

On the Causal-Doxastic Theory of the Basing Relation

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If one is to believe that *p* justifiably, then one must believe *p* *for*, or *because of*, one's evidence or reasons in support of *p*. The basing relation is exactly this relation that obtains between one's belief and one's reasons for believing. Keith Allen Korcz, in a recent article published in this journal, has argued that two conditions are each sufficient and are jointly necessary to establish basing relations between beliefs and reasons.¹ One condition is formulated to account for basing relations that can obtain in virtue of causal relations between one's belief and reasons, and the other condition is supposed to account for basing relations which can be established independently of the instantiation of any such causal relation. Korcz terms the theory constituted by these two conditions the *causal-doxastic theory of the basing relation*. Since the dominant view is that the basing relation cannot obtain in the absence of any causal relation between one's reasons and one's belief, part of Korcz's task is to establish that this latter, 'doxastic' condition is needed. Contrary to his claims, however, none of the arguments that he cites in support of this succeed. Further, the condition that he does provide is inadequate for additional, independent reasons. As a result, the causal-doxastic theory of the basing relation is inadequate and fundamentally flawed.

1 Keith Allen Korcz, 'The Causal-Doxastic Theory of the Basing Relation,' *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 30 (2000) 525-50. All further references to Korcz will be to this article.

I Considerations Against Causal Theories of the Basing Relation

Before considering Korcz's arguments, it is important to first explicate two closely related kinds of justification. Korcz distinguishes between *justified* belief and belief which is merely *justifiable*, and he explains these terms as follows. 'A belief is merely *justifiable* for a person S when [S's belief is *not* based on the reasons S has even though] S possesses reasons which would be sufficient to justify the belief were the belief based on those reasons' (525-6). By contrast, a 'belief is *justified* for S when S possesses reasons sufficient to justify the belief' and that belief *is* based on those reasons (526). From this distinction we can see that any belief which is justified for S is also a belief which is justifiable for S, though not merely justifiable. In this paper I will write of a justifiable belief as a belief which is *propositionally justified*, for here the object of justification is not one's *believing*, but rather the *proposition believed*. Similarly, I will write of a justified belief as a belief which is *doxastically justified*. This more robust sense of justification takes into account the reasons for which one believes a proposition and requires that one believe that p *because of* those reasons which propositionally justify one's belief that p in order for one's believing p to be justified. Roughly, it is this 'because of' relation which is the basing relation.

1. Cognitive considerations

The first argument that Korcz presents against a (purely) causal theory of the basing relation begins by noting standard ways that we can come to believe things justifiably. As noted above, when we think about what is necessary to make one's believing justified we think that one has to make, or there simply has to be, a certain kind of connection between one's belief and the evidence for that belief. One way to do this is by reasoning in an appropriate manner from the evidence to the belief that evidence makes probable. One can think, for example, that one's evidence is good reason to believe that p and can come to accept p as a result of this evidence. In such a case, it seems that it is the meta-belief that the evidence is good reason to believe that p that allows one's believing to be justified. In this way, then, it seems that reasoning and reflection can establish basing relations, and it may be the case that these methods can establish them independently of any causal connection between the evidence and the belief that it makes probable. After all, we did not have to consider whether any causal relation obtained in order to infer that such methods of reasoning establish doxastically justified beliefs.

Korcz argues that deontological considerations support this view. According to him, our practice of praising and blaming people for the

epistemic appropriateness (or inappropriateness) of their beliefs provides us with good reason to think that meta-beliefs can establish basing relations independently of any causal relation. Korcz writes:

One reason to believe that meta-beliefs do provide the requisite connection is that the presence of the appropriate meta-belief seems sufficient to hold a person epistemically responsible for taking into account the reason which is the object of the meta-belief. For example, S may be epistemically praiseworthy in holding the belief that p if S recognizes that p is entailed by reason r, and S knows that r. Similarly, S could be held epistemically at fault if S fails to recognize that r entails p when S should have recognized this. (527-8)

Here Korcz wants to argue that in these cases the praise or blame attaches to the beliefs that p and not just to the meta-beliefs, and this is supposed to provide us with reason to think that the meta-beliefs are relevant to the justificatory status of the beliefs that p.

I want to emphasize two reasons why this argument fails to provide us with significant reason to think that a purely causal analysis is inadequate. First, we offer epistemic praise and blame for a myriad of reasons. We praise someone, e.g., for a particular instance of good reasoning, for inculcating good habits of inquiry, for believing true propositions, or for seeing the relevance of some reason for the epistemic status of a proposition. Since we offer epistemic praise for reasons other than a belief's being justified, all things considered, citing an instance of praise fails to establish that our offering praise demonstrates that we take the relevant belief to be justified *in either of the two senses explicated above*. The second example in the above quotation makes this point very well, for it is highly questionable whether we are finding epistemic fault with S for her belief that p. It seems, rather, that we think that given all of her beliefs, abilities, and other epistemically relevant states or qualities she ought to have realized or believed that r entails p. Her failure to believe that r entails p is what we find epistemically faulty. Any other claim about the case is questionable at best.²

2 Though Korcz does not say this, one may claim that we hold people at fault for failing to believe p when they believe r and should have seen that r entails p and that this gives us reason to think that the meta-belief is sufficient to establish a basing relation between r and p. Here, however, the problems with drawing conclusions based on deontological considerations remain. It is highly unlikely that beliefs about basing explain such intuitions. This is especially true since we are not even considering one's *belief* that p; rather, we are interested (for, e.g., moral, prudential, or epistemic reasons) in one's coming to believe that p. Reasoning is sufficient to do this.

Second, and more importantly, these considerations fail to address the crucial issue which is relevant to motivating the inclusion of a non-causal condition in an analysis of the basing relation. In order to make plausible the claim that a theory of the basing relation needs a non-causal condition, one needs to provide cases in which a subject's believing is justified even though no causal relation obtains between the belief and the evidence. With regard to the cases considered above, one needs to make plausible the view that one's reasoning from the evidence to the belief that *p* does not *establish* a causal connection between the evidence and the belief that *p*. Thus far, we have failed to even address this issue. Indeed, it is plausible to think that the appropriate meta-belief establishes a causal relation between the belief that *p* and the reasons which constitute that meta-belief. Those mechanisms which produce one's belief that *p*, or that result in one's inferring *p* from one's beliefs that *r* and *r* entails *p*, are commonly thought to *cause* one's belief that *p*. Further, when one already believes that *p* and then obtains some evidence for *p* and sees that this evidence does make *p* plausible, (at least typically) that evidence comes to causally *sustain* to some extent one's belief that *p*. In short, one's belief has causal relations to other propositional attitudes (including other beliefs), and it is via these causal relations that we reason and act intentionally. For these reasons, then, the 'cognitive considerations' that Korcz presents against a purely causal analysis of the basing relation fail to make plausible the idea that such an analysis is inadequate.

2. *The gypsy lawyer variations*

Keith Lehrer has presented an example which addresses exactly the shortcomings mentioned in the previous section. With the case of the gypsy lawyer,³ Lehrer tries to make plausible the view that the reasons which propositionally justify one's belief need not be causally related to that belief in order for it to be based on those reasons. In this case a gypsy lawyer comes to believe as a result of consulting his tarot cards that his client is innocent of one of eight murders which she is charged with committing. Afterwards, he comes to find an entirely cogent but complicated line of reasoning which shows that his client is innocent of the eighth murder. He realizes that this conclusively establishes that his client is innocent, but the reasoning in no way sustains, or otherwise

3 Keith Lehrer, 'How Reasons Give Us Knowledge, or The Case of the Gypsy Lawyer,' *Journal of Philosophy* 68 (1971) 311-13

causally contributes to, his belief that his client is innocent. Nevertheless, Lehrer wants to argue that his possessing this line of reasoning and believing it to show that his client is innocent *does* allow his believing to be (doxastically) justified.⁴ Clearly, then, the example squarely addresses the issues left untouched by the considerations of the preceding section.

Rather than consider Lehrer's actual example in detail here, I want to focus on one variant that Korcz offers in his article. His case of the persistent lawyer is supposed to exclude what Korcz takes to be misleading features of Lehrer's original example, and it is thereby supposed to make it even more clear that such examples are counterexamples to a purely causal analysis of the basing relation. As with Lehrer's original case of the gypsy lawyer, Korcz's persistent lawyer is defending a client who is charged with committing eight gruesome murders. The lawyer has conclusive evidence that his client is guilty of only seven of those murders. One night the lawyer consults his tarot cards, in which he justifiably has complete confidence. He knows that every time he has consulted the cards they have been right, and therefore he has overwhelming evidence that his cards are reliable and will provide him with the correct answer about whether his client is innocent of the eighth murder. Indeed, his cards do tell him that his client is innocent, and the lawyer thereby comes to justifiably believe that his client is innocent (Korcz, 529).

Knowing that an appeal to the cards in court would not cause the jury to believe that his client is innocent, he consults 'the (legally presentable) evidence and discovers a complicated line of reasoning showing that his client is innocent of the eighth murder' (529). About this, Korcz writes that

The complicated line of reasoning gives the lawyer an additional good reason to believe that his client is innocent.... [Further,] he fully accepts the reasoning and its implication. These facts indicate that the lawyer is, in part, justified in believing that his client is innocent on the basis of the complicated line of reasoning.... It seems clear that his reasoning provides a reason for which the lawyer believes that his client is innocent. (529)

4 In 'How Reasons Give Us Knowledge, or The Case of the Gypsy Lawyer,' Lehrer argues that the lawyer had to *have* a correct answer to the question 'How do you know that p?' in order to know that p. It is important to see that such a theory of the basing relation is not interpersonal. In particular, what one would say under certain circumstances is irrelevant to whether one's belief is doxastically justified. In a later presentation of the case, however, he claims that the lawyer's *justification* for believing that p is based on the good reasoning. Perhaps this is what has encouraged the common view that his theory of basing is interpersonal. See Keith Lehrer, *Knowledge* (New York: Oxford University Press 1974), 122-6.

It is uncontroversial whether the lawyer now has an additional good reason to believe that his client is innocent of the eighth murder. After all, he has the additional evidence and sees its implication. Korcz stipulates that the lawyer believes that this reasoning is a good reason to believe that his client is innocent of the eighth murder, and he claims that this shows that the lawyer is justified in believing that his client is innocent (at least in part) *on the basis of* this line of reasoning. By this he means that his belief that his client is innocent is *based on* this reasoning. At this point, however, it is not clear why we should think this is true.

The meta-belief about the complicated line of reasoning does provide the lawyer with more reason to believe that his client is innocent, but this is not to say that this reasoning is now *the* (or even *one*) *reason for which* the lawyer actually believes. All that we know at this point is that the probability that the lawyer's belief is true, given all of his evidence, has increased with the addition of this new evidence. This gives us reason to think that the lawyer is propositionally justified in believing (perhaps only to a higher degree) that his client is innocent. The further claim that the lawyer now believes *on the basis of* this line of reasoning has not yet been supported, and this is precisely what is at issue.

Intuitions to the contrary may be due to either of the following. First, the distinction between propositional justification and doxastic justification is crucial here, as I have noted above. Gypsy lawyer cases play off of our intuitions that the subjects under consideration are justified in some sense. Utilizing this intuition, some then make the claim that the subjects are believing justifiably in the sense that they are believing for the reasons which make their beliefs likely to be true. By failing to realize that the kind of justification we intuitively want to attribute to such subjects does not entail that this be the case, we may find this claim plausible. Nevertheless, we need to resist it.

Second, we also need to be cautious about what we say about the case of the persistent lawyer because, as thus far developed, we know nothing about the causal relations that belief bears to the agent's other mental states. The explication of the case does not, for instance, stipulate that the belief does not come to be causally sustained by the additional reasoning.⁵ We may think that such causal sustenance normally obtains in cases in which such a meta-belief is present (or that typically such reasoning

5 It is not until after the presentation and evaluation of the case that Korcz stipulates that no such causal relations obtain. Since he is appealing to our intuitions about the case as it is presented, one's initial intuition may be explained by one's implicitly supposing that the lawyer's belief does come to be causally sustained by his good reasoning, as typically happens in these kinds of cases.

does come to sustain one's belief when the conditions of the case are met), and this may provide us with reason to think that the persistent lawyer is justified in the doxastic sense. Yet when considering such cases we need to suspend these preconceptions. If this is what explains one's intuition about the case, then one's intuition cannot be taken to show that a non-causal condition on the basing relation is needed. For these reasons, therefore, we need to consider carefully why it is that we think that the lawyer is justified and what kind of justification the lawyer possesses. Since Korcz has not made plausible the claim that our intuitions are *not* due to either of these things, Korcz has not succeeded in providing a counterexample to a causal analysis of the basing relation.

This is the crucial issue regarding gypsy lawyer-like cases. At bottom, everything that Korcz and others write regarding these cases depends upon intuitions regarding the justificatory status of the belief. This is worth emphasizing. Such cases appeal to our intuitions regarding epistemic justification, and I think that when we properly consider what explains those intuitions in any such case, we will find that the above considerations adequately explain them. In this way, these considerations are fully general and are not solely restricted to the particular gypsy lawyer variations that Korcz provides.

Nevertheless, one may take the following considerations to support Korcz's view that the persistent lawyer is doxastically justified, though it is not clear whether Korcz himself takes them to show this. In favor of his diagnosis of the view that the persistent lawyer's belief is based on the good reasoning, Korcz writes the following:

The fact that the degree to which the lawyer is justified in holding the belief has been increased by the complicated line of reasoning is relevant to the question of whether the belief about his client's innocence is based on the complicated reasoning because ... a necessary condition for a belief's being justified by a reason is that it be based on the reason. So if the degree to which the lawyer is justified has increased, it necessarily follows that his belief is based on the reason. (530)

We can represent the reasoning here as follows:

1. The lawyer's belief is made better justified by the reasoning.
2. If a belief is justified by a reason, then it is based on that reason.
3. Therefore, the lawyer's belief is based on that reasoning.

The second premise here is supposed to follow directly from Korcz's definition of 'justified belief.' A necessary condition for a belief's being justified in Korcz's sense is that it be based on that which makes it justifiable. To put this differently, the antecedent of (2) employs the

notion of doxastic justification, and a necessary condition of a belief's being justified in this sense is that it be based on the evidence that makes it probable. As a result, (2) is true.

The crucial premise of the argument, therefore, is (1). As I read it, (1) is ambiguous between the two senses of justification explicated earlier in the paper: propositional justification and doxastic justification. If we interpret (1) as a statement about the reason making the lawyer's belief propositionally justified, then the premise is clearly true. We have stipulated that the reasoning makes the innocence of his client highly probable. Unfortunately, however, on this interpretation the argument turns on an equivocation and, as a result, is invalid.

In order for the argument to succeed, therefore, (1) has to assert that the reasoning makes the lawyer better *doxastically* justified in believing that his client is innocent. This, however, is precisely what is at issue. The case of the persistent lawyer is supposed to establish this, and we have not yet seen reason to believe that it has. To the contrary, it is highly questionable. Merely by possessing additional evidence for p I come to be more justified in believing that p, but this is not to say that my believing p is better justified in a doxastic sense. I may, for example, be believing p for the same reasons as I was before obtaining this additional evidence;⁶ so that the belief has not come to be based on additional evidence despite its being more probable given my total body of evidence for p. On this reading (1) is unsupported, and the argument therefore fails to show that the persistent lawyer believes on the basis of the good reasoning. As a result, it fails to show that a non-causal condition needs to be included in an analysis of the basing relation.

In a further effort to support his diagnosis of the case of the persistent lawyer, Korcz argues that his diagnosis is 'confirmed' by a parallel case — the case of the doubtful lawyer (530-1). I do not want to cite all of the details of this case here because nothing that I will say will turn on its specificities. Rather, here it is only necessary to emphasize the structure of the argument that Korcz presents in order to illustrate that this case does not make more probable the view that basing relations can be established independently of any causal relation between one's reason and one's belief.

Korcz argues that his case of the doubtful lawyer confirms that a meta-belief is sufficient to establish a basing relation (531). In short, he argues as follows: the case of the doubtful lawyer is 'just like the case of

6 Put differently, even after the addition of this evidence I may be believing p *because of and only because of* the reasons I had all along. The belief has not now come to be based on more or different reasons.

the persistent lawyer in all relevant respects except that the [doubtful] lawyer does *not* have a meta-belief to the effect that the complicated line of reasoning is a good reason to believe that his client is innocent' (531). He claims that the persistent lawyer's belief is based on the complicated line of reasoning while the doubtful lawyer's belief is *not* based on the complicated line of reasoning. It is the presence or absence of this meta-belief that explains whether the belief in question is based on that line of reasoning. Therefore, Korcz concludes, meta-beliefs are sufficient to establish basing relations.

I reject the assumption that the persistent lawyer's belief is based on the complicated line of reasoning. This is crucial because the argument proceeds along the same lines as Mill's method of difference. In order to utilize such a method, we first need to fix the facts of the cases being compared and then proceed to compare them to determine what differences between the two cases may explain the difference that we are seeking to explain. Since the method is being used to explain the difference in basing between the two cases, some *other* argument needs to be provided to establish that the relevant differences in basing exist. These are assumptions from which the argument proceeds rather than assumptions that the argument seeks to establish. As I have emphasized above, however, Korcz's basing claim regarding the persistent lawyer is not adequately supported. We do not have good enough reason to believe that the lawyer's belief is based on the complicated line of reasoning. Contrary to Korcz's claims, therefore, his gypsy lawyer variants fail to provide us with good reason to think that basing relations can be established in the absence of any causal relation between the evidence and the belief that evidence makes probable.⁷

3. Korcz's argument from showing

Korcz's most novel argument against a causal theory of the basing relation begins with considerations about demonstrating or showing one's belief to be justified, and he tries to utilize them to show that some

⁷ Korcz makes no claims about the justificatory status of the doubtful lawyer's belief. Nevertheless, one might reason as follows. The persistent lawyer's belief is better justified than the doubtful lawyer's belief. If this is the case, then it must be based on something better — i.e., the meta-belief. Therefore, it must be based on the meta-belief. Such reasoning fails, however, as it is subject to the considerations developed above regarding the case of the persistent lawyer. Further, it is also unlikely that basing is needed, or even appropriate, to explain such a justificatory difference. It seems, rather, that a theory of propositional justification can do all of this work, even if we suppose that such a difference exists.

beliefs can be doxastically justified without a causal relation obtaining between that belief and the evidence that makes it probable. The sense of 'showing' here in 'one's showing one's belief to be justified' does not presuppose that one's belief actually is justified (in any sense). Thus according to this sense of the phrase, one can show one's belief to be justified even though it wasn't justified prior to this and isn't justified thereby. In short, showing that one's belief that *p* is justified is a kind of action; it is an attempt to exhibit that one possesses reasons adequate to justify *p* (532). Because no examples are provided to illustrate or justify Korcz's claims, what I will consider in this section is the abstract reasoning he provides.

Where *S* is an agent, *r* is a reason that the agent possesses,⁸ and *p* is a proposition, his argument is as follows (535).⁹

- P1. It is possible that: *S* believes that *p*, and if *S* shows that *S*'s belief that *p* is justified by *r*, then *S*'s believing that *p* is justified on the basis of *r*.¹⁰

8 Here and throughout this paper a reason is understood exactly as Korcz has understood it — that is, as a causally efficacious state of a person. Such states include beliefs as well as perceptual states (526). According to Korcz's notation, therefore, 'r' is shorthand for one of two things: either 'belief that *q*, where *q* is evidence for *p*' or 'perceptual state *s*, where *s* is evidence for *p*'.

9 The following argument is a reformulation of a displayed argument that Korcz presents. I have formulated the premises more carefully than Korcz formulated them in his paper in order to highlight the argument's structure and to make more explicit the mistaken reasoning. They do, however, still capture the meaning of each of the premises.

10 I think this is the best reading of (P1), but an alternate reading is as follows. (P1*): If *S* shows that *S*'s belief is justified by *r*, then it is possible that *S*'s believing that *p* is justified on the basis of *r*. To see that (P1*) is not relevant to our present concerns, consider the following. Two conditions are sufficient to make (P1*) true, and neither of them have to do with intuitive considerations regarding what it is to show that one's belief is justified. In the actual world either *S* shows that *S*'s belief is justified by *r* or *S* does not show that *S*'s belief is justified by *r*. If the latter, then the antecedent is false, and the conditional is trivially true. If the former, then it is plausible to think that the conditional is true, for it is plausible that some possible world exists in which *S*'s believing *p* is justified on the basis of *r*. This, however, is not to tell us anything else about which world this is or about what else is true in that world. In particular, it does not tell us whether in that world *S*'s belief that *p* is causally related to *r* or, more importantly, whether in that world *S* even shows that her belief is justified by *r*. These are the considerations which are relevant to showing that a non-causal condition needs to be included in an analysis of the basing relation, and they are left unaddressed by (P1*). What we want is for a possible world to exist in which both the antecedent and the consequent obtain, and this is what (P1) captures.

- P2. It is possible that: S believes that p, S shows that S's belief that p is justified by r, and r bears no causal relation to S's belief that p.
- C1. It is possible that: S believes that p, S's believing that p is justified on the basis of r, and r bears no causal relation to S's belief that p.
- P3. It is necessarily the case that: if S's believing that p is justified on the basis of r, then S's belief that p is based on r.
- C2. It is possible that: S believes that p, S's belief that p is based on r, and r does not cause S's belief that p.

In what follows I want to grant that (P2) is true, at least for the technical sense of 'showing a belief to be justified' employed in the argument. Further, I think the general idea Korcz formulates in (P1) is plausible, as it does seem to be the case that at least sometimes the activity of justifying one's belief that p results in one's believing that p being justified (in the doxastic sense). By going through this process of showing one's belief to be justified one can thereby come to instantiate the relation which is necessary in order for one's believing to be justified, whatever that relation is. This, however, is not to say that showing that one's belief that p is justified is *sufficient* for one's believing that p to be justified, even sufficient 'in the appropriate circumstances' (533). Unless these circumstances are exhaustive and specified exactly, this stronger claim is highly doubtful and is, at the very least, in need of support. Nonetheless, we can understand these conditions to be so specified and (P1) to be asserting that it is *possible* that *if* one shows one's belief to be justified, *then* it is based on one's reasons. Understood in such a way, (P1) is clearly true.

The argument from showing, however, does not succeed in establishing that beliefs can be based on reasons without those reasons bearing some causal relation to those beliefs. This is because the inference from (P1) and (P2) to (C1) is invalid.

Simplifying a bit, the crucial part of the form of this step of the argument is as follows.¹¹

11 In the following I have omitted for ease of exposition any reference to the standing condition that S believes that p. Of course, doing so does not affect the crucial point here.

- $P1' \diamond (A \rightarrow B)$
 $P2' \diamond (A \& C)$
 $C1' \diamond (B \& C)$

Assume, as (P1') states, that a possible world exists in which the conditional ($A \rightarrow B$) is true, and assume, as (P2') states, that a possible world exists in which A and C are both true. We cannot establish from these two assumptions alone that B and C are both true in some world, for it is perfectly consistent that the conditional holds in only those worlds in which C is false. As a result, we cannot validly infer from (P1') and (P2') that some possible world exists in which both B and C are true. As the argument for (C1') is the formal equivalent of the argument for (C1), it is also the case that the first step in the argument from showing is invalid. As a result, Korcz has failed to demonstrate that a causal theory of the basing relation is inadequate.¹²

Note further that if B is necessary or if it exists at all times and in all worlds that A exists, then (C1') can be legitimately inferred. It clearly, however, is not necessary that S's believing that p is justified on the basis of r. It is also false that S's believing p is justified on the basis of r at all times and in all worlds that S shows that S's belief is justified by r. Korcz wisely never wanted to claim this. So, (C1) cannot be demonstrated to be true by the considerations that Korcz presents. As a result, the argument from showing fails to demonstrate that a non-causal condition needs to be included in an analysis of the basing relation.

II The Status of Korcz's Non-Causal Condition

We have seen that the considerations Korcz provides in an effort to motivate a non-causal condition on the basing relation fail to demonstrate that such a condition needs to be included in its analysis. Furthermore, the non-causal condition that Korcz *does* present (and takes to be

12 If we substitute (P1*) for (P1) in the argument from showing the argument still fails. To see this, substitute for (P1') (P1*): ($A \rightarrow \diamond B$), and consider the following model. In the actual world A, $\sim B$, and C are all true, and in the only other possible world (a world accessible from the actual world) $\sim A$, B, and $\sim C$ are all true. On such a model both of the premises are true while the conclusion is false, and therefore the inference from (P1*) and (P2') to (C1') is invalid. Note also that formulating (P1) as a conjunction will not help either. Nor will formulating it as a material conditional with reference to an appropriately specified set of conditions in which one shows one's belief to be justified (thereby avoiding the modal language). In short, on all plausible interpretations of (P1), the inference is invalid.

sufficient for basing) classifies gypsy lawyer-like cases as cases in which the relevant belief is doxastically justified. Since this status is suspect, we have reason to think that the non-causal condition he formulates is not sufficient for a belief's being based on a reason. In this section I want to argue that the condition as written fails on its own, independently of this consideration. In short, even if *some* non-causal condition is needed in a complete analysis of the basing relation, the condition that Korcz formulates is not the correct one.

Before turning to this evaluation, it is necessary to consider the analysis of the basing relation that Korcz provides. His analysis is constituted by two main parts: a causal condition (RCT) and a non-causal condition (NCC), and his non-causal condition is supposed to account for the following two claims. The guiding intuitions behind (NCC) are (1) that meta-beliefs of the right sort can establish that one's belief is based on one's reasons and (2) that *not all* meta-beliefs can do this. Korcz's analysis is explicitly presented as follows.¹³

S's belief that p is based, at time t, upon reason r possessed by S iff

- (1) S believes that p at t; and
- (2) Either (a) the conditions of (RCT) are satisfied, or (b) [(NCC)] the following conditions obtain:
 - (i) S has a meta-belief, at t, to the effect that r is a good reason to believe p,
 - (ii) the causal explanation of S's having this meta-belief involves, in some appropriate manner, both S's belief that p and r, (thus, the meta-belief is not an epiphenomenal basing belief), and
 - (iii) r, the belief that p, and any other reason the meta-belief is caused by and is to be causally based on (in the sense defined by condition (2)(a) only), must meet all of the conditions of (2)(a), and
 - (iv) S has no other meta-belief which is contrary to the meta-belief described in (i). (547-8)

13 Here, again, note that 'p' represents a proposition while 'r' represents a (causally efficacious) state of a person that is evidence for p. Since space does not allow me to consider (RCT) here, in what remains I will only focus on (NCC). As a result, I will not explicate (RCT) in this paper. For its explicit formulation, see Korcz (547).

The only technical term that Korcz employs in (NCC) occurs in condition (ii). There, Korcz employs the notion of an ‘epiphenomenal basing belief,’ and it is condition (ii) which is to preclude such beliefs from establishing basing relations. As Korcz understands them, epiphenomenal basing beliefs are those ‘meta-beliefs to the effect that a reason is a good reason to believe, but which do not establish basing relations’ (536). The following example is supposed to illustrate that not all meta-beliefs that a reason is a good reason to believe establish basing relations. We are to

suppose that Ezekiel ... sees an armadillo, and thereby comes to believe that he saw an armadillo. However, Ezekiel belongs to a religious cult, and slavishly believes everything his cult leader, Exidor, tells him. Exidor later tells Ezekiel that his belief in God is a good reason to believe everything else he believes, and Ezekiel obediently comes to believe this. But it is clear, we may suppose, that his belief that he saw an armadillo is not based on his belief in God. (537)

The meta-belief here is supposed to fail to establish a basing relation because it is ‘mistaken,’ but I do not know what this is supposed to mean. Why ‘mistaken’ meta-beliefs should fail to establish basing relations between one’s reasons and one’s belief is, at the very least, puzzling. To complicate matters, the example is nothing more than a brief sketch, and it may be that the details regarding the case matter. For example, it may be that when we fill in the details regarding the acquisition and content of the meta-belief we will be less inclined to think that Ezekiel’s meta-belief does indeed fail to establish that his belief that he sees an armadillo is based on his belief in God. Nevertheless, let us suppose that Korcz’s claim regarding the case is correct — i.e., that Ezekiel’s meta-belief does not establish that his belief that he saw an armadillo is based on his belief in God. If this is the case, then *some* condition needs to be included in a non-causal condition of the basing relation in order to exclude such meta-beliefs from being categorized as establishing basing relations. Korcz writes that such counterexamples ‘can be avoided by requiring that any meta-belief, to the effect that a reason *r* is a good reason to believe *p*, and which is to establish a basing relation, must be such that *r* and the belief that *p* causally contribute to the meta-belief’ (537). That is, including condition (ii) as a necessary part of (NCC) is sufficient to rule out such problematic cases.

This may be right, but it is not necessary in order to overcome such problems that we require that both *r* and the belief that *p* cause the meta-belief that *r* is a good reason to believe *p*, in order for the meta-belief to establish that one’s belief that *p* is based on *r*. Recall the central features of the example. Ezekiel believes that he saw an armadillo, believes that God exists, and also believes that his belief that God exists is a good reason to believe everything else that he believes. We are supposed to

agree that this meta-belief does not establish that Ezekiel's belief that he saw an armadillo is based on his belief that God exists. This seems right, but what is going wrong in the example is that Ezekiel has not reasoned out the connections between his meta-belief and his belief that he saw an armadillo. It is such reasoning that is supposed to make plausible the view that meta-beliefs can establish basing relations, and this is also a distinctive feature of gypsy lawyer-like examples. Suppose, for instance, that Ezekiel reasons from his meta-belief to other beliefs of his. That is, suppose Ezekiel reasons that if his belief that God exists is good reason to believe everything he believes, then his belief that God exists is good reason to believe that he saw an armadillo. Thereby, Ezekiel comes to believe that his belief that God exists is a good reason to believe that he saw an armadillo. Ezekiel is then in the following situation. He believes that he saw an armadillo (p), he believes that God exists (r), and he believes that his belief that God exists is good reason to believe that he saw an armadillo (meta-belief that r epistemically supports p). Ezekiel's situation is then exactly parallel to that of the gypsy lawyer, and it seems to me that if one is to claim that the gypsy lawyer's belief is based on his good evidence, then one also ought to conclude that Ezekiel's belief is based on his belief that God exists.

Two things may cause one to think that in the original case Ezekiel's belief that he saw an armadillo is not based on his belief that God exists. First, this may be due to one's intuition that Ezekiel's belief *is* justified but would *not* be justified if it were based on his belief in God. Notice, though, that holding that the meta-belief here does establish a basing relation between Ezekiel's belief and his belief in God does not entail that his belief is *only* based on his belief in God. We may still hold that his belief is based on his perceptual experience, as it is likely that this is the causal explanation for Ezekiel's holding the belief that he saw an armadillo (and therefore it will meet the conditions of (RCT)). We can say, then, that Ezekiel believes that he saw an armadillo for two independent reasons. One reason is his belief that God exists, and the other is his perceptual experience of seeing an armadillo. On this view, we may hold that Ezekiel's belief is justified even though some of his reasons for believing that he saw an armadillo are inadequate. It is just that those reasons fail to defeat the other 'chain' of justification. On such an account, Ezekiel's belief is doxastically justified and the meta-belief still succeeds in establishing a basing relation.

Second, Ezekiel's meta-belief in the original case does not explicitly contain as a constituent his belief that he saw an armadillo. The general schema for a meta-belief's establishing a basing relation between r and p is that it be a belief that r is good reason to believe that p . The meta-belief in the original case is not of this form. Rather, it is a belief of the following form: for all x , if I believe x , then r is a good reason to believe

x.¹⁴ This clearly does not fit the schema with which we are working. This provides us with reason to think that this meta-belief is not the sort of meta-belief that is supposed to be sufficient for establishing basing relations between reasons and beliefs.¹⁵ As a result, if one were to restrict the class of meta-beliefs which are able to establish basing relations so as to exclude Ezekiel's meta-belief, then one could do so without paying attention to the causal genesis or explanation of the meta-belief.

If it is correct that we can overcome the supposed problems posed by such examples by paying attention to what constitutes the meta-belief, then condition (ii) of (NCC) is at least irrelevant, if not mistaken altogether. Further, what I have said above equally well applies to both examples Korcz cites. It is just not the case that his examples show that we need to stipulate that the meta-belief be caused in an appropriate way by the reason and the belief in order for it to establish a basing relation between them.

Next, consider condition (iii) of (NCC). Recall that condition (iii) is as follows:

- (iii) *r*, the belief that *p*, and any other reason the meta-belief is caused by and is to be causally based on (in the sense defined by condition (2a) only), must meet all of the conditions of (2a). (548)

All that Korcz has to say about this condition is that it is supposed to exclude deviant causal chains from causing the meta-belief which is supposed to establish the basing relation. Thus (iii) is a companion to (ii). It is because of the importance of the meta-belief's being caused by the reasons and belief that problems regarding deviant causal chains become salient. If we reject (ii), then we no longer have any reason to retain (iii). If the points I have developed above are correct, therefore, neither (ii) nor (iii) are necessary parts of a non-causal condition on basing.

Finally, condition (iv) of (NCC) is extremely vague, due to the notion of contrariness it employs. If we are to assess its adequacy, (iv) needs to be more fully analyzed so that we may know what kinds of meta-beliefs

14 That is, everything I believe is made justified by *r*.

15 Contrast the following that I think the non-causal theorist should be committed to. If the meta-belief had contained *p* (i.e., Ezekiel saw an armadillo) as a constituent, then, all else being equal, *p* would have been based on *r*. This, of course, is importantly different from Ezekiel's meta-belief in the example under consideration.

it excludes. The status of condition (iv), therefore, is uncertain, and conditions (ii) and (iii) of (NCC) ought to be rejected altogether.

III Conclusion

We have seen that the causal-doxastic theory of the basing relation is inadequate for a variety of reasons. First, for the reasons developed in the preceding section, conditions (ii) and (iii) of (NCC) are not necessary parts of any plausible non-causal condition on the basing relation, even if such a condition is needed. Second, Korcz has failed to provide us with sufficient reason to think that an analysis of the basing relation must include any non-causal condition. Thus even though (NCC) fails, we are without reason to think that another non-causal condition needs to replace it. Since intuitions to the contrary are the main motivations for providing such a causal-doxastic theory, we remain without reason to think that a causal theory of the basing relation needs to be amended in order to account for the possibility that basing relations can be established independently of any causal relation between one's belief and one's reasons for believing. Contrary to Korcz's claims, his causal-doxastic theory of the basing relation is neither adequate nor necessary, and instead we need to consider more carefully causal theories of basing.¹⁶

Received: May, 2001

Revised: April, 2002

Revised: June, 2002

16 I would like to thank Richard Feldman for his very helpful comments on earlier versions of this paper. Thanks also go to John G. Bennett for bringing to my attention some parts of this paper that needed to be clarified.

