to adopt conative attitudes *solely* on the basis of having certain beliefs: one could be committed to the belief expressed by (1*) or (2*) solely on the basis of one's beliefs, and then, if one has the belief expressed by the antecedent of those counterfactuals, be rationally committed to the conative attitude expressed by their consequent. This would mean that HUM is false and therefore, that expressivism is false. This is inconsistent with our starting assumption.

This reveals partly what is wrong with The Objection. The Objection claims that there is some meta-ethical reading of (1) and (2) to which expressivists are committed. But, according to the expressivists' theoretical assumptions, there can be no such reading that is not some disguised form of (3). For The Objection to succeed, it therefore must deny one of expressivism's theoretical assumptions. It seems therefore that the reading which these authors think expressivists overlook is the reading on which expressivism is false. Since they have given no reasons to accept such a reading, their argument is question-begging.

V. A more Elaborate Response to The Objection

What the quick response leaves open is what specific assumption underlies The Objection. This brings us to the more elaborate response. To make this response, we first need to make a distinction. Recall that expressivism is an account of the meaning of moral sentences. What is such an account trying to provide? In order to avoid philosophical presuppositions, we can formulate this in terms of telling us what one has to know to be a competent speaker with respect to the sentences in question. Now, what one has to know for this are plausibly the conditions under which it is correct to assert such sentences. However, we must distinguish at least two senses in which statements can be correct.⁷

⁷ This distinction is also made by Schroeder 2008a: 29/30 and 2008b: 108/109.

First, statements can be correct in the sense that they satisfy the conditions of correct usage. The conditions of correct usage of sentences are the conditions that must be satisfied in order for the person using those sentences to avoid linguistic mistakes. For example, assume that I want to tell you that Berlin is in Bavaria. Then it would be correct in this sense to assert 'Berlin is in Bavaria'. On the other hand, I would be making a mistake in this sense (assuming the normal conventions of English hold), if I assert e.g. 'Paris is in France'. Let us call this sense of correctness 'semantic correctness'.⁸ Second, statements can be correct in the sense normally associated with truth. For example, although I am not semantically mistaken in uttering 'Berlin is in Bavaria' if I want to tell you that Berlin is in Bavaria, I am mistaken in the sense that what I say is false. I will call this sense 'substantial correctness'.⁹

Now, it seems quite plausible that it is knowledge of the conditions under which it is semantically correct to assert sentences that constitutes being a competent speaker with regards to those sentences: Although there might be views on which the conditions under which it is

8 Some readers might be puzzled about the use of this label, given that I explicitly stated in footnote 2 that I wanted to remain neutral on the question whether expressivism is to be understood as a semantic view. However, the label is in fact not in violation of this commitment to neutrality, as I think that both semantic theories and foundational theories of meaning will be concerned with semantic correctness in the sense that will be relevant for what is to come, even though I also think that the label “semantic” is the most fitting for the sense of correctness I have in mind. The sense of correctness I want to pick out with the label “semantic correctness” is the sense that is at play when someone is “playing by the rules” of the language in question. Those rules will be of central concern to both semantic theories and foundational theories of meaning: in some sense we can see semantic theories as making explicit what those rules are, while foundational theories of meaning give us an account in virtue of what those rules hold. Either of these relationships to the rules of language is sufficient for the argument that is to come to go through, which means that it will make no difference for my argument whether expressivism is understood as a semantic theory or as a foundational theory of meaning. However, given that “playing by the rules” of the language is playing by those rules that semantic theories are trying to articulate, it still seems that the label “semantic correctness” is the most appropriate.

9 Although talk of truth makes it easier to grasp what I mean by 'substantial correctness', I do not say that substantial correctness *is* truth for the following reason: It seems that one could reject the idea that the truth-predicate appropriately applies to some discourse, but nevertheless hold that it is legitimate to say of statements in that discourse that they can be correct in some substantive sense related to, but not identical with truth. A.J. Ayer e.g. held that the truth-predicate does not apply to moral discourse, but that it is legitimate to hold statements in that discourse to be correct in some substantive sense, where he understood this just as the expression of one's endorsement of such statements (see e.g. Ayer 1984: 17-50). It seems to me that we can distinguish (using John Rawls' terminology (Rawls 1999: 40-46)) our *concept* of substantial correctness and particular *conceptions* of substantial correctness we hold to be appropriate explications of this concept for specific discourses. Accounts of truth can then be seen as conceptions of substantive correctness, which might not exhaust the possible legitimate explications. Of course, much more could be said about 'substantial correctness', but this would go beyond the purposes of this paper. The reader who is suspicious of a notion of 'substantial correctness' independent of the notion of truth, should read 'substantial correctness' in what follows as 'truth', since nothing in my argument hinges on the specific reading.

semantically correct to assert sentences just *are* the conditions under which it is substantially correct to assert those sentences, it seems plausible that we can pull those conditions, at least *in principle*, apart. On any view on which those conditions *would* come apart, however, it would be knowledge of the conditions under which it is semantically correct to assert sentences that determines linguistic competence. And that should mean that it is generally knowledge of those conditions that is relevant for being a competent speaker. Views on which semantic and substantial correctness fall together just *are* particular views on what those conditions are. And so it is the conditions under which it is semantically correct to assert sentences that a theory about the meaning of moral sentences like expressivism will be concerned with. Having set these remarks in place, let us now return to the elaborate reply to The Objection.

First, note that independently of whether it is a moral or meta-ethical issue, the relevant issue concerning whether matters of morality are mind-dependent is obviously whether the *substantial* correctness of moral statements is mind-dependent. For The Objection to go through, the following must therefore be correct: in giving their account for moral discourse, expressivists must be making meta-ethical commitments about the metaphysics of moral facts, properties, propositions, etc. which reveal that the substantial correctness of moral statements is mind-dependent. So, the assumption underlying this objection must be that theoretical accounts about the semantic correctness of moral sentences either are, or entail, substantive accounts about the nature of those facts, properties, propositions, etc. that determine the *substantial* correctness of moral statements. This assumption comes very naturally: For common accounts of the meaning of sentences like, e.g., certain forms of truth-conditional accounts, it is plausible that, if the account is complete, one makes certain commitments in the metaphysics of those facts, properties, propositions, etc. relevant for the substantial correctness of moral statements. There also is a general justification for this assumption: an account concerned with the conditions of semantic correctness for certain sentences will give an account of the *content* of the sentences in question. But the content of sentences is generally also

held to determine when they are substantially correct. This means that content can serve as a kind of bridge between semantic and substantial correctness: A theory about the semantic correctness conditions for certain sentences will, by giving an account of their content, also be an account of the substantial correctness conditions for those sentences.

As natural as these assumptions might be, expressivists need not accept them. A theory about substantial correctness for certain sentences would be an informative account, giving the conditions under which they are substantially correct. With regards to moral statements, such a theory would be a substantial theory about when things are wrong, obligatory, etc., because the conditions under which 'Eating meat is wrong' is substantially correct are the conditions in which eating meat *is* wrong. So, to give an account answering the question of when statements like 'Eating meat is wrong' are substantially correct, one must give an account answering the question of when things are wrong, obligatory, etc. However, on the expressivist account, issues concerning the standards that determine a statement's substantial correctness must then themselves be moral issues. Take the following claim about the substantial correctness of moral statements

(A): 'x is right' is substantially correct, iff with regards to x, condition y holds.

and the triviality

(B): x is right iff 'x is right' is substantially correct.

Now, given this, acceptance of any informative version of (A) rationally commits you to accept certain moral claims, provided you have certain beliefs. For example, if you believe that giving 66.6% of your income to charity maximizes utility, acceptance of

(C): 'x is obligatory' is substantially correct, iff x maximizes utility.

commits you to

(D): Giving 66.6% of your income to charity is obligatory.

To accept (D) is, on the expressivist account, to have a conative attitude. But, given HUM that means that to make informative judgements of the form of (A) must be to make judgements

expressing conative attitudes. So, again given HUM, expressivists have to say that nothing informative for the account of the substantial correctness of moral statements follows from their account of the semantic correctness of moral statements. This means two things:

First, if expressivism is true, then it has no commitments in the metaphysics of moral facts, properties, propositions, etc. — at least not on issues connected to settling questions of substantial correctness.¹⁰ This is so, because, if expressivism is true, these seemingly metaphysical questions are actually moral questions on which expressivism is neutral. This also holds for conditionals like (1) and (2): since these are claims about when moral statements are substantially correct, they do not fall into the scope of expressivism's commitments. The only mind-dependence conditionals expressivists could be committed to are claims like (3) according to which semantic correctness is dependent on mental states.

Second, on the meta-ethical level since expressivists cannot say anything that has substantive implications about issues of substantial correctness they can also not say anything about the content of moral statements that has substantive implications for issues of substantial correctness. Of course, expressivists must nevertheless give an account of the content of moral statements that answers e.g. how the expressed attitude and the content of moral statements interact and how the content of moral statements interacts with their substantial correctness. The particular challenge concerning such issues is to address them while retaining the distinction between semantic and substantial correctness. Whether expressivists can successfully do so is a question for another investigation.¹¹ In any case, however, the 'content-as-bridge' assumption will not work against

¹⁰ This might be surprising, since expressivism has often been described as 'anti-realist'. However, this might be because expressivists have, in the past, not been sufficiently clear on their theoretical commitments. There has, however, been a change in this regard: expressivists now argue that they are moral realists *on the only reading of such claims they need allow* (see e.g. Blackburn 1999: 216/217 and Gibbard 2003: 180-196). Furthermore, certain meta-ethical claims about moral facts are of course perfectly compatible with an expressivist approach (even as construed here), e.g. that moral facts play no role in our explanatory account of ordinary moral practice.

¹¹ Such issues have, of course, been addressed (e.g. in Blackburn 1993: 182-197 and 1998: 68-86, in Gibbard 1990: 94-102 and 2003: 41-185, in Horgan and Timmons 2006a: 275-288 and in Schroeder 2008a). Whether such accounts could be successful in the light of the discussion in this paper is beyond the scope of my investigations. It is worth noticing, however, that my discussion, which suggests that expressivists are not only entitled, but committed to a sharp distinction between semantic and substantial correctness might reveal new problems for expressivists: theorists might want to attack expressivism specifically on the basis that any adequate theory of meaning of truth-apt sentences *must* also provide an account of their truth-conditions (this is argued e.g. by Bar-On, Horisk and Lycan

expressivists, due to the core commitments of their meta-ethical theory.¹²

All this means that the presupposition behind The Objection is false. It presupposes that the distinction between accounts of semantic correctness and substantial correctness breaks down: Accounts of the former kind have substantive implication for accounts of the latter kind, and vice versa. Although natural for most philosophers, this is false, because the expressivists' theoretical assumptions allow them to make a sharp distinction between these two issues: it follows from expressivism's theoretical commitments that, as a theory about when it is semantically correct to assert moral sentences, expressivism cannot be a theory about when these sentences are substantially correct. Once this misconception is removed, we see that The Objection cannot establish that expressivism fails to meet the mind-dependence challenge. This also reveals principled reasons why any attempt along these lines must fail: if (i) we have to distinguish accounts of semantic and substantial correctness, if (ii) on the expressivist account the former entails nothing about the latter and vice versa, and if (iii) issues regarding mind-independence are matters of the latter kind, then it must be true that expressivism meets the mind-dependence challenge.¹³

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2000 against deflationism about truth). Whether such objections could succeed is, however, subject to further research.

- 12 An additional consequence might be that expressivists are restricted in their account of the norm of assertion: Timothy Williamson for example holds that the norm of assertion is knowledge (see Williamson 2000: 238-269). If my argument is correct, expressivists might not be able to adopt such an account. This, however, need not be damaging for expressivists: First other plausible accounts regarding the norm of assertion are open for expressivists (see e.g. Ridge 2009: 195-202 or Schroeder 2008b: 108-111). Second, it is questionable whether expressivists would even be attracted to such an account: for an expressivist, the most plausible account of knowledge-attributions, at least in the normative realm, is to take them to be expressions of conative attitudes. This would transform "S knows that p" into a nonrepresentational judgement, transforming the issue of whether someone has acted in accordance with the norm of assertion on a Williamsonian framework into a nonrepresentational issue. But, given the plausible assumption that part of an account of semantic correctness is to give an account of the norm assertion, this would make semantic correctness itself a nonrepresentational, rather than a descriptive issue, something which expressivists traditionally would not accept.
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