

# Naturalism, Normativity, and Reasons

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ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER – RECEIVED 16. 12. 2025. ACCEPTED 7. 5. 2026.

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**ABSTRACT:** Marko Jurjako's recent monograph, *Normative Reasons from a Naturalistic Point of View*, is an engaging defence of a naturalistic meta-ethics. The book's specific focus is on normative reasons, which it understands along subjectivist lines. In my contribution to this symposium, my primary aim is to clarify some of the positions taken by Jurjako and to point out possible problems with them with an eye on further developing these positions. This does not mean that I agree with his naturalistic meta-ethics; nonetheless, I do see it as a major contender in today's meta-ethical landscape. I interpret Jurjako as being a naturalist in meta-ethics, not only methodologically, but also substantively. However, as I try to show, this does not come clearly forward from the book even though the book explicitly endorses naturalism. Along the way I also make some critical remarks about Jurjako's treatment of Enoch's idealization challenge and his use of Street's evolutionary debunking argument.

**KEYWORDS:** dispositionalism, evolution, idealization, naturalism, normativity, Derek Parfit, reasons, subjectivism

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## I. Introduction

Contemporary meta-ethics was born, the common opinion goes, with G.E. Moore's *Principia Ethica* (Moore 2002). In his magnum opus, Moore has argued for four theses, the first two of which are meta-ethical in nature: that the fundamental ethical notion is goodness and that the term 'good' refers to a non-natural property.<sup>1</sup> Both of these ideas are alive and influential up to this day, but they are far from being unanimously accepted. These days 'reason' seems to have replaced 'good' as the fundamental ethical notion as attention has moved away from evaluative matters to a focus on normativity (Darwall 2025).<sup>2</sup> As for non-naturalism, it is still thriving in certain corners of meta-ethics, but it is not the dominant view. In the face of the 'outside'

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<sup>1</sup> The other two theses present Moore's first-order ethical views advocating for a pluralistic ideal utilitarianism.

<sup>2</sup> Of course, axiology (the theory of value) is still an important part of ethics, but it is less influential in meta-ethics. For the turn to reasons, if one is to mention one particular 'early' work, it is typical to credit the work of Joseph Raz, in particular, his *Practical Reason and Norms* (Raz 2002), originally published in 1975.

world's embrace of the authority of science, it has become customary in meta-ethics to question whether anything that cannot be investigated by science could give us ethical truths.<sup>3</sup> Marko Jurjako's book, *Normative Reasons from a Naturalistic Point of View* (Jurjako 2024) consciously and explicitly places itself in this trend.<sup>4</sup>

That is, on the face of it at least, Jurjako embraces the meta-ethical position of naturalism and understands normativity in terms of (normative) reasons.<sup>5</sup> The position that seems to follow from this is that normative facts are facts about reasons, which in turn are natural facts, i.e., facts science deals with.<sup>6</sup> Lastly, the best account we have about what these natural facts are is subjectivist: they are facts about what would fulfil what we desire or, more broadly, what we have pro-attitudes toward, at least after a process of idealization (correcting for errors etc).<sup>7</sup> Actions are then supported by reasons if these reasons are in some way anchored in the agent's subjective states. There are some twists and turns to this story and some important modifications to the basic picture it paints, but for present introductory purposes this much should suffice.

Jurjako's self-imposed challenge in the rest of the book is to defend this approach. As he puts it (2–3):

The challenge of providing an elucidation of the nature of normative reasons can be explained as a facet of the broader problem of explaining the phenomena of normativity as a whole within a naturalistic worldview.

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<sup>3</sup> The other classic work one should mention in this context is Henry Sidgwick's *The Methods of Ethics* (Sidgwick 1962), although Sidgwick's primary interest in the book is not solely meta-ethical as in Moore's case. It is notable, however, that in many ways Sidgwick predated today's turn to the normative, although his own preferred central notion is not 'reason' but 'ought', where 'ought' is understood as final corresponding to a 'duty proper' (as opposed to a *prima facie* duty). For more on this and the connection to Sidgwick's dualism of practical reason, see Crisp (2015) and Phillips (2022).

<sup>4</sup> Henceforth I will only reference Jurjako's book fully if the context requires it; otherwise, I will only use page numbers for reference.

<sup>5</sup> Jurjako (4–9) distinguishes normative reasons from motivating reasons ('reasons for which'). Henceforth I will use 'reason' to stand for 'normative reason' in the text, unless otherwise noted. Exactly how to distinguish the two types of reason is a matter in its own right also because there appear to be different kinds of motivating reasons. I let this problem rest in this article; I discuss the issues surrounding it in (Morganti & Tanyi 2017).

<sup>6</sup> Arguably, the term 'natural' in this or any other context is hard to define, but I think Jurjako wouldn't mind this rough and ready definition. See Copp (2003) for discussion.

<sup>7</sup> Jurjako has no consistent protocol for denoting the position he has in mind. Sometimes he writes about state-based reasons (following Parfit), sometimes about subject-based reasons, and yet other times about stance-dependent reasons (and truths), and sometimes also 'subjectivist' reasons. Not as criticism but I will mainly use the established terms 'subjectivist' and 'subjectivism' to denote the more general approach in question. On some occasions, when context requires, I will use the same terms that Jurjako uses.

Throughout this endeavour, Jurjako's main sparring partner, his main opposition, is Derek Parfit (Parfit 2017, 2011a, 2011b) who denies both parts of the picture Jurjako endorses: he is a non-naturalist about normativity, and he is a non-subjectivist about reasons. Jurjako first argues against Parfit (Chapter 2) after setting the stage (Chapter 1), then he turns to another prominent non-naturalist, David Enoch (Enoch 2005) and responds to his idealization challenge (Chapter 3), before defending Sharon Street's (Street 2006) evolutionary debunking argument against Parfit's objections (Chapter 5). These are, for me, the cornerstones of the book, but there is valuable material in further chapters, which will come handy in discussing the issues I find most engaging.

In my own contribution, I will focus first on Jurjako's naturalism and its connection to his views on reasons: here I will try to clarify – without fully succeeding – exactly what Jurjako thinks about naturalism, whether a naturalist must endorse a subjectivist theory of reasons (Section II), and whether the resulting account is really as defensible as Jurjako claims it to be (Section III). After this, I turn to Jurjako's response to Enoch (Section IV) and lastly, I discuss his defence of Street's evolutionary debunking argument against moral realism (Section V).<sup>8</sup> I then end my paper with a short summary and conclusion.

## II. Naturalism and Reasons

There are many terms and labels floating around in contemporary meta-ethical debates (as in most other debates in philosophy, one might add). I cannot clear up this terminological bonanza, but I can, in an arguably simplifying manner, define what I mean by the central terms I will use in what follows. Standardly, most discussion in meta-ethics is about morality, but these days, as explained above, the discussion was extended to normativity as such (arguably but not undisputedly, morality is a subset), and therefore, just like Jurjako, I will focus on normativity. For now, I will remain neutral on what the primitive normative notion is, whether it is 'reason', 'rationality', 'ought', or 'duty' (to name the main contenders). As we proceed with setting out Jurjako's position, this will become clear enough, I hope.

In this spirit, take the following six propositions (Karimi 2024):

- i. There are normative properties and facts.

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<sup>8</sup> This is a term not used so far. Street's focus is on morality (a point that will become important later) and she is out against realists about moral judgments and facts. Non-naturalism, as I've used the label so far, is a form of realism (moral, or broadly, normative), but some more work is needed to be able to use these terms clearly enough. I will therefore start the next section by painting the conceptual landscape in more precise terms.

- ii. Normative propositions are true or false.
- iii. Some of these propositions are true.
- iv. Normative judgments are beliefs.
- v. Normative propositions are irreducibly normative in the sense that they are not reducible to or derivable from any non-normative propositions.
- vi. Normative properties are metaphysically robust (or) weighty.

Jurjako tends to write about ‘robust realism’ as his main opponent and he takes Parfit and Enoch to be representatives of this position. This is both true and false in my own terminology. It is ‘true’ insofar as both authors accept (i)–(v) and these are the propositions, especially (v), that are important for Jurjako (although, proposition (vi) will be of brief relevance when we get to evolutionary debunking).<sup>9</sup> But it is also false because they differ on (vi), which is the ‘robustness proposition’ on the list. Parfit is what is these days called a ‘relaxed realist’, that is, a realist who eschews heavy ontological commitments (Parfit 2021).<sup>10</sup> At the same time, non-reductive naturalists, such as so-called Cornell realists (Brink (1989), Sturgeon (1985), Railton (1986)) accept (i)–(vi). Reductive naturalists, analytical (Jackson (2008), Smith (2009b)) as well as non-analytical, while don’t accept (v), do accept (vi).

In short, all these positions, except Parfit’s own relaxed realism and, partially, reductive naturalism, qualify, in my view (and terminology), as robust realists, of one stripe or another (naturalist or non-naturalist). Parfit’s realism does not qualify because he does not allow normative facts and properties to play a truthmaking role and/or to explain normative meaning (Karimi 2024). So, while Jurjako’s ‘robust realism’ covers his main opponents like Enoch, it doesn’t in effect cover Parfit (who is a relaxed realist), while it does cover some naturalists (non-reductive naturalists) whom, as I will argue, are not only not among his opponents, but he himself might be one of them. I think, therefore, that it is useful to keep this difference in terminology in mind.

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<sup>9</sup> This is at least how I read his point 3 on page 105. Of course, ‘stance-dependence’ need not be the same as ‘non-normative’ but for now we can leave this question open. These are substantive matters that are up for discussion (along with Parfit’s parallel claim that naturalist has no right to talk about normative properties).

<sup>10</sup> This is a crucial claim for Parfit because, in his view, this allows him to find agreement with other realists as well as non-realists. Others, such as Ronald Dworkin (Dworkin 1996), Thomas Nagel (Nagel 1989), Thomas Scanlon (Scanlon 2014), and John Skorupski (Skorupski 2010) also belong in this camp, although they are much less likely to be as conciliatory toward competing positions as is Parfit.

This is then, in a nutshell, the theoretical landscape as far as (normative) realism is concerned. My primary aim in this – and, more indirectly, in the next – section is to ask where exactly Jurjako falls in these categories, in particular, what kind of naturalism Jurjako is embracing in his book. I think this is important in itself to clarify especially for someone like Jurjako who self-professes to be a naturalist. But it has also relevance for what it is to come later: the success or failure of the different arguments Jurjako considers for and against his position. And of course, when we ask what kind of naturalist Jurjako is, we must also situate his preferred subjectivist theory of reasons in the emerging picture, which, as we shall see, will not prove to be as straightforward as one might expect it to be.

We get some clues from Jurjako, but I find it somewhat hard to piece them together. He is clear that he is a *methodological* naturalist (Jurjako 2024). But methodological naturalism is compatible with substantive meta-ethical positions some of which are avowedly anti-realist (quasi-realism, error theory, constructivism, to name but a few). It is, after all, ‘just’ the idea that one should adopt an *a posteriori* explanatory approach to an area of human practice or discourse such as epistemology, semantics or ethics. The real question is whether Jurjako is also what is often called a *substantive* naturalist (Railton 1989). This is the kind of view that I’ve tried to locate above in today’s landscape: on this view, naturalism proposes an interpretation of the concepts and properties in some area of practice or discourse in terms of *natural* properties or relations. Most of these naturalists are robust realists in my terminology (I am reluctant to use the title regarding reductive, especially, analytical naturalism) but there are significant differences among them. Is Jurjako a substantive naturalist?

The answer to this question, perhaps surprisingly, is not fully clear to me. In a footnote (12, fn. 4), Jurjako notes the following:

Some even claim that if there were reasons to accept naturalism, then naturalism would be false, since it cannot accommodate the notion of a normative reason (Parfit 2011a). One of the main aims of the book is to show that there is a viable naturalistically friendly account of normative reasons.

This footnote is curious because in the main text to which the note is added, Jurjako is in fact writing about methodological naturalism, whereas the footnote is clearly about substantive naturalism. At least that’s what I think given the reference to Parfit whose interest was, in this sense, in rejecting substantively naturalist positions, not methodology (although, no doubt, his own realism is not methodologically naturalist). Take, for example, his normativity and triviality objections that I think are the best objections to naturalism today (and I will discuss them briefly in the next section).

The naturalism under attack in them is a substantive, ontological (and conceptual) position, not a methodological one.<sup>11</sup>

Can help come from the other main scaffolding in Jurjako's account, his endorsement of subjectivism about reasons? In brief, can Jurjako's endorsement tie him to substantive naturalism? I don't think so (and I think he would agree with me, but I am not sure, as I explain later). Let me elaborate. After the discussion (in Chapter 2) of Parfit's various objections to subjectivism, Jurjako goes on to put forward his own preferred account of reasons. It is an ideal dispositionalist (response-dependent) analysis according to which (69):<sup>12</sup>

(RD) The fact that *p* is a normative reason for *X* to *F* iff *X* is disposed to *F* on the basis of *p*, in conditions where *X* is rational.

For (RD) to be a subjectivist position, 'rationality' must be understood in compatible terms: it has to be subjectivized.<sup>13</sup> This is a tricky matter since it demands that rationality is understood in purely *procedural* terms correcting for errors of reasoning and of facts, to begin with. But what else procedural rationality involves is unclear and is potentially treacherous ground for the subjectivist since they must avoid smuggling in evaluative/normative terms in their account of rationality in ways that prejudice what is valuable or what we have reason to do (Loeb 1995; Rosati 1995; Sobel 2021). Yet, for our purposes here, we can grant that this is a workable strategy.<sup>14</sup>

No doubt, RD can be a naturalist position. But it need not be. The issue here is in a sense a broader question and it concerns the relation theories of reasons have to substantive meta-ethical theories, in this case, to meta-normative theories. If one is an advocate of some kind of subjectivism, is one

<sup>11</sup> The footnote might be a reference to Jurjako's upcoming discussion of Williams's internal reasons account (32–4), but Williams's position is also in the substantive and not the methodological camp.

<sup>12</sup> Again, subjectivist positions like Jurjako's that use idealization (in Jurjako's case the appeal to rationality) were first worked out in the theory of value (and of morality): its early proponents were interested in goodness and rightness and not in reasons (Brandt 1998; Firth 1952). This is one problem with the supposed distinction between value-based and desire-based theories of reasons (a distinction Jurjako does not use), since desire-based theories can see goodness in terms of desires, i.e., desire-based theories also qualify as value-based, it is just that their account of goodness is different.

<sup>13</sup> (RD) also shows that, contrary to some statements at the start of the book (3), Jurjako is not a 'reasons-first' theorist, but a 'capacity-first' one. He makes this clear himself (143): he understands reasons (so-called substantive reasons) in terms of rationality (the faculty of reason construed as a set of principles) and not the other way round (or hold that the two are independent sources of normativity, like Broome (2013) does).

<sup>14</sup> For more on procedural rationality and the related notion of structural rationality (which briefly Jurjako discusses and criticizes, 31–33), see Hooker & Streumer (2004).

thereby automatically placed in the (substantive) naturalist camp? Sadly (for some), the answer is no.<sup>15</sup>

Subjectivism, I think Jurjako would agree (cf. 37), is easiest to be seen as taking a position in *Euthyphro's* dilemma: someone like Jurjako would say that something is valuable – in the present context: normative – because we desire it, and not the other way around. I suspect that there is a temptation to read this as taking the *further* position of denying non-naturalist realism (robust or otherwise) since, assuming that the best naturalistic construal would be along subjectivist lines, it appears that we are saying that values or reasons (or whatever is your favourite axiological or normative (deontic) category) are now cashed out in terms of subjective states of mind ('desires', 'pro attitudes', what have you). Insofar as one is a realist, endorsing subjectivism about reasons might then appear to commit one to naturalistic realism, to be an advocate of some kind of substantive naturalism.<sup>16</sup>

This can be translated into the language Jurjako opts to use in his book: the language of the reason-relation. He takes over (23) John Skorupski's account of reasons as multi-place relations: "Set of facts  $r_i$  is at time  $t$  a reason of degree of strength  $d$  for  $X$  to  $\Psi$ ."<sup>17</sup> We could abbreviate this as  $R(r_i, t, d, X, \Psi)$  to bring out the idea that reasons are best understood as relations. Most places in this schematic relational structure are not important for us; only two of them matter:  $R$ , the reason-relation, and  $r_i$ , what Jurjako calls "the ground or basis of the reason-relation". Subjectivism about reasons can enter this relational view of reasons in two places of the relation:  $R$  ('counting in favor'), the relation itself, and  $r_i$ , the 'ground or basis of reason relation' (23).

Jurjako's position is clear: if reasons are relations, subjectivism about reasons must offer us an account of the reason-relation. He writes (50):

Thus, the general claim is that reasons are not provided by intrinsic properties of things that are encapsulated in the relation *counting in favor of*. The basic idea is that the relation *counting in favor of* can be explained by examining the interaction between the rational agent's structure and the environment she is situated in. In

<sup>15</sup> As I say, I think Jurjako would agree. For example, on page 50 (italics are mine) he writes: "What is important is that subject-based theorists, according to my construal, endorse some kind of dispositionalist *or* constructivist account of reasons [...]". And indeed, in Chapter 6 (157) there is a lot of appeal to solving tasks and to Korsgaard's Kantian constructivist theory. So, perhaps, Jurjako sees himself as a potential constructivist, although, presumably, the Humean type (e.g. Street) and not the Kantian kind (e.g. Korsgaard).

<sup>16</sup> Again, as noted in the previous footnote, *if* Jurjako is not a realist, further options are open to him, among them constructivism (which I do not regard as a realist position, but this is another matter).

<sup>17</sup> Perhaps a bit pedantic, but this is not the correct quote from Skorupski (at least I couldn't find the quote Jurjako uses). What Skorupski writes on this page is this: " $R(r_i, t, d, x, \psi) \rightarrow r_i$  is/are at time  $t$  a reason of degree of strength  $d$  for  $x$  to  $\psi$ " (Skorupski 2010).

essence, the subjectivist perspective asserts that things hold value, or provide reasons, based on their alignment with our desires and fundamental concerns, primarily determined by what we currently value or would value under specific conditions [...]

I am with Jurjako on this, but it is important to emphasize that not nearly everyone agrees. Here is David Sobel, the perhaps most prominent subjectivist today (Sobel 2021):<sup>18</sup>

Other views, such as Parfit's and Scanlon's version of non-naturalism, are compatible with subjectivism about what grounds reasons even while being non-naturalist about what the reasons relation is. To be clear, Parfit and Scanlon both argue strongly against subjectivism. But as I read them, no part of that argument is their non-naturalism. Parfit is clear that even if you accept his sort of non-naturalism, subjectivism is still not ruled out. Subjectivism as I conceive of it is entirely compatible with non-naturalism at the metanormative level. I find subjectivism clearly more tempting as an account of what grounds reasons than as an account of what the reason relation is. Parfit and Scanlon rightly insist that until one has shown that what the reason relation is turns out to be nothing over and above some naturalistic state, one has not yet fully naturalized one's worldview. And thus, even if we accept subjectivism about what grounds reasons, work remains to ensure a fully naturalistic view. [...] The core thought behind subjectivism can remain whether we are naturalists or not. The core thought is that valuers generate value with their valuing. The direction of explanation goes from valuing to value rather than the reverse. That can be true whether we accept naturalism or not. Thus as I see it issues surrounding naturalism, epistemic worries, metaphysical worries, and whether subjectivists are identifying desire-satisfaction with what the reason relation is are possible additions to the subjectivist view, but not part of that core.

In a sense, Sobel makes a simple point here. Subjectivism is a position about what grounds reasons: only subjective states can do that. In Bernard Williams's (Williams 1981) language, all reasons are internal; there are no external reasons.<sup>19</sup> (RD) is such a position since dispositions are subjective states (in fact, Sobel (Copp & Sobel 2002) as do many others, endorses a dispositional account of desire). But investigating the question *why* this is so, belongs to the realm of what he above calls metanormativity: the nature of

<sup>18</sup> I apologize for the long quote, but I think it's worth it.

<sup>19</sup> One has to be careful here, though. Internalism about reasons, as Dancy (2004) (and many others, including Parfit), point out, is compatible with the idea that one's reasons must be dependent on one's desires. This would be a kind of existence internalism (Darwall 1992) that is compatible with a non-subjectivist account of reasons. This is because it does not claim that we have reasons if and only if, and because we have the relevant desires (the 'because' is particularly important – think of *Euthyphro* – although RD does not have it); it holds that we have reasons only if we have the relevant desires. Cf. Jurjako's definition of Williams' internal reasons (44) and his claim that this motivational role of reasons (Williams called this the 'explanatory constraint') counts strongly against Parfit's endorsement of object-given reasons. But it doesn't, not in the way as presented in the text.

normativity, naturalistic or otherwise, requires separate investigation and is orthogonal to the question of what grounds or provides reasons.

Sobel does put this claim in an ontological setting familiar to us by now. He writes: “I find subjectivism clearly more tempting as an account of what grounds reasons than as an account of what the reason relation is.” The way I read Sobel (but this may well not be the only way), what he is saying, situated in the ontological picture of the reason-relation painted by Skorupski and endorsed by Jurjako, is that subjectivism is a position first and foremost about  $r_i$  and *not* about  $R$ . That is, reasons are desires or they are facts of desire-satisfaction that count in favour of, i.e., stand in the reason-relation to action (practical reasons). Jurjako, however, does not like this idea. He briefly considers the claim that on subject-based theories reasons are mental states, whereas on object-based theories, they are the contents or objects of these states. He rejects (51) this thought on the ground that:

the subjectivist theories would immediately look implausible, since they would not be able to account for the *counting in favor of* relation and how we normally conceive of it. We normally talk about facts that are not about our desires as being reasons to do something or to believe something. Moreover, desires are normally not construed as relations that count in favor of something. At most, the content of a desire or the fact that one has a desire that  $p$ , is used as a grounding part of the *counting in favor of* relation. Instead of asserting that desires serve as reasons on subject-based theories, these theories can also acknowledge that reasons are, in fact, facts or states of affairs that can become the objects of a person’s desires [...] The crucial distinction between object-based and subject-based theories is ontological, in the sense that on both accounts reasons can be facts or states of affairs outside the agent, however they vary on what *makes* those facts reasons.

The problem with this rebuttal is two-fold.<sup>20</sup> One is that, as Sobel already made clear, it is far from obvious that the subjectivism/objectivism debate about reasons *must* be about the *counting in favor of* relation. Sobel, for one, clearly thinks it isn’t. Jurjako does provide a consideration to back up his position, which is that we have to allow that reasons “facts or states of affairs that can become the objects of a person’s desires”. But this can be accomplished even if one endorses a subjectivist account. For example, one can endorse, as many do, what Mark Schroeder calls (and rejects) the *No Background Condition*: that everything, every fact (to steer now away from the view that reasons are mental states) that is part of the explanation of why something is a reason, must be part of the reason. This would mean that  $r_i$  is

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<sup>20</sup> Possibly three-fold since there is a separate and ongoing debate about the ontology of reasons, both normative and motivating. See Morganti et al. (2019); Morganti & Tanyi (2017) for details. This discussion is largely metaphysical and does not concern the nature of normativity, so it could be taken to be orthogonal to the other two debates that are in focus in the text.

best construed as a complex fact containing facts about desire satisfaction as well as other facts. What Jurjako does, it seems to me, is to reject this condition, along with Schroeder, and this is fine, but, especially without argument, this does not have to happen if one is a subjectivist.

So, one problem with the idea that subjectivism about reasons gives us a substantively naturalist position is that subjectivism must then make a statement about the reason-relation. But, as Sobel rightly points out above, it need not do so. Of course, our question is not the purely theoretical one of whether subjectivism is a naturalist position but whether Jurjako thinks so. I don't think he does since I see no clear sign of this in his book. He is a methodological naturalist, clear enough, but his views on the ontological position of substantive naturalism are much less clear to me. However, he does claim, I believe wrongly (as I argued above), that (RD) and subjectivism in general are positions on what the reason-relation is. This does seem to commit him, albeit on shaky premises, to a substantively naturalist position.<sup>21</sup>

However, even assuming that he is right about subjectivism and the reason-relation, for the move to naturalism to happen, one more obstacle has to be handled: he must show how rationality can not only be subjectivized but also be naturalized. The book does say a lot about rationality, but I am not sure how helpful this is in the present context.<sup>22</sup> To subjectivize rationality, as we saw, substantive rationality in the way described above in introducing (RD), must be avoided. To naturalize rationality, naturalistic reduction must at least be a possibility (even if one is a non-reductive naturalist, this is only on the level of concepts, not on the level of properties), however complex the natural property might turn out to be.

These topics, as far as I can tell, are not explicitly taken up in the book. In Chapter 4 of the book, for example, Jurjako shows interest in how one can sort out defective desires in a subjectivist account, by appealing to 'profound concerns', 'identity', 'valuations', 'a person's deep or intrinsic concerns' (91–5) will not help in this context since the question is exactly how we understand these terms and concepts. Chapter 6 openly sets out to tell a naturalistic story about the emergence of rational capacities and the phenomenological difference between hypothetical and categorical reasons. But this,

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<sup>21</sup> I do would like to add that I think Jurjako *is* right that subjectivism *should be* about the reason-relation. In previous publications (including the ones referenced in the previous footnote), I side with Jurjako's view that reasons, i.e., the things that *r* refers to, are 'ordinary', run-of-the-mill facts (e.g. 'that the train is coming'), although on some occasions, these can be facts about desire satisfaction or about our having a belief (Dancy 2004). My point in the text is that the subjectivist *need not* hold this view; hence Jurjako owns us an explanation why he thinks this is clearly – I dare say: obviously – the subjectivist position.

<sup>22</sup> A search in the document for 'rationality' brings up 65 pages where the term is mentioned.

once again, is a methodological story, not an ontological one. For example, Jurjako briefly considers several principles of rationality put forward by Michael Smith (Smith 2009a). But only the first two of these six principles are clearly suitable for a (naturalistic) subjectivist. Thus, while I think the discussion of these chapters is intriguing and very useful from a *methodologically* naturalist perspective, in the present context they do not help us decide where exactly Jurjako stands in the substantive naturalist vs non-naturalist debate. This is not as such a problem, but I think it would be a significant advantage of the book if a clear position came forward in this regard.

### III. Reasons and Normativity

It is possible, though, that Jurjako's discussion of certain objections to subjectivism brings this inquiry forward as well. The discussion in Chapters 2 and 5 are particularly useful. In Chapter 2 of the book, Jurjako discusses two objections by Parfit to state-given reasons. The first is the well-known agony argument that is much discussed in the literature; the second is the perhaps lesser-known incoherence argument, which is both less discussed and is also more interesting in the present content. For, it again, it seems to me, intertwines metanormative theories with theories of reasons.<sup>23</sup> Let me briefly present the objection and Jurjako's response to it. We will take up discussion from there.<sup>24</sup>

The argument rests on three premises, and the claim is that the subjectivist cannot endorse all three premises without contradicting its own position. The three premises are (quoting p. 57; the original reference is Parfit (2011a: 1: 93)):

(M) what we have most reason to do is whatever would best fulfil, not our actual present telic desires or aims, but the desires or aims that we would now have, or would want ourselves to have, if we knew and had rationally considered all of the relevant facts.

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<sup>23</sup> The agony argument is a particular instance of the general strategy that questions the extensional adequacy of subjectivist theories of reasons. As Mark Schroeder (Schroeder 2007) puts it, subjectivism is often taken to admit too many reasons and/or too few. The agony argument belongs to the former camp; the claim, for example, that subjectivism has no place for moral reasons, belongs to the latter. This kind of ping-pong between subjectivist and objectivist has been going on for decades (or centuries). Let me note here that Jurjako (27–8) discusses behaviour of reasons that would normally be taken to be a challenge for subjectivists to accommodate (Jurjako does not seem to acknowledge this). For discussion, see Tanyi (2013).

<sup>24</sup> I follow Jurjako's own presentation of the argument; I do not use Parfit's material directly. I think for what I want to achieve here, this will do.

(N) when we are making important decisions, we ought if we can to try to learn more about the different possible outcomes of our acts, so that we can come to have better informed telic desires or aims, and can then try to fulfil these desires or aims.

(O) these possible outcomes may have intrinsic features that would give us object-given reasons to want either to produce or to prevent these outcomes, if we can.

(M) is just meant to be a Parfitian statement of the subjectivist position (that uses idealization) according to which reasons are state-given; (N) is an epistemic claim about practical deliberation that Parfit assumes we all find acceptable and is also a claim that, according to Parfit, (M) is naturally aligned with; (O) is the claim that Parfit thinks (N) assumes and is nothing else but the statement of the rival, objectivist position according to which reasons are object-given. Hence follows the incoherence charge: since (M) is taken to be true (by subjectivists) and (N) is obviously true (agreed by everyone) and is a natural partner of (M), and given that (N) can only be true if (O) is also true, but given that (O) contradicts (M), (M), on pain of contradiction, must be given up.

To refute the argument, one must reject one of the premises or argue that there is no contradiction even if we accept the premises. (N) is agreed by everyone,<sup>25</sup> while (M) voices the subjectivist position, so Jurjako opts to reject (O) by reformulating it so that it becomes (59):

(O') possible outcomes may have intrinsic features that would give us *subject*-given reasons to want either to produce or prevent some outcome

Jurjako thinks he can do this because of the way he interprets subjectivism about reasons: that it is an account of R, the reason-relation, and not r, the grounds or basis of the relation (the 'intrinsic features' Parfit refers to in his definition of (O)). We saw in the previous section that this *need not* be what subjectivists think but let us set this matter aside here. The result of this move, however, is that (O') now partially restates (M); as Jurjako realizes, (O') renders (M) an analytical statement, a conceptual truth.

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<sup>25</sup> Parfit might be wrong here. Not because (N) is not indeed widely accepted but because it is, as it were, misplaced. While (M) and (O) are in the business of specifying truth conditions for reasons-statements, (N) is in the business of describing decision-making and the two are different roles. This would be a move similar to the one standardly made in normative ethics in defence of consequentialism: that there is a difference between criterion of rightness (truth-conditions) and decision-making (practical deliberation). A similar point is made in a somewhat different context by Sobel (2009) concerning Mark Schroeder's endorsement of what he calls the *Deliberative Constraint*. (We have come across this indirectly when we touched upon the *No Background Condition*: Schroeder rejects it because he endorses the *Deliberative Constraint*.)

Notice, first, that if we go along with Jurjako here, we do get a fairly clear substantively naturalist position: analytical naturalism. This is an ontological position on the nature of the reason-relation that it cashes in an analytically reductive manner. There are two problems with this move. One, Parfit would not go along with it; two, it might not be, on the whole, defensible. Moreover, I think the two issues are related. Let me explain.

In the quote from Parfit that Jurjako also uses, Parfit states the following (Parfit (2011a: 1: 94) quoted by Jurjako at p. 58):

[i]f (O) were false, as Subjectivists claim, we would have no reason to believe that what we have most reason to do is whatever would best fulfil, not our actual present desires or aims, but the desires or aims that we would now have if we had rationally considered all of the facts about the possible outcomes of our acts. And if these facts could not give us reasons to have these desires or aims, we would have no reason to accept (M). We would have no reason to believe that these better-informed desires or aims have any higher reason-giving status, or are desires or aims that we have more reason to try to fulfil.

The central claim in the quote is the first sentence: if (O) were false, we would have no reason to go along with (M). So, (M) is reliant on (O). Why does Parfit claim this? As Jurjako later realizes (63), Parfit might have something like Enoch's idealization challenge in mind. The epistemological principle of (N) and the subjectivist thesis of (M) both presuppose (O) for the same reasons that Enoch thinks idealization must assume the truth of his robust realism. In a nutshell, we idealize because we're looking for the relevant normative facts 'out there'; there is no other reason to endorse idealization. I won't discuss this challenge here; I will make some remarks about in the next section. But there is another point, I think, that Parfit is alluding to in the quote: his normativity and triviality objections (originally, Parfit (2011b) and then also further discussed in Parfit (2017)).

Now, Jurjako does admit that Parfit has arguments against analytical subjectivism, but he says that "these arguments do not aim to demonstrate that analytical subjectivism is inherently incoherent" (60). But I don't think this will do in the book's broader context. If Jurjako's aim is to defend subjectivism about reasons and in response to Parfit's incoherence argument, he ends up endorsing analytical subjectivism, then I think he should tackle head on the objections Parfit makes against this kind of position. It is just natural to consider Parfit's position as a whole, not only in parts; moreover, these two objections are I think the most influential and possibly the best Parfit has against naturalism.

Interestingly, the triviality objection, without being labelled as such, does rear its head somewhat earlier in the book. In discussing Williams's internal reasons account, Jurjako (45) invokes Parfit's first formulation of the

objection (in Parfit (1997: 123–4)). I won't now quote Jurjako quoting Parfit but instead provide a nutshell summary of the objection. The idea is very simply that naturalistic reductions, both analytical and non-analytical, trivialize reasons-claims and thereby rob them off their normativity. Why? Because my naturalistic premise about desire-satisfaction (attached most likely to a mundane empirical claim about the world, e.g. 'the train is coming') is simply *restated* by my normative conclusion regarding what I have reason to do (e.g. to jump off the tracks). That is, my normative conclusion adds no substantive information to my empirical/psychological premises. But that is exactly what is *not* supposed to happen: my normative conclusion is something over and above, both in terms of information-content and ontological substance, my empirical/psychological premises. This also shows that the triviality objection is intimately connected to the normativity objection, which is just the claim that natural facts and normative facts belong to different categories, so identifying one with the other would be a categorical mistake. In fact, at the base, these two objections seem just to be variants on the classic objection to ethical naturalism: Moore's open question argument (OQA) in Moore (2002: 10–21). After all, what both objections query is the normativity that is missing from naturalistic reductions: questions about our conclusions put in the form of claims about the reasons we have are left open on any naturalistic definition because of their missing normativity (Kauppinen (2022: section 4.2); Lutz (2024: section 4.2)).

The standard move on the part of contemporary naturalists today in responding to Parfit's objections is to steer away from analytical naturalism to non-analytical and, preferably, non-reductive naturalism.<sup>26</sup> That is, they hold that while naturalism understands the normative in terms of the natural, this happens not on the conceptual level, but on the metaphysical: on the level of properties. Such synthetic identity or constitution-claims escape the grasp of Moore's OQA, they provide substantial information in establishing the connection between the moral and the natural, and they also explain why we might think that natural facts cannot be normative: our worries about a possible categorical mistake are driven by conceptual intuitions and not by metaphysical ones (Copp 2020; 2024; Schroeder 2005).

My aim in this section is not to provide a detailed discussion of these matters.<sup>27</sup> This would take us too far and unnecessarily take up space. What I would like to point out is that, without naming any of these positions,

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<sup>26</sup> The best known exception to this strategy is Frank Jackson's analytic functionalism ((Jackson 2008) also endorsed, in part, by Smith 2009b)). For a good overview of naturalistic responses, see Lutz (2024).

<sup>27</sup> I have done this elsewhere, see Tanyi (2009). For Parfit's own most recent (posthumous) discussion, see Parfit (2021). For another good critical discussion, see Fleming (2015).

Jurjako also goes in the above direction. At least this is how I read his invocation of Street's response to Parfit's criticism of Williams.<sup>28</sup> The way I read Street (Street 2017), she is making the point that on the level of concepts, one does not have to be a Parfit type of realist to accept that the concept of 'reason' is irreducible, primitive, and normative, while holding onto whatever substantive position one has about those reasons (subjectivist or objectivist, internalist or externalist). As she puts it (Street 2017: 127):

[A]cknowledging that we understand and possess the concept of a *purely normative reason* does not commit us to thinking that there is something (in particular, a normative reason) that exists in a way that is robustly independent of the type of conscious experience being talked about – any more so than acknowledging that one had a certain dream commits one to the view that the thing one dreamed about actually happened. Similarly – and this point is equally central in what follows – acknowledging that we understand and possess the concept of a purely normative reason of course also does not commit us to thinking that there *isn't* something (in particular, a normative reason) that exists in a way that is independent of the type of conscious experience being talked about.

In fact, as she rightly points out later, it doesn't even commit us to any kind of realism either (2017: 138). And this too is correct: a constructivist or an expressivist is more than happy with the idea that 'reason' just means 'counting in favour of' and nothing else. All we need to make this work is to have common experiences in everyday life in which 'reason' or similar normative terms would be invoked. In this way, we get a handle on the 'simple, irreducible concept of a normative reason' and the rest is history.

Insofar as Jurjako is a substantive naturalist, this sounds very much like what a non-reductive naturalist (or, as is sometimes called, one-term naturalist), like a Cornell realist, would say.<sup>29</sup> We have one normative term, and one term only: 'reason'.<sup>30</sup> This term is not reducible, not synonymous with any other term, no conceptual analysis is available in its case. This, however, does not rule out that the relational *property* of 'counting in favour of' is a

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<sup>28</sup> I am not fully certain about this because Jurjako repeatedly makes the point (46, 47) that Williams's notion of a sound (rational) deliberative is not purely psychological or empirical. The important bit here is 'notion': if Jurjako has in mind the concept, then that is in line with my interpretation in the text. If instead, he is ruling out the naturalization (and subjectivization) of rationality, then we are no longer in the terrain of naturalism, it seems to me.

<sup>29</sup> Jurjako also repeatedly uses an analogy with color perception (that Street also uses) that takes properties of color to be response-dependent ('secondary qualities'). This also chimes well with the metaphysical aspect of non-reductive naturalism: multiple realizability of facts and properties (cf. 76).

<sup>30</sup> Although we should not forget that for Jurjako this is really the concept of 'rationality'. The role this plays in the part of the book I'm here discussing is somewhat confusing, I must admit. Parfit is a reasons-first theorist, but Jurjako is not. So, why are we suddenly considering the position that 'reason' is the primitive normative concept?

natural property, perhaps a complex natural property (think of the complex ways one could describe rationality in Jurjako's (RD)).

What, however, this position does seem to rule out is analytic naturalism (of a subjectivist stripe in Jurjako's case).<sup>31</sup> But this was of course Jurjako's response to the incoherence argument, so the obvious next question is whether, perhaps because we also want to deal with other Parfitian objections to naturalist subjectivism, we are thrown back into the clutches of the incoherence argument. Jurjako thinks we aren't, but I am not entirely sure as to how this is exactly supposed to work.

Jurjako's main move here is just to endorse, in fact, as far as I can tell, repeat the kind of Street-inspired non-analytical position I've described above. It is now made explicit that, for present purposes (?), Jurjako reads (M) along these lines (61). Then he concludes (63): "This line of reasoning should help us understand that even if we interpret Parfit's claim (M) as substantive [non-analytical], we can still argue that what provides a basis for believing that our reasons align with (M) is (O')." But we've just established that using (O') renders (M) analytical; now we say, it doesn't? Just because we can, and perhaps we should, read (M) as non-analytical, for independent reasons (provided by Street, e.g.), this does not seem to change the fact that (O') still renders (M) analytical. All we get is a clash of our independent reasons for reading (M) non-analytical and our strategy to respond to the incoherence argument, which, however, renders (M) analytical. Since the triviality and normativity objections otherwise force us, perhaps, to endorse a non-analytical account of (M), it becomes rather important to make sure that the incoherence argument does not do the opposite. The stakes are high (or at least higher than Jurjako might believe them to be).

#### IV. Enoch's Idealization Challenge

I would like to end this article with some remarks about two influential arguments Jurjako discusses, in Chapter 3 and Chapter 5, respectively. The first is an argument against positions like his, the so-called idealization challenge by David Enoch (Enoch 2005); the other is an argument against positions like Parfit's, the so-called evolutionary debunking argument by Sharon

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<sup>31</sup> I think Jackson (see footnote 26) would disagree. He would say that Street's description of how we get a handle on the 'simple, irreducible concept of a normative reason' is very similar to his own collection of platitudes of mature folk morality (which he then turns into "Ramsey sentences" that provide us with functional roles, which then help us 'find' the natural property (a possibly, in fact, infinitely disjunctive property)). If so, an analytical naturalist could accept Street's 'methodology' without endorsing her non-reductive position on the concept of reason.

Street (Street 2006).<sup>32</sup> As I write above, I will offer ‘remarks’: unlike the previous two sections, I won’t put forward anything like a sustained argumentation and analysis in this section.

Let us begin with Enoch’s challenge. As Jurjako presents it, and as I already foretold in the preceding section, this is an epistemological challenge. The idea is that the natural (and, for Enoch, ultimately the only good) rationale for accepting idealization is that through it we are tracking objective, mind-independent facts – which would be just an affirmation of some kind of non-naturalistic realism.<sup>33</sup> Jurjako’s answer begins with a distinction between revisionary and non-revisionary response-dependence views (in this chapter we are just after Jurjako’s introduction of (RD), hence the sustained talk of response-dependence). Regarding revisionary accounts, he employs an analogy with colour perception because the correct scientific account is response-dependent whereas the naïve account takes colour properties to be intrinsic. Jurjako’s (79, 80) point is that the revisions introduced to our naïve account were only minimally disturbing, i.e., minimally revisionary, and, therefore, acceptable – so, why wouldn’t the same be true of revisions based on (RD) introduced to our normative talk and practice (discourse)? I am more sceptical than he is about the validity of the analogy. True, as philosophical arguments show, (RD) is more in line with our scientific worldview. This is, let’s grant it, analogous to what happened with our account of colour and colour perception.<sup>34</sup> Still, there is a difference. Revising or reforming our colour-talk was easier because its commitment to colours as intrinsic, response-independent properties was much less deep, much more negotiable than our commitment to the irreducible normativity of reasons (think of morality, about which most of these debates originally took shape). In fact, the possibility or impossibility of this kind of revision is partially what Parfit’s normativity objection might be zooming in on: if we take away this kind of normativity, then our reform becomes not merely a revision, but *elimination* of reasons. So, in a way, we’re back with our discussion at the end of the preceding section.

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<sup>32</sup> This is, of course, a simplification since there is by now a small library written about these challenges, nor can we say that Enoch or Street were the first to voice these worries. Still, they gave the first sustained treatment and theirs is what Jurjako focuses attention on.

<sup>33</sup> Again, as noted at the start of the Section II, contrary to the impression Jurjako gives, there are differences between non-naturalist positions, for example, in terms of their robustness.

<sup>34</sup> I think the analogy does not obviously show this since in the case of colour perception we have hard scientific evidence with all the authority of science attached to it and we employ reference to ‘normal conditions’ that in the given case science can make relatively easy sense of. Whereas in the case of (RD), we have philosophical evidence (albeit appealing to science) and reference to ‘rationality’, a hotly disputed concept itself.

I think Jurjako also sees that ultimately, this is the crux of the matter: what our normative, justificatory practices – our reason-citing, reason-claiming, advisory practices – are committed to. Is the irreducible normativity of reasons part and parcel of these practices; is this commitment, in Richard Joyce’s sense (Joyce 2001: Chapter 1), non-negotiable? If this is not the case, then not only the revisionary but also the non-revisionary reading of (RD) becomes defensible against Enoch’s idealization challenge. In this spirit, Jurjako (84–5) cites in some detail several recent studies that appear to show that the subject’s explicit metanormative beliefs – i.e., what they believe about normativity – do not commit them to Enoch’s robust realism. As Jurjako reports, Enoch’s answer seems to be to discard these results as not relevant. But Jurjako is puzzled by this move since he thinks that the results put the burden of proof on Enoch to say something, to provide justification for his quick rebuttal (86).

I think the employment of these studies in the present context and the argumentative move Jurjako uses them to support rest on shaky foundations. First of all, we would have to know much more about the details of these studies. In Jurjako’s interpretation, they concern mainly the objectivity of *morality*, but that is not nearly the same as robust realism about normative reasons. There are or at least can be several theoretical jumps between a feature – objectivity – of a practice and discourse and a theoretical position – robust realism – about the subject of this discourse. And then we have not spoken at all of the extension from morality to normativity. Second, using the studies to counter Enoch’s challenge entangles Jurjako in all the meta debates about experimental philosophy. There are influential arguments in this literature that forcefully argue for points that I think Enoch could use to support his position that “[w]hat is relevant, rather, are the deep metanormative commitments embedded (perhaps implicitly) in normative discourse and practice themselves” (Enoch 2005: 773–4, fn. 31).<sup>35</sup> Lastly, and I could have mentioned this already when discussing non-revisionary (RD), most of what Jurjako says in this part can be accommodated by sensibility theories that do not, however, fully share Jurjako’s naturalistic commitments.<sup>36</sup> So, Jurjako must navigate a fairly thin wedge here between denying (but not ‘too much’) certain commitments while keeping both robust

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<sup>35</sup> Antti Kauppinen’s by now classic piece on the ‘rise and fall’ of experimental philosophy springs quickly to mind (Kauppinen 2007). But we should not forget that error theorists like (Joyce 2001, 2006) would also probably agree with Enoch’s depiction of our justificatory practices, at least as far as morality is concerned.

<sup>36</sup> It is notable that at the end of his discussion Jurjako brings in humour (the property of being funny) as an example. Humour is one of the favourite analogies sensibility theories deploy in explaining what they have in mind when it comes to morality. See Darwall et al. (1992: 152–165) for a good discussion.

realism and sensibility theory at bay. I think in this tug of war, Jurjako's best bet is still to revert back to the non-reductive synthetic naturalism discussed in the previous section. For, this position can accept that our normative, justificatory discourse is committed to irreducibly normative reasons, at least on the conceptual level. This seems like a natural move to make at this point since analysis of normative discourse is primarily a conceptual and not ontological enterprise.

### V. Street's Evolutionary Debunking Argument

My last topic in this article is Sharon Street's influential evolutionary debunking challenge to moral realism. Jurjako reckons that this is extendable to the realm of (robust) normative realism and hence he cites it as one of the two considerations that strongly support his response-dependent account of reasons (or, more generally, subjectivism about reasons) (42, fn. 15).

Just as with Enoch's challenge, my aim in this short section is not to provide a detailed discussion. In a nutshell, evolutionary debunking arguments are, like Enoch's challenge, epistemological in nature: they point out that our moral beliefs are perfectly accountable for, because saturated by (as Street puts it) evolutionary influences. However, if our moral (evaluative) beliefs are evolutionary products, then it would be a 'sheer coincidence' that we happen to believe the truth where truth is understood along moral realist lines: moral beliefs are true if they correctly represent independently existing moral facts. But we have no justification in thinking that any such sheer coincidence has taken place. Consequently, either we embrace moral scepticism since their evolutionary origin defeats the justification of our moral beliefs, or we must give up moral realism. Error theorists (e.g. (Joyce 2006)) are happy to embrace the first horn of this dilemma; whereas Jurjako embraces the second horn.

I have three questions about Jurjako's project – his use of evolutionary debunking – here. First, above I write that Jurjako embraces the second horn but of course that would be moral anti-realism. This raises a question (if not a worry proper). Street's target is moral realism, but this is not realism only of the non-naturalist kind (Enoch, Parfit etc.). Arguably, naturalist realism is also among her targets.<sup>37</sup> Jurjako, as far as I can tell, nowhere explains exactly how his preferred response-dependent account of reasons escapes the grip of evolutionary debunking. (We now assume that Jurjako is a substantive naturalist, not a constructivist like Street.) I presume his idea is that the dispositions he is making use of are all evolutionary products in the way Street

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<sup>37</sup> Take, for example, the back and forth between Street and David Copp in various publications, most recently Copp (2019).

needs them to be and hence truth about such responses in idealized conditions (e.g. full rationality) would be fine with Street. I am not entirely sure, especially once we begin invoking conditions of rationality (as yet unspecified), that this is so obviously correct as Jurjako appears to take it to be.

My second question concerns Jurjako's choice to move away from the standard epistemological presentation of evolutionary debunking to an ontological one. There are two reasons why I find this puzzling. True, as Jurjako points out (110), from the fact that we are not justified in believing moral truths (construed realistically), it does not follow that there is no moral reality. So, fair enough, we could embark on a question to prove or disprove the existence of moral reality. But one could still ask why this would be important for us. If Street's argument works, whether or not there is moral reality, we can never be justified in having beliefs about it. So, it appears a mere 'intellectual' curiosity whether we then want to somehow 'find out' about its existence. Second, recall my early presentation of a realist terminology. Contrary to what Jurjako seems to assume, many non-naturalist realists today are 'relaxed' and not 'robust' like Enoch. For them – among them figures like Parfit, Scanlon, or Dworkin – there *isn't* any moral reality, not in any ontologically robust sense anyway: there are normative truths and there are normative facts, but truths are understood minimalistically and facts are just true normative propositions involving concepts, and facts do not act as truthmakers (Karimi 2024). As a result, while these relaxed realists are troubled by the epistemic version of evolutionary debunking, they are (or would be), I'd imagine, much less troubled by its ontological version.

Lastly, my third question. Jurjako extends Street's original argument to the realm of normativity, to the realm of reasons. I think this must be characterized as an extension since morality is not the same as normativity. Jurjako is clear about this, and it is also clear why he does this: his subject matter is reasons, not only morality (moral reasons, say). He explains this move by pointing out that (112, fn. 57):

The main reason for talking about evaluative attitudes more generally instead of just moral judgments, for instance, is because it is not easy to delineate the moral domain or to determine what would count as a moral judgment as opposed to a normative judgment of another kind [...] Thus, in what follows, I will not presuppose that the moral domain has clear boundaries or that people have specific adaptations for morality (such as a moral sense). In discussing normative realism, I will have in mind normative phenomena that involve evaluative attitudes towards general social affairs and our well-being.

This is interesting (and curious, if I may say, especially the last sentence). I agree with Jurjako that morality is hard to delineate; in fact, it is hard to tell what makes a reason 'moral' (Crisp 2018). I myself hold the

controversial view that all reasons are moral. However, all these are open questions, so Jurjako can't make use of them – and doesn't make use of them – without argument. But if he doesn't, and in general, why should we believe that all our *normative* beliefs are 'saturated' by evolutionary influences? In other words, why should we believe that these beliefs, like moral beliefs, if construed realistically, will also be debunked by their evolutionary origins? Why couldn't we just be like local error theorists and confine our sceptical attention to morality (or, in fact, only just to a part of morality)? Evolutionary debunking seems to be a restricted enterprise, but suddenly, Jurjako extends it well beyond the realm of morality. Do we have assurance that this is a justifiable (and reasonable) move?

## VI. Conclusion

I have more to say about the book – some remarks, for example, about Jurjako's response to Parfit's objections to evolutionary debunking were left out<sup>38</sup> – but the article is already too long, and I fear I have spent more space on certain issues than I should have. I hope, however, that the length – if not the precision, let alone the correctness – of my treatment shows my appreciation for Jurjako's book. I have found it very engaging and although we disagree, I have found it seriously challenging as well.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Partly because they receive excellent treatment in FitzPatrick (2025)

<sup>39</sup> I thank very much the Le Studium Loire Valley Institute for Advanced Studies whose hospitality I've enjoyed in the beautiful city of Tours, France while working on this article.

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