EPISTEMIC INTERNALISM, CONTENT EXTERNALISM AND THE SUBJECTIVE/OBJECTIVE JUSTIFICATION DISTINCTION

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Abstract: We consider two arguments against the compatibility of epistemic internalism and content externalism. Both arguments are shown to fail because they equivocate on the concept of justification involved in their premises. To highlight the crux of the involved equivocation, we introduce the distinction between subjective and objective justification, which can be independently motivated on the basis of a wide range of thought experiments to be found in the mainstream literature on epistemology. The subjective/objective justification distinction is also ideally suited for providing new insights with respect to central issues within epistemology, including the internalism/externalism debate and the New Evil Demon intuition.

1. INTRODUCTION

Consider, on one hand, *content externalism*, according to which mental content is externally individuated by one's physical (Putnam 1975) and/or social environment (Burge 1986).[i] On the other hand, consider *epistemic internalism*, according to which epistemic justification must either always 1) be a matter of reasons that are internal to one's conscious psychology and thereby, at least in principle, reflectively accessible,[ii] or— formulated more loosely—2) supervene on things (usually mental states) that are internal to one's mental life:[iii] *viz., Access J-Internalism* and *Mentalist J-Internalism*, respectively.

Now, however one may formulate epistemic internalism, the point we mean to accentuate here is that the commonly received, pre-theoretical intuition is that these two views—content externalism and epistemic internalism—do not go hand in hand. The underlying worry, in short, is that it's *prima facie* puzzling how a subject *S*'s epistemic justification for her belief that *p* will be—as the epistemic internalist has it— internal to *S*'s mental life or reflectively accessible psychology, if the very content of *S*'s belief that *p* is externally individuated—as the content externalist has it.

On top of such intuitions, however, there have also been several influential arguments towards the same effect. Here we will consider two of them. The first, proposed by Laurence Bonjour (1992), targets the compatibility of *Access* J-Internalism with content externalism. The second, proposed by James Chase (2001), targets the compatibility of *Mentalist* J-Internalism and content externalism.

The two arguments are related to each other in that in the same paper Chase introduces his own argument, he argues that Bonjour's fails to establish the incompatibility between *Access J*-Internalism and content externalism because it fails to target the sort of justification epistemic internalists have in mind. Not so, he thinks, with respect to his own preferred argument against the compatibility of content externalism and *Mentalist* J-Internalism. As we shall here demonstrate, however, Chase's argument turns out to fail on the exact same grounds. Specifically, we will argue that if, following Greco (1999), a distinction between subjective and objective justification can be motivated, we will soon notice that *both* arguments equivocate between these two kinds of justification. And that if, as Chase suggests in his rejection of Bonjour's argument on the basis of the New Evil Demon intuition, epistemic internalism is concerned only with subjective justification, then one may be (subjectively) justified—both in the Accessibilist and the Mentalist sense—even if mental content is externally individuated.[iv] Therefore, and contrary to what Bonjour's and Chase's arguments have attempted to establish, no incompatibility between epistemic internalism and content externalism has been established.

We begin by outlining Bonjour's and Chase's arguments (§2). Then, in §3, we introduce the subjective/objective justification distinction and diagnose what has gone wrong with the two arguments. §4 concludes with some closing remarks.

2. TWO ARGUMENTS FOR THE INCOMPATIBILITY OF CONTENT EXTERNALISM AND EPISTEMIC INTERNALISM

2.1 *Bonjour's Simple Accessibilist Argument*

A straightforward argument for the incompatibility of Access J-Internalism and content externalism has been suggested by Laurence Bonjour (1992) in a brief passage from which we can, following here Chase (2001, 237), extract the following line of reasoning:[v, vi, vii]

(1) If content externalism is true then there can be an agent *A* with belief *B* such that part or all of the content of *B* is not internally available to *A*.

(2) If agent *A* with belief *B* is such that part or all of the content of *B* is not internally available to *A*, then the justification relations *B* stands in with other beliefs of *A*'s are not internally available to *A*.

(3) If an agent A with belief B is such that the justification relations B stands in with other beliefs of A are not internally available to A, then not all factors relevant to the justification of beliefs of A are internally available to A.

But, as Chase notes, the consequent of (3) just is the denial of (Accessibilist) J-Internalism. Thus:

(4) If content externalism is true then J-Internalism is false.

Bonjour's accessibility argument—an argument wherein premises (2) and (3) are doing a lot of the heavy lifting—is a quick way to reach incompatibility between the two views, but perhaps it is too quick.

One charge that Chase (2001, 238) and, more recently, Madison (2009)[viii] have leveled against the argument is that the sense of internal availability (i.e., accessibility) that is effectively precluded by content externalism in (1) is, as Chase puts it, '*not* the sense of internal availability at issue in characterizing J-Internalism'. And if that's right, then of course the incompatibilist conclusion (4) can be dismissed as a product of illicit equivocation.

Specifically, the equivocation Chase finds objectionable is argued to come out most clearly in New Evil Demon-style cases, which—it should be kept in mind for the section to follow—were introduced in the literature in order to argue against the necessity of the externalist condition that one's process of forming one's beliefs should be (objectively) reliable.

To appreciate the objection, think about Stan who is in the 'bad case': Stan's belief 'there is water in front of me'—call this widely individuated belief 'W'—is, given an elaborate deception, false. Moreover, stipulate that on this particular occasion, Stan's belief that W is based on his visual experience that he is currently looking at a lake, along with his further (widely individuated) belief that 'water is the stuff usually found in lakes'—call this belief 'L'. To the contrary, Stan's counterpart, who is in the good case, has a similarly formed belief with the same narrow content, W^*, but which is true: in the good case there is no elaborate deception going on and what looks and feels like water is water indeed.

Now, on the basis of this, it may seem *prima facie* plausible that there should be a difference in the justification Stan and his lucky counterpart enjoy with respect to their

belief *W* ('there is water in front of me'). The reason is that, given Stan's unfortunate situation his (widely individuated) belief *L*, 'that water is the stuff usually found in lakes' is false and thereby does not concern real water at all. Consequently, *L* is not appropriately related to and thereby cannot confer justification to Stan's further (widely individuated) belief *W*, 'that there is water in front of me', which is supposed to concern real water. This, however, should not be a problem for Stan's counterpart, whose belief *L* is true, meaning that its justification relations to *W* (which, remember, is supposed to concern real water) are just right.

Contrary to initial impressions, however, J-Internalists *insist*—and this is the rub of the argument—that victims of evil demon scenarios (such as Stan) are indeed—and clearly so, they maintain—no less justified in their beliefs when compared with their counterparts (who are in the corresponding good case), despite the fact that the former's beliefs are unreliably formed. That is, so long as it opaque to one that one is in the bad scenario, such that one appropriately forms one's beliefs from one's point of view, then one can be justified in drawing inferences and holding the resulting beliefs, independently of the fact that one's inferences are based on false beliefs. Put another way, so long as one's beliefs are appropriately formed from one's point of view, it should make no difference to one's justificatory status, whether one's inferences are, from a bird's-eye point of view, reliable or not.

This is supposed to be the key intuition that counts against the necessity of any condition to the effect that in order for one to be justified, one's way of forming one's belief must be (objectively) reliable (*pace* epistemic externalists (e.g. Goldman 1986)).[ix] With respect to the present discussion, however, the above intuition indicates that, on the Access J-Internalist understanding of justification, the justification relations that the widely individuated belief *L* ('water is the stuff that is usually found in lakes') stands in to the widely individuated belief *W* ('there is water in front of me') are *not* factors relevant to the justification of S's belief in *W*. If they were, then the Access-J Internalist would have no reason to claim that there is no justificatory difference between Stan and his counterpart: After all, the only difference between the two cases is the wide content of the two subjects' beliefs: Stan's water-related beliefs are false, whereas his counterpart's corresponding beliefs are true. Rather, the justification relations that are relevant are those that stand between *L** and *W**, where *L** and *W** have the same *narrow—i.e.,* non-externally individuated—content as *L* and *W*.[x] Thus, as Chase reasons, what *would* be a factor relevant to Stan's belief *W* ('there is water in front of me') will be that *L** beliefs

are evidence for *W** beliefs, and, crucially, '*this fact* is internally available to S even in evil demon cases' (Chase 2001, 238).[xi]

Thus, (contra (2) and (3) in Bonjour's incompatibility argument), the following conjunction can be true: an agent *A* with belief *B* can be such that (i) part or all of the content of *B* is not internally available to *A*, and yet (ii) *not* be the case that the justification relations *B* stands in with any of *A*'s other beliefs—such that *A* can count as being justified in believing *B* in the Access J-Internalists's sense—are not internally available to *A*. Thus, on the line Chase advances against Bonjour, new evil demon cases suffice to illuminate why it is that (2) in Bonjour's accessibility argument should be rejected.

If Chase is right, then notice that he will have effectively diffused an argument capturing what is perhaps the most straightforward way to articulate the (alleged) incompatibility between content externalism and epistemic internalism, at least in the form of Access J-Internalism.[xii] As Chase argues, however, we may still be able to show content externalism to be incompatible with epistemic internalism when the latter is considered in the form of Mentalism.

2.2 *The Process Argument*

To this end, the *Process Argument* has been defended by Chase (2001), and challenged by Brueckner (2002). To start with, note that according to Mentalist J-Internalism, internal duplicates are *justificational duplicates*, where two subjects are *justificational duplicates* with respect to a proposition *p,* just in case their justification with respect to *p* is identical.[xiii] On the basis of this Mentalist J-Internalist commitment, Chase suggests, we can derive the following claim:

> *Process Claim* (PC): For any justificational duplicates, a_1 and a_2, and proposition *p*, if a_1 and a_2 believe *p*, then the 'justificatory processes' leading to a_1's belief that *p* and a_2's belief that *p* are identical.

If Chase is right that PC follows from Mentalism, then this would be enough to establish premise (1) of the following argument, which he calls the *Process Argument*:

(1) If PC is false, then Mentalist J-Internalism is false.

(2) If Content Externalism is true then PC is false.

(3) Therefore, if content externalism is true, then Mentalist J-Internalism is false.[xiv]

Chase, however, attempts to bolster his case for accepting (1) by claiming that PC follows from, specifically, the conjunction of Mentalist J-internalism and the 'natural assumption' (NA) that the justificatory process leading to a belief is relevant to the justification of the relevant belief—a point we'll return to. The crux of the idea motivating (1), then, can be put thusly: *If* Mentalist J-internalism is true and we have two agents who are identical in the 'internal physical constitution on which their minds supervene', then they will also be justificational duplicates—i.e., the antecedent of PC. And if that's true *then*, *via* (NA), they will also employ identical justificatory processes—i.e., the consequent of PC. Accordingly, Chase claims, Mentalist J-Internalism entails PC, which means that if PC is false, then so is Mentalist J-Internalism.

Bracketing premise (1) for the time being, let us move on to premise (2). In order to establish the conditional claim that content externalism entails the denial of PC, Chase needs to show that content externalism (in (2)) is inconsistent with PC. Accordingly he offers the following 'Twin Earth'-style case[xv]:

> TWIN SUE: Sue is on Earth. Twin Sue is on Twin Earth. Both Sue and Twin Sue reason *via* the following sentences:
>
> **(i)**   It is possible to drink water
> **(ii)**   Water is liquid
> **(iii)** Hence it is possible to drink a liquid
>
> As a result of this reasoning, Sue and Twin Sue believe that it's possible to drink a liquid and express this in the usual way.[xvi]

Now, Chase insists that in TWIN SUE, we have a case where, if PC is true, then the justificatory processes used by Sue and Twin Sue will be the same:

> If you believe in propositions, then you could say that Sue and Twin Sue are now expressing the same proposition; the beliefs they are reporting have the same content, they are the same type belief (although of course not the same belief token). Moreover, as in all Twin Earth cases, Sue and Twin Sue are identical in internal physical constitution. Hence, by (PC) the justificatory processes Sue has used to obtain the belief

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that it is possible to drink a liquid is identical to the justificatory process Twin Sue has used.

The problem, however, is that if content externalism is true, then the above can't be correct: The thoughts operative in Sue and Twin Sue's reasoning to the belief that it's possible to drink a liquid *differ*,[xvii] and *ipso facto*, the justificatory processes they use differ. Accordingly, if content externalism is true, PC must be false. Hence what follows is premise (2): If content externalism is true, then PC is false.[xviii] And if that's true then the Process Argument seems to go through to its conclusion.

What to make of the *Process Argument?* Does it fare any better than Bonjour's argument in showing that at least one version of epistemic internalism is incompatible with content externalism? Brueckner (2002, 514) has suggested that both premise (1) and premise (2) are problematic and it is particularly interesting, especially for our purposes, to see why.

With respect to premise (1), contrary to what Chase suggests, PC is not entailed by Mentalist J-Internalism: PC is not the strong—controversial—claim that if two subjects are *internal* duplicates who both believe *p*, then their justificatory processes leading to *p* will be identical. Instead, it is the weaker—and much more plausible—claim that if two subjects are *justificational* duplicates who both believe *p*, then their justificatory processes leading to *p* will be identical, and this much is entailed simply by the natural assumption (NA): That the justificatory process leading to a belief is relevant to the justification of said belief. Accordingly, even if premise (2) is true, such that content externalism entails the falsity of PC, this much would not, in turn, entail the falsity of Mentalist J-Internalism.

But even if premise (1) were acceptable, the Process Argument would still be unsound: Premise (2) can be established on the basis of the Twin Sue case only if (as Chase suggests) PC *does actually* have the implication that Sue and Twin Sue employ the same justificatory processes. As Brueckner points out, however, only a Mentalist J-Internalist is bound to accept this; a content externalist will simply deny it. This is because, as we explained in the paragraph just above—and, again, contrary to what Chase suggests in his defense of premise (1)—PC is not entailed by Mentalism, and, certainly, it does not presuppose it.

Accordingly, the content externalist is thus positioned to reason in the following way: 'Granted, both PC is true and Sue and Twin Sue are internal duplicates'. 'However',

the content externalist will further insist, 'I cannot accept PC's antecedent that they are *justificational* duplicates, because they are reasoning through different beliefs (*water* and *twater* beliefs, respectively), in (i) and (ii).'[xix] 'And if that's true', his reasoning will further go, 'then neither the consequent of PC is true': i.e., it is not the case that, contrary to content externalism, Sue and twin-Sue have identical justificatory processes. Accordingly, the Twin Sue case fails to establish that PC and content externalism can't be true at the same time (*viz.*, Premise (2)), and, so, the process argument cannot go through to its conclusion.

We therefore see that despite its initial plausibility, the Process Argument—no less than Bonjour's accessibilist argument—does not go through. This is because, even though it is tempting to assume that Mentalism entails PC or, even, that the latter somehow presupposes the former, none of these claims is quite true. To the contrary, PC is a rather straightforward claim that follows merely from (NA) and is compatible with both Mentalism and content externalism. Accordingly, there is no way to argue for premise (2) of the Process Argument on the basis of cases like Twin-Sue: Even though both the mentalist and the content externalist alike will accept both PC *and* the claim that Sue and Twin Sue are internal duplicates, this last claim will imply they are also *justification* duplicates only for the mentalist—the content externalist can and *will* outright deny this. In other words, when it comes to deciding whether Sue and Twin Sue are *justificational* duplicates—such that we can demonstrate via PC whether they also employ the same justificatory processes—the mentalist and the content externalist will be talking past each other, which can only mean one thing: Just as Bonjour's argument, so Chase's argument reveals an equivocation about the possible concepts of justification in play.

3. THE SUBJECTIVE/OBJECTIVE JUSTIFICATION DISTINCTION

What, then, might be the cause underlying the content externalist and epistemic internalist's equivocation about 'justification', in both Bonjour's and Chase's arguments? The answer, we want to suggest, can be traced back to the intuitions driving the familiar debate between epistemic internalism and externalism. Epistemic internalists—and notice that both Accessibilist and Mentalist J-Internalists belong to this category—have traditionally assumed that whatever justifies a subject's belief is to be *entirely* determined by factors that are internal to the subject's conscious or non-conscious psychology, depending on whether one will take the accessibilist or mentalist turn, respectively. To

the contrary, epistemic externalism—a view that content externalists will, most likely, feel more comfortable with—says that the justification of a belief is *not* entirely determined by factors that are internal to the believer's perspective.

In other words, epistemic internalists have been traditionally inclined to fixate solely on what is internal to the epistemic agent's psychology, whereas epistemic externalists have tried to downplay the importance of the 'internal'. In fact, the latter go, sometimes, so far as to deny that the internal aspects of one's psychology are even relevant to one's justification. Consider, for example, reliabilism—arguably the most representative theory of epistemic externalism—according to which, in order to be justified in believing a proposition (and thereby know it, if true) one does not need to know, be justified in believing or even believe that the way one formed one's belief is reliable. Instead, on the reliabilist proposal, one counts as justified merely by having his belief formed *via* a process that is *in fact reliable*, no matter whether one is aware or has any beliefs to the effect that this is so.

Reliabilism, of course, is a controversial thesis.[xx] Focusing on it for a bit, however, and juxtaposing it with epistemic internalism can bring to the fore several intuitions with respect to the concept of justification. Specifically, it can bring to the fore certain apparently opposing intuitions that seem to have been implicitly fueling the epistemic internalism/externalism debate.[xxi]

The New Evil demon intuition, for example, was introduced in the literature in order to argue against the claim that reliability is a necessary condition on justification; if both the deceived agent and the agent whose beliefs are reliably formed count, intuitively, as equally justified, then why assume that reliability is even necessary for justification? Now, admittedly this is an intuition that maybe not everyone shares. And even if one does share the intuition, one may still not be convinced by what it is supposed to demonstrate—i.e., that reliability is not a necessary condition on justification. In any case, leaving this intuition aside for the moment (we will return to it soon), standard process reliabilism still appears problematic.

Greco (1999), for example, has argued that by making *de facto reliability* sufficient for justification (and thereby for knowledge too—provided one's belief is also true), reliabilism seems to be missing an important dimension of our epistemic nature. "Sometimes", as Greco notes (ibid., 285), "this intuition is expressed by insisting that knowledge requires *subjective* justification. It is not enough that one's belief is formed in a way that is objectively reliable; one's belief must be formed in a way that is subjectively

appropriate as well." One, that is, must be in some relevant sense aware that one's belief is formed in the right way.[xxii]

In other words, Greco—an epistemic externalist himself—recognizes the importance of recognizes the importance of accommodating a core internalist intuition about justification. And in order to reconcile the two views' seemingly opposing intuitions on justification, he is cautious to not speak about justification *simpliciter* but, instead, introduce a distinction between subjective and objective justification. The *objective justification* an agent's belief enjoys will be a matter of whether the agent is justified from an objective—bird's eye—point of view, no matter whether the agent is in any way aware that this is so. *Subjective justification*, on the other hand, refers to whether the agent is, or at least can become, somehow aware—from her point of view—whether her beliefs are reliably, or—even weaker—not unreliably, formed.[xxiii] On the basis of this distinction, we can then say that epistemic internalists have been fixating on subjective justification— with the aspiration to account for it exclusively in terms of factors that are internal to the agent's (conscious or non-conscious) psychology, whereas reliabilists have insisted that what matters is objective justification. As with most cases, however, the middle path is most likely to be the best way to go, which also explains why both extremes may at times appear intuitive: In order to be *fully* justified, such that one's belief, if true, can count as known, *one must be both subjectively and objectively justified.*

We can easily clarify and motivate this claim by considering some of the classic thought experiments to be found in the literature on mainstream epistemology. Suppose, following Pritchard's (2009, 11) gloss on Chisholm's (1977) classic case, that 'Roddy' believes that there is a sheep in the field because he is looking at a sheep-shaped dog. Even though his belief is both true (as luck would have it there is a sheep hidden behind the sheep-shaped dog) and 'justified' (he is looking at something that looks just like a sheep, after all), he still lacks knowledge of the relevant proposition. How so? We can say that even though he is *subjectively* justified—there is nothing wrong with the way he forms his belief from his point of view, such that he is not epistemically culpable—he is not fully justified, because he is not objectively justified: His (total) justificatory process is not objectively reliable because the input to his belief-forming process, in this unfortunate case, is defective.[xxiv]

Similarly consider 'Barney' who forms the belief that he is looking at a real barn by taking a look at a real barn.[xxv] Unbeknownst to him, however, he is in a barn-facade country, where every object that looks like a barn—save the one he is currently looking

at—is a convincing fake. Again, his belief is 'justified' and true, but it does not amount to knowledge. A compelling reason, we want to suggest, is that even though his belief is subjectively justified (not only is there nothing wrong from Barney's point of view, but it is actually formed in a way that is as appropriate as it could ever be to Barney's knowledge[xxvi]) he is not fully justified. The reason is that Barney is not objectively justified, because even though, in his case, the input to his belief-forming process is appropriate, his otherwise normally reliable belief-forming process is unreliable in the environment he finds himself in.[xxvii] Accordingly, his (total) justificatory process is not objectively reliable.[xxviii]

Or consider Plantinga's (1993, 192) famous brain lesion case, whereby the agent has developed a rare brain lesion, one side effect of which is to reliably cause the true belief that one has a brain lesion. This is a case, where even though the agent's justificatory process is *objectively* reliable, meaning that the agent is objectively justified, he nevertheless lacks knowledge. The reason is that, again, he fails to be fully justified, only, this time, the reason for this is that the agent fails to be subjectively justified: From his point of view the justificatory process is so strange—no good epistemic agent takes himself to be justified in believing he has a brain lesion, if the belief happens to spring in his mind out of the blue—that it is entirely inappropriate to believe the relevant output on its basis.[xxix]

And similarly for the Careless Math Student (Greco 2010, 152), who chooses to solve a mathematical problem on the basis of the correct algorithm, which she nevertheless chooses on a whim. Even though his justificatory process is objectively reliable such that he is objectively justified (and will thereby receive a good mark on the exam), he still lacks knowledge of the answer to the relevant problem. The reason, we want to suggest again, is that the Careless Math Student is not fully justified, because he fails to be subjectively justified: He has no understanding that the algorithm is the correct one, meaning that in similar circumstances he could just as well have chosen one that is incorrect. So, from his point of view, he is in no sense aware that the relevant justificatory process is appropriate.[xxx]

We therefore see that there is much to recommend an appeal to the suggested distinction between subjective and objective justification in order to make sense of a variety of cases within mainstream epistemology. We further want to suggest, however, that it can also be used with respect to two more cases that are central to the present discussion.

First, distinguishing between subjective and objective justification can shed significant light on the controversial New Evil Demon intuition that Chase appeals to in order to explain why Bonjour's argument fails to demonstrate an incompatibility between content externalism and the sort of justification that epistemic internalists have in mind. Specifically, we can say that if the New Evil Demon intuition is indeed a guide to the sort of justification that epistemic internalists are concerned with, then, indeed, just as we claimed above, epistemic internalists are only interested in *subjective* justification.

Accordingly, in the case of Stan, we can make the following claim: If the evidential relations between $L*$ and $W*$ (remember: $L*$ and $W*$ are supposed to have the same narrow—*i.e.,* non-externally individuated—content as L and W) are sufficient for Stan to be 'justified' in believing W, on the epistemic internalist's view, then Stan can only count as subjectively justified: His belief is indeed appropriately formed from his point of view, but it is not formed in an objectively reliable way; his (total) justificatory process, we may say, is not reliable, because even though his belief-forming process is appropriate, the input that goes in it is incorrect. Now the reason this is important in the case of doing away with the incompatibility claim between content externalism and epistemic internalism is that by so distinguishing between subjective and objective justification we can be clear about the specific sense in which one can count as justified (in the Access J-Internalist use of the term) even if content externalism is true: Stan is *subjectively* justified despite the fact that he is the victim of the evil demon.[xxxi]

Overall then, if epistemic internalism is only interested in subjective justification and not justification *simpliciter*, there should be no in principle tension between the New Evil Demon intuition (as deployed by epistemic internalists) and reliabilism. Presumably, the reliabilist can claim that even though Stan is subjectively justified, he is not justified in their (objective) sense of the term. Therefore, the New Evil Demon intuition fails to establish that reliability is not necessary for objective justification, which is the kind of justification that is necessary for knowledge.

Nevertheless, following Greco, it seems to us that the right thing to claim is that even though neither epistemic internalism nor reliabilism are correct, both of their underlying intuitions are correct: In order to be fully justified such that one can take one's self to know a true proposition, one needs be both subjectively and objectively justified with respect to it.

Second, the subjective/objective justification distinction can be used in order to see why the epistemic internalist and content externalist are bound to talk past each other

when it comes to interpreting PC in Chase's argument. That is, Sue and Twin Sue both are *and* are not justificational duplicates, depending on the notion of justification one has in mind.

If it is subjective justification we are talking about, then Sue and Twin Sue will indeed count as justificational duplicates; but, then, all we can establish *via* PC is that their justificatory processes are identical only from their—and not an objective, externally individuated—point of view, and this is a claim that is certainly compatible with content externalism. To be more precise, however—such that the content externalist will rest content—we should say that even though Sue and Twin Sue's (internally supervening) belief-forming processes are identical, their (total) justificatory processes are different, because the input that is fed into their (identical, internal) belief-forming processes is externally individuated and, thereby, different.[xxxii]

To the contrary, if it is *objective* justification we are talking about, content externalists will point out that we cannot even start using PC in the Twin Sue case, because they will deny its antecedent (i.e., that Sue and Twin-Sue are justificational duplicates). But then again, so will epistemic internalists, on the grounds that this is not the kind of justification they are interested in when they judge whether two individuals are justification duplicates, and so this is not the right way to read and employ PC. Therefore, we see that, in either case, we fail to establish incompatibility between epistemic internalism and content externalism on the basis of PC, and that this can only *seem* to be the case, when we do not properly distinguish between the two possible concepts of justification in play.

4. CONCLUSION

In summary, we have been through two arguments for the incompatibility of epistemic internalism and content externalism: Bonjour's Simple Accessibilist Argument and Chase's Process Argument. Even though both arguments may initially appear compelling, they both seem to fail on grounds of illicit equivocation *vis-à-vis* 'justification'. Specifically, both arguments seem to promiscuously jump back and forth between the concepts of subjective and objective justification. This is a particularly meaningful distinction, which we have seen can be independently motivated on the basis of a wide variety of thought experiments within mainstream epistemology. In addition, however, it has also turned out to be especially useful for understanding what's wrong with both

Bonjour's and Chase's arguments—despite their initial plausibility—and, also, for reconciling the relevant underlying intuitions of all epistemic internalism, epistemic externalism and content externalism.

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[i] 'Externalism' with respect to *any property* is tantamount to the claim that, as Lau & Deutch (2014, §1) put it: 'whether an individual has that property or not depends, at least in part, on facts about the individual's external environment'.

[ii] We here refer to Access J-Internalism. For two influential defences of Access J-Internalism, see Chisholm (1977) and Bonjour (1985, ch. 2). For some helpful recent discussions of Access J-Internalism and its role in the wider epistemological externalism/internalism debate, see Steup (1999), Pryor (2001, §3), Bonjour (2002), Pappas (2005), and Poston (2008).

[iii] The *locus classicus* for defences of mentalism is Conee & Feldman (2004). For a set of critical discussions of this proposal, see Dougherty (2011).

[iv] Occasionally, we use the terms 'Accessibilism' and 'Mentalism' as abbreviations for 'Access J-Internalism' and 'Mentalist J-Internalism', respectively.

[v] See Chase (2001, 327) for a slightly different way of extracting Bonjour's argument.

[vi] Bonjour (1992, 136) remarks that "The adoption of an externalist account of mental content would seem to support an externalist account of justification in the following way: if part or all of the content of a belief is inaccessible to the believer, then both the justifying status of other beliefs in relation to that content and the status of that content as justifying further beliefs will be similarly inaccessible, thus contradicting the internalist requirement for justification." On this line of thinking, the content of my belief 'X is F" where X is an externally individuated (i.e. wide) content is not reflectively accessible in such a way that 'X is F" can never, by the standards of J-Internalism, be something that justifies any other belief I have.

[vii] Note that Williamson (2007, 107-108) offers a similarly straightforward argument for the incompatibility of content externalism and epistemic internalism construed along *mentalist* lines, with the operative point being that Oscar and Twin Oscar can differ in their justified beliefs (given content externalism) despite being internal duplicates—a difference that Williamson takes to be incompatible with the mentalist claim that internal duplicates are justificational duplicates. It is interesting to note that Madison (2009, §3, esp.

pp. 180-182) objects to Williamson's argument for the incompatibility of content externalism with Mentalist J-Internalism for essentially the same reasons (as we show) Chase sites in objecting to Bonjour's argument for the incompatibility of content externalism with *Access* J-internalism.

[viii] Madison (2009) engages primarily with an incompatibilist thesis submitted by Williamson (2007).

[ix] For the seminal discussion of the new evil demon cases, see Lehrer & Cohen (1983; *cf.* Cohen 1984). There is a wealth of literature on new evil demon cases. For some of the key texts and recent discussions of this topic, see Bach (1985), Goldman (1988), Engel (1992), Bonjour & Sosa (2003, 159-61), Neta & Pritchard (2007) and Littlejohn (2012). For an excellent survey of recent work on the new evil demon, see Littlejohn (2009).

[x] Compare here with Madison's (2009, 182) point that the internal grounds relevant to epistemic J-Internalism's accessibility requirement are 'what is necessarily in common between twins in Twin Earth scenarios'—*viz.*, narrow content that is 'subjectively indistinguishable' in the two cases. It is a difficult philosophical question how to articulate with precision what is subjectively indistinguishable and 'necessarily in common' in these cases, in part because, on some views (e.g. Dretske (1996)), what is subjectively indistinguishable is also widely individuated, and so would not be 'necessarily in common' between the twins in Twin Earth scenarios. See here, along with Dretske (1996), Lycan (2001) for the view that *qualia* are wide, where qualia in Lycan's (2001, 18) sense are 'the introspectible qualitative phenomenal features that characteristically inhere in sensory experiences.' *Cf.* Block's (1990) 'Inverted Earth' argument.

[xi] We should here note that Chase's remarks about how the epistemic internalist's intuition with respect to new evil demon cases can be used against Bonjour's arguments are condensed to a few brief sentences in p. 238 of his 2001 paper. We cannot be entirely sure that the above analysis is exactly what Chase has in mind. As an anonymous referee has pointed out, however, it would indeed be very helpful to unpack what is supposed to be the input of new evil demon intuitions to the debate over the incompatibility of epistemic internalism and content externalism. Accordingly, even though the above 4 paragraphs may well stand on their own, we also hope that they are a charitable interpretation of Chase's relevant remarks.

[xii] Cf. Vahid (2003, 101-103), however, for a criticism of Chase's critique of Bonjour's argument.

[xiii] Chase (2001, 239) articulates mentalism, which he calls *J-Int$_2$* in this way: 'For all agents a_1 and a_2 and worlds w_1 and w_2, if a_1 in w_1 and a_2 in w_2 are identical in the internal physical constitutions on which their minds supervene, then a_1 and a_2 are identical in all respects relevant to the justification of their beliefs.'

[xiv] We paraphrase the argument as Chase (*Op. cit.*, 241) presents it. In particular, we are using "Mentalist J-Internalism" where Chase is using his favoured articulation of Mentalist J-Internalism, which (as we noted in the previous footnote) he calls J-Int$_2$.

[xv] For the original presentation of the famous twin-earth thought experiment, see Putnam (1975).

[xvi] Chase (2001, 241-242). See also Brueckner (2002, 513-514) for a presentation of Chase's argument for (2).

[xvii] Sue is reasoning through premises (e.g. 1 and 2) about *water* while Twin Sue is reasoning through premises about *twater*.

[xviii] Chase (*Op. cit.*, 242).

[xix] See also Brueckner (*Op. cit.*, 514).

xx One particular point of controversy has been how best to reply to the 'generality problem' for process reliabilism. See here Feldman (1985) and Conee and Feldman (1998). See also the bootstrapping and 'easy knowledge' problems (e.g. Vogel (2000) Cohen (2002)).

xxi Cautionary note: Running ahead of ourselves, this is not to claim that the two concepts of justification we are about to introduce—viz., objective and subjective justification—*define* the debate over epistemic internalism and externalism. That is, at least with respect to subjective justification, which seems to be the sort of justification that drives the internalist intuitions, there is no reason to assume that it can't be given an externalist account. Subjective justification, in other words, may as well depend on both internal aspects of the agent's (conscious) psychology and things that are external to it. For such a take on subjective justification see Greco (2005) and Palermos (2014).

xxii Similarly, Steve Fuller suggests that reliabilism in insufficient for knowledge on the grounds that it misses a very important aspect of our epistemically sentient nature:

> Anything calling itself "epistemology" — including "social epistemology — not concerned with the formation of beliefs and only examining reliable processes for arriving at the truth provides no more than an account of knowledge fit for androids not humans—that is to say, an epistemology where all the action occurs without the mediation of consciousness (Fuller 2012, 269).

xxiii For anyone who may feel uncomfortable with the terms "objective" and "subjective" justification, two possible alternative terminologies that we have been trying out are "first person" and "third person" justification or "justification from one's point of view" and "justification from a bird's-eye point of view". We here prefer, however, to stick with Greco's terms, which are already available in the literature (and which, in comparison to the above alternatives, are more successful in capturing what we mean).

xxiv Henceforth, the agent's '(total) justificatory process' will refer to the conjunction of the agent's belief-forming process and the input that is fed into it. Moreover, we take it that, in order for the (total) justificatory process to be reliable, it must be the case that both the agent's belief-forming process is reliable and that its input is correct.

xxv (Pritchard 2009, 12); *cf.* Ginet (1975) and Goldman (1976) for earlier versions of this classic case.

xxvi *Cf.* here, however, proponents of factive accounts of reasons, e.g. McDowell (1994).

xxvii As Greco (2013, 22) has put the point, '[The protagonist in the classic barn façade case] believes from a disposition that is reliable relative to normal environments, but not relative to the environment he is in.' See Greco's 'Working Farm' case (*Ibid.* 23) for a fuller expression of this idea. For another expression of the idea, couched in the language of perceptual-recognitional abilities, see Millar's (2010, 126-127) suggestion that:

> 'When Barney judges falsely in fake-barn territory he fails to exercise an ability to tell of certain structures that they are barns from the way they look. Indeed, he does not have the ability to tell structures around there that they are barns from the way they look. Of course, when he is there he does something like that he also does back home —judge of some structures that look like barns that they are barns—and in doing so he will sometimes judge correctly. But that does not amount to his being able to tell of the structures that they are barns from the way they look.'

xxviii To be clear here, nothing said in our diagnosis of the classic barn-façade cases contradicts the popular suggestion (see for example Pritchard (2005)) that environmental epistemic luck is incompatible with knowledge. That is, nothing suggested here indicates that cases whereby one's belief is undermined by

environmental epistemic luck, as is Pritchard's gloss on the barn-façade case, cannot as well be cases where the agent is not objectively justified in virtue of the general kind of explanation being offered.

xxix See here Greco (2010, 149).

xxx Of course, there is another potential take on this case, according to which the relevant process is construed liberally as the process of choosing an algorithm on a whim to solve a math problem. If one were to construe the process this liberally (where the whimsicality is built in to the process), then the agent is neither subjectively nor objectively justified. However, and even though the thrust of our argument doesn't turn on this point, we would also like to note that whimsicality seems to be conceptually connected with how things look from one's point of view such that it may only pertain to facts about one's subjective justification.

xxxi Notice that one may here attempt to provide an account of subjective justification in terms of narrow content: If the justification relations between the narrow contents of one's beliefs that make up one's belief-forming process are appropriate—something which can be clearly assessed from one's point of view—then one can be subjectively justified in holding the resulting proposition *p,* no matter whether *p* is indeed true or false. That is, narrowly individuated yet appropriate belief-forming processes allow one, from one's point of view, to inculpably hold that *p,* even when one is massively deceived, such that *p* (and anything else that is fed into one's narrowly individuated aspects of one's belief-forming processes) is false. In other words, one's subjective justification, and thereby epistemic responsibility, hinges only on the justification relations of the narrow contents of one's beliefs. To the contrary, one's objective (and thereby total justification) relies on the wide content of one's beliefs. Accordingly, one cannot be fully justified in believing *p, even if* one's subjective justification is impeccable *and even if*, as is the case with Gettier cases, *p* somehow turns out to be true. In order to be fully justified the wide content of the beliefs that participate in one's belief-forming processes must be appropriate as well—i.e., one must form one's further beliefs on the basis of true beliefs.

xxxii In relation to the previous note, then, one could claim again that subjective justification concerns only those aspects of one's belief-forming processes that rely solely on one's narrow contents. In order to judge whether one is *fully* justified, however, we also need to look at one's objective justification: In other words we also need to check that one's belief-forming processes operate on true beliefs, which means that we also need to check whether the wide content of one's beliefs is appropriate as well. As a final note, however, we should mention that epistemic externalists will most likely resist the above approach to subjective justification on the grounds 1) that not all belief-forming processes operate on beliefs and 2) that it relies too heavily on the agent's conscious psychology in a way that it requires an implausibly active and reflective stance on the part of the agent that is absent in cases of perception or telling the sex of chickens apart.