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Ingroup Attitude: A Reliance-Based Analysis

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Ingroup Attitude: A Reliance-Based Analysis

by

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ABSTRACT

People as group members tend to exhibit a partial attitude to either conform to the dominant group view or form beliefs—such as climate change denial and religious belief—based on other ingroup members' testimony when the evidence for such a belief is insufficient. Philosophers have conceptualized this phenomenon of ingroup attitudes in terms of belief. In this paper, I argue that *reliance*, a cognitive attitude that is goal-oriented and primarily regulated by pragmatic concerns, is more fitting to illuminate cases of ingroup attitudes. Framing the discussion of ingroup attitudes in terms of reliance has three virtues: it captures the volitional aspect of the ingroup attitude that the norm governing belief fails to offer; it explains the indifference to evidence that occurs in cases of ingroup attitudes; and it resolves the seeming irrationality in acting against what one believes.

INDEX WORDS: Belief, Epistemic partiality, Reliance, Ingroup attitude, Practical factors, Group members

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1   INTRODUCTION

Epistemic partiality is a phenomenon in which people exhibit certain favoring beliefs or doxastic dispositions toward a specific group of people mainly on account of their personal relationships, even when confronted with evidence against their beliefs.[1] The beliefs involved in epistemic partiality are frequently less warranted than the evidence would support, or even that conflict with the evidence. The philosophical literature on epistemic partiality has mainly centered on personal relationships such as friendship. For example, people form or have optimistic beliefs about their friends, without sufficient evidence, in order to be a good friend (Stroud, 2006; Keller, 2004).[2]

Epistemic partiality, however, also appears in a broader setting: social groups. Often, people as group members tend to exhibit an ingroup attitude in ways in which they would conform to the dominant group view or form beliefs—such as denial of climate change and religious belief—based on other ingroup members' testimony when the evidence for such a belief is insufficient. Several theorists have sought to explain this phenomenon of ingroup attitudes. For example, Neil Levy (2019), focusing on the epistemic factors, proposes that those ingroup members who conform to views that are strongly at variance with the evidence but welcomed by the group are epistemically unlucky. By contrast, Helen De Cruz (2020), emphasizing the practical factors, argues that maintaining one's social identity and ingroup membership plays a significant role in the phenomenon of ingroup attitudes.[3] Note that Levy and

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[1] I use epistemic partiality as a neutral term to describe the phenomenon of ingroup attitudes where people express partiality through a mental attitude. I do not intend to use it as belief based. As I argue in this paper, the ingroup attitude involves a reliance-based partiality.

[2] Sometimes there is no specific established attitude involved in cases of epistemic partiality. For example, I may have never formed the belief that my friend Bob is not a sexual predator. But if I were to face some evidence or testimony that indicate otherwise, I may resist that evidence or testimony.

[3] De Cruz's view is not a purely non-epistemic view. As she admits it, her view is a "mix of both [epistemic and non-epistemic concerns]" (De Cruz, 2020, p. 446). But the challenge posed by the nature of belief to her view stands as well for reasons I argue later.

De Cruz's views are not in conflict.[4] It might be the case that ingroup beliefs are formed and maintained in order to promote the practical end of group membership and that this also often leads people to epistemically unlucky outcomes.

The aim of my paper is twofold. First, I argue that explanations focusing on either epistemic factors or non-epistemic factors only yield a partial explanation, since cases of ingroup attitude formation usually involve both epistemic and non-epistemic factors. To explain the phenomenon of ingroup attitudes, we need a converging account with both epistemic and non-epistemic factors considered. Then, I advance a positive account based on a different mental attitude: *reliance*, a cognitive attitude that is goal-oriented and primarily regulated by pragmatic concerns, to illuminate cases of ingroup attitudes. Specifically, my thesis is that reliance is a more fitting attitude than belief to explain cases of ingroup attitudes, given that belief ought to be governed by evidence and impartial norms. Note that this is not to deny the instances of false beliefs or beliefs formed through an inappropriate epistemic procedure. Nor do I claim that reliance *is* the attitude that is taken in cases of ingroup attitudes. Instead, I argue that, *if* there is an ingroup attitude manifesting partiality in cases of ingroup attitudes, *then* reliance should be that attitude because it can better capture the phenomenon of ingroup attitudes.

My strategy is as follows: in section 2, I introduce the phenomenon of ingroup attitudes and its belief-based explanation. Then, in section 3, I put forth the features of reliance and belief and show how reliance differs from belief. In section 4, I give a direct argument that reliance is

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[4] One might question the compatibility between De Cruz's and Levy's views, given that De Cruz's view positing a psychological influence on belief that levy's theory would need to reject. Specifically, if we accept De Cruz's view that practical concerns pose psychological influence on our beliefs, then it would undermine Levy's view focusing on the significance of luck in shaping people's belief pattern. De Cruz, however, appears to think that her account is compatible with Levy's view. She writes, "my view is not that our beliefs are exclusively motivated by social belonging (Kahan), nor that they are exclusively motivated by epistemic concerns (Levy). Rather, I hold that both factors play a role in the beliefs we endorse" (De Cruz, 2020, p. 446). In other words, De Cruz considers Levy's theory to be inadequate but essential to explain the ingroup attitude. Levy, on the other hand, would need to avoid and reject De Cruz's account to maintain his luck-attributed theory.

more of a fitting attitude than belief in cases of ingroup attitudes. Then I provide a diagnosis of the inadequacy of the belief-based explanation in comparison to a reliance-based proposal. I show that the mental attitude that is under direct pressure in these cases is reliance instead of belief. In section 5, I defend this argument against potential objections. Finally, I conclude that framing the discussion of ingroup attitudes in terms of reliance has three virtues: it captures the volitional aspect of ingroup attitude that the norm governing belief fails to offer; it explains the indifference to evidence that occurs in cases of ingroup attitudes; and it resolves the seeming irrationality in acting against what one believes.

2   INGROUP ATTITUDES AND THE BELIEF-BASED ANALYSIS

People want to be perceived by others and perceive others in a good light, especially by those to whom they bear individual relationships. We care what people think of us. This desire to care is in part because belief has an intimate bearing on people's actions, and thus what people believe would result in actions corresponding to such beliefs (Basu, 2018). Also, it is because belief reflects what people genuinely think of us, and hence, we care about others' beliefs about us for its own sake (Basu, 2018). Similarly, Simon Keller (2018) argues that "what others believe about you determines whether you have a good reputation, whether you have the respect of your peers, and whether your friends genuinely like you" (p. 19). In other words, we care what others believe of us because their beliefs "bear directly upon [our] level of well-being" and flourishing (Keller, 2018, p. 19). Consequently, it makes sense for people desiring to be seen in a positive light.

For example, in cases of personal relationships such as friendship, people favorably perceive their friends and, in turn, expect their friends to see them in a similar light. One may feel *wronged* when her friend's beliefs of her do not align with what she reasonably expects them

to be. The literature on epistemic partiality examines such cases and suggests that friendship

places a normative demand on people in determining how they should form beliefs of their

friends (Keller, 2004;2013;2018; Stroud, 2006; Basu, 2018). That is to say, maintaining a

friendship requires people to form or hold beliefs about their friends in a particular way. More

specifically, people should form favorable beliefs about their friends in order to be a good friend.

Otherwise, one may fail to be a good friend. This case interestingly reveals a normative aspect of

belief within the domain of personal relationships: there is a normative requirement on people's

attitude to those with whom they share a relationship, namely an ingroup attitude. There is

something people *ought* to believe in accordance with the relationship they share.

Similarly, within social groups, there are ingroup attitudes arising from group pressure on

individual group members to regulate their external behavior and internal thoughts accordingly.

This effect has been examined by the "Asch-style conformist experiments" (De Cruz, 2020). The

Asch-style cases date back to Solomon Asch (1956), who conducted what is now regarded as a

classic experiment on social conformity to investigate the extent to which social pressure from a

majority of the group would affect individual group members' tendency to conform. In these

experiments, people are asked to participate in a simple perceptual test. A majority of the

participants collude with the experimenter, as they have already been told to pick a wrong line to

match. When the real participants are asked to answer the question, Asch found that these real

participants sometimes conformed with the clearly incorrect answer chosen by the majority, even

if that answer does not reflect their true judgments. As the study interview shows, some of those

participants confessed that they knew that the majority of the participants were wrong, and they

did not believe what they chose.[5] Although the participants in this experiment vary in their social

and group identities, this experiment nonetheless reveals the extent to which social influence

affects people's decisions in a group setting.

The effect of ingroup attitude on ingroup members becomes evident when it comes to

religious beliefs and politically polarized issues such as the theory of evolution and global

warming. For example, although the theory of evolution enjoys a high degree of expert

consensus, there are still a good number of people holding a creationist view. According to a

2019 Gallup poll, there are as many as 47% and as few as 38% percent of Americans have taken

a creationist view (Brenan, 2019). Another good example is the rejection of global warming. The

IPCC's *Fifth Assessment Report* concludes that anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions are

"*extremely likely*" to have been the predominant cause of global warming over the past 50 years.

This report is produced by a large group of scientists based on their assessments of a rich body of

scientific evidence and facts. According to a 2018 Gallup poll, however, only 42 % of

Republicans think there is a scientific consensus on the occurrence of global warming, compared

to that of 86% of Democrats. Furthermore, 35% of the Republicans believe that global warming

is caused by human activities, whereas 89% of the Democrats believe that human activities are

the cause of global warming (Brenan and Saad, 2018; as cited in De Cruz, 2020).

One question worth asking is how laypeople come to reject the view that enjoys high

scientific consensus while lacking access to the relevant scientific evidence and facts. This is

what Alvin Goldman (2001) calls the *novice-expert* problem. The novice-expert problem arises

when laypeople try to decide which expert to ask for intellectual guidance on highly specialized

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[5] It is noted that the results of Asch-style experiment are not "clear-cut," and that "some participants deferred more to the majority view than others" (De Cruz, 2020, p. 444). Th point here is that there are other factors than truth at play in deciding people's deference to testimony.

matters, given that laypeople themselves do not have the epistemic resources and access to the evidence directly. Typically, the novice-expert problem is approached in terms of belief and thereby assessed through purely evidential considerations. On the face of it, it seems that the scientific consensus by scientists with appropriate credentials holds significant evidential weight and thus poses an epistemic demand on laypeople in requiring to which expert to defer. Yet, as the polls have shown, the rejection of consensus is relatively ubiquitous. More importantly, to a greater extent, the endorsement and rejection of these two issues are consistently aligned with people's political allegiance and religious identity (Dunlap et al., 2016).

One might argue that ingroup members who reject scientific consensus on certain issues are less critical, or irrational, or less informed compared to those who form their beliefs on the same maters in accord with evidence. Neil Levy (2019) objects to this point. Instead, he argues that these rejectionists are merely epistemically unlucky. According to Levy, there is no necessary connection between rejecting expert consensus and being deficient in scientific knowledge or having bad reasoning skills. In fact, he notes that there is a negative correlation between having good reasoning skills and rates of acceptance of the expert consensus among the conservatives because rejectionists are more likely to employ their critical thinking skill to undermine the counterarguments and to defend their own views (p. 315).

Moreover, Levy (2019) points out that people typically employ two cues when assessing testimony from others: "benevolence" and "reliability" (p. 322). Reliability signals the competence of the speaker in the area of expertise, while benevolence signals whether the speaker has the audience's best interests in mind. These two key testifiers shield people from being deceived and exploited. Consequently, people are more sensitive to these two features of speakers over the conveyed content. This remains true, "even when the content of the testimony

is disagreeable to hearers" (Levy, 2019, p. 321). Levy further suggests that sharing the same political or religious group membership functions as a proxy for benevolence. Thus, when scientific experts already possess contrary political views to those held by their audiences, these experts would be perceived as lacking benevolence and therefore also reliability, since the possibility of being deceived is heightened by the lack of benevolence. In Levy's view, although both Republicans and Democrats utilize the same cues as a mechanism to evaluate testimony, the deference transmission for the Democrats *happens* to trace back to experts with proper credentials, whereas the Republicans' chain of transmission is bottomed out by "maverick scientists" (p. 322). Note that Levy mainly focuses on the epistemic consideration in evaluating testimony. The cues of benevolence and reliability are for the purpose of preventing us from being deceived. Thus, his position is an epistemic position.

Helen De Cruz (2020) challenges Levy's view by proposing a non-epistemic focused approach. As a purely epistemic position leaves out the non-epistemic considerations, she argues that within a group, ingroup membership places "a prima facie demand" on group members to hold ingroup beliefs as a way to "achieve increased cohesion" (De Cruz, 2020, p. 442). In other words, ingroup membership, *prima facie*, requires an ingroup attitude: belief. In part, it is because "believing what one's group holds helps people to coordinate action," even if the belief is false (De Cruz, 2020, p. 444). Additionally, holding distinctive beliefs that mark out members of one's group can "enhance within-group homogeneity" as well as "emphasize within-group similarity" (De Cruz, 2020, pp. 444-445). Meanwhile, holding such shared beliefs can heighten the intergroup differences. Given these functions of holding shared beliefs, being a member of a group requires people to believe what one's group believes. In light of this argument, De Cruz explains the rejection of the expert consensus in terms of the pursuit of a sense of belonging.

Specifically, when the Republicans reject the expert consensus on global warming, they are doing so to exemplify their group membership status and thereby feeling the sense of belonging to their group.

Although De Cruz acknowledges that epistemic factors also play a role, she argues that non-epistemic factors such as group membership and its related demands often *trump* the epistemic factors. For example, when believing one's ingroup beliefs undermines his epistemic commitment to truth, as an ingroup member, the sense of belonging to his group would outplay his concern for truth in determining his ingroup belief formation. Given the defining role that practical consideration plays, ingroup members' beliefs are mostly immune to evidence. Sometimes, even if an ingroup member is well aware of the falsity of the group's view, he might still come to "*partial deference*," a state of knowing that dominant group view is incorrect but still agreeing with such a view in order to belong (De Cruz, 2020, p. 444). De Cruz appeals to Hodges and Geyer (2006; as cited in De Cruz, 2020) to explain this partial deference as people attempt to "work pragmatically to negotiate these conflicts in ways that acknowledge their interdependence with others and their joint obligations to values such as truth" (De Cruz, 2020, p. 444). It might be that partial deference is a result of "[trusting] the beliefs that are predominant in the group one is a member of" for social advantage (De Cruz, 2020, p. 444). One thing to note is that for De Cruz ingroup membership demands belief instead of mere agreement. Thus, the partial deference will eventually result in a genuine belief in her account. Although those ingroup members who defer to the majority view are well-aware of the implausibility of the majority view, they still come to *believe* the implausible view as true.[6]

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[6] Note that although De Cruz does not specifically say that people who partially deferred to the majority view would come to *believe* such a view, it is a direct implication of her argument on how social identities and ingroup affiliation are marked by counterintuitive beliefs. She appeals to examples of people holding counterintuitive religious beliefs to argue for how these beliefs function as "an easy marker for ingroup affiliation" because these

Cases of ingroup attitudes are puzzling, given that belief is generally thought of as evidence-based and governed by impartial norms. Seemingly there are two types of factors at play during ingroup attitude formation: epistemic and non-epistemic factors. Emphasis solely on either epistemic or non-epistemic factors would result in an inadequate explanation. On the one hand, if we accept Levy's argument that people exhibiting an ingroup attitude by deferring to group views are merely epistemically unlucky, we would be ignoring the role of practical factors and cases in which ingroup attitudes are primarily motivated by pragmatic concerns. On the other hand, if we follow De Cruz's argument that people conform to certain unintuitive views as a group member for the sake of a sense of belonging, we face two further questions: can practical factors normatively demand belief? Does the ingroup attitude that signals one's group membership require beliefs?

In the next section, I give a negative answer to these two questions in light of the nature of belief. Moreover, I put forth a new account to understand ingroup attitude formation by introducing a different mental attitude: reliance. I explain why belief would be an inappropriate attitude to understand cases of ingroup attitudes and I argue that reliance does a better job at capturing the mental state involved in cases of ingroup attitudes. And it does so without leading to any conflict between epistemic and group norms.

3   BELIEF AND RELIANCE

Reliance, in the sense developed here, is a propositional attitude rather than an act. It is a cognitive attitude in the same sense in which "believing, imagining and so forth are cognitive

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beliefs "are not widely shared in the world at large" and "are only shared among [their] fellow ingroup members" (De Cruz, 2020, p. 445). While it is possible that De Cruz uses the word 'hold' interchangeably with 'accept' or 'endorse,' this interpretation undermines her project on explaining "how … large swathes of the population *believe* in discredited scientific theories" (De Cruz, 2020, p. 441; emphasis added). Thus, I suspect that De Cruz means that to be an ingroup member requires one to believe views endorsed by the group.

attitudes" (Alonso, 2014, p. 165). While belief aims at truth and is normatively regulated by

evidence, reliance aims at providing correct guidance to help the agents to achieve their practical

ends and thus is constitutively regulated by relevant pragmatic considerations. Reliance is

justified if and only if it cognitively guides one's reasoning in an appropriate way to achieve the

relevant goals. Here are two paradigmatic examples of reliance:

Rope. Stuck on the top of the mountain at dawn, you come across some climbing rope and trying
to deliberate about whether the rope will hold your weight. You have doubts as to whether this
rope can hold your weight. You have no evidence indicating whether the rope will hold your
weight or not. You do not believe it will. But you do not believe that it will not, either. In
addition, there is no other way for you to climb down the mountain than relying on the rope's
holding your weight. Upon careful reflection, you decide to rely on the rope's holding your
weight, and plan to make moves in reliance on the rope's holding your weight to climb down the
mountain. [7]

Shop owner. As a shop owner, you recently hired your good friend as a cashier who was
convicted of petty theft before. You know how difficult it is to get a job with a criminal record.
You don't know the likelihood of your friend stealing again either from your shop or other
places. If she steals again, you will suffer as her employer as well as a good friend. You decide to
keep her employed at your shop because you want to give her the benefit of doubt as a good
friend should do. [8]

   In the *Rope* example, the climber does not have any evidence suggesting whether the

rope *can* or *cannot* hold his weight. Similarly, the shop owner does not have evidence indicating

whether her friend *will* or *will not* steal again. Although her friend's previous conviction can

undermine her having a belief that her friend will not steal again, this negative evidence is not

sufficient to ground a belief that her friend will steal again. Nonetheless, both agents need to

react to a situation by making a decision. Thus, the question becomes whether there are some

attitudes other than belief that guiding and justifying the agents' action.

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[7] This is a paradigmatic example of reliance discussed in Alonso (2014). Noted by Alonso, Holton (1994) and
Blackburn (1998) also discuss a similar example to *Rope*.
[8] I borrow this example from Holton (1994).

Facundo Alonso (2014) identifies the cognitive attitude in question as "reliance."[9] Reliance occurs not only when people lack evidence to form beliefs, but also when people possess some evidence and have a corresponding belief. In the *Rope* case, the climber lacks evidence to form a negative or affirmative belief and thus, forming the reliance to guide his intentional action of using that rope.[10] In the *Shop Owner* case, the shop owner has no evidence of whether or not her friend will steal again at the moment. She cannot appeal to the belief that her friend will not steal again to justify her action of hiring her friend, given that there is no evidence for such a belief. Although she might believe that her friend will not steal again for other reasons, such a belief is not justified by evidence and thus cannot rationally ground her decision to hire her friend. So, she relies on the fact that her friend will not steal again to plan her action of hiring her friend.[11]

Alonso (2014) defines reliance as a cognitive attitude that constitutively aims at "providing cognitive guidance that is sensible or correct from the standpoint of relevant ends, values and so on -- where these include, among others, prudential, moral and intellectual ends and values" (p. 169). By sensible, he means that "[the guidance] is instrumental to one's relevant end" (Alonso, 2016, p. 325). For instance, the reliance formed by the shop owner guides her in hiring her friend so that she can be a good friend. The achievement of her goal to be a good friend justifies her reliance. Moreover, reliance is "constitutively regulated by relevant

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[9] Although the phenomenon of reliance has been discussed widely in the literature of trust, the nature of reliance has received only limited attention. For discussions on trust and reliance, see Baier (1986); Holton (1994); Blackburn (1998); Marušić (2017).

[10] One might suggest that the agent in the *Rope* case can simply accept that the rope can hold his weight and use it as a premise to plan his actions without believing that proposition. This move has been suggested by Michael Bratman (1992). He refers to the phenomenon of reliance as "acceptance in a context." For an argument against Bratman's reducing reliance to acceptance, see Smith (2010).

[11] Note that to propose reliance in these cases is not to deny the existence of other cognitive attitudes at work. It might be that there are other cognitive attitudes at play. Nonetheless, it is plausible to say that belief cannot exhaust the phenomenon of epistemic partiality.

pragmatic considerations" (Alonso, 2014, p.170). It aims at achieving goals by considering

pragmatic factors, whereas belief aims at truth, typically excluding other non-truth contributory

considerations.[12] If, however, taking evidence into account further assists one in achieving

certain goals, reliance may be regulated by both evidential and pragmatic considerations. Thus,

Alonso concedes that reliance can be regulated by evidence in some cases. Yet, as he suggests,

we should not infer from these cases that reliance, "as a matter of constitution, aim[s] at truth and

[is] regulated by evidence," because reliance is primarily governed by the norm of sensible

guidance (Alonso, 2014, p. 172). Thus, reliance can be settled based solely on prudential or

moral recommendations in certain cases.

One might wonder what similarities and differences exist between belief and reliance.

According to Alonso, reliance resembles belief in two relevant senses. First, both belief and

reliance are cognitive attitudes. Second, both attitudes are "*cognitively guiding* (*or framing*)

one's reasoning" (Alonso, 2014, p. 166). Specifically, both attitudes involve a disposition to

deliberate on the basis of their content. These two attitudes, nonetheless, differ in several

respects. First, belief "constitutively aims at the truth" (Alonso, 2014, p. 167). It functions to

track the world as it really is. By contrast, reliance might involve truth but is not constitutively

truth directed. Second, reliance "bears, in contrast to belief, a tight connection to the will,"

whereas belief is "not under the direct control of the will" (Alonso, 2014, p.176). One cannot

decide to believe because belief is typically involuntary.[13] But one can decide to rely based on

the pragmatic goals at issue. Third, belief is disposed to be solely regulated by evidence as it

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[12] Some philosophers argue that pragmatic considerations can affect the norms for justified belief and knowledge. This view is first discussed under the term "pragmatic encroachment" by Kvanvig (2004). See e.g., Stanley (2005); Fantl and McGrath (2009) and (2002) for a defense of this thesis. For an argument against pragmatic encroachment, see Schaffer (2006).

[13] For a discussion on the involuntariness of belief, see Williams (1973).

tracks the truth. Thus, belief is revisable as it responds to the evidence. Reliance, by contrast, plays a "non-defeasible role in cognitively guiding one's reasoning" (Alonso, 2014, p. 169). Note that there is a level of evidence that would typically suffice to override the reliance on P, e.g., when the agent gains new evidence such that she come to know that not-P is true. For example, if the shop owner knows that her friend is stealing, that could give her a very strong reason to stop relying on the proposition that her friend will not steal. But it is still possible for her to continue relying on that proposition just to give her friend the benefit of doubt.[14] It is in this possibility that the non-defeasibility of reliance consists.

The difference in defeasibility and voluntariness between belief and reliance gives rise to the fourth distinction, namely that reliance has a kind of context-dependence that belief lacks. For example, in the case of *Shop Owner*, if the owner believes that her friend will not steal again, her belief will not be modified based on which stores she works at. It will not be the case that she believes her friend will not steal again when her friend works for her, while failing to believe the same content when her friend works for someone else. She will either believes that her friend will steal again, or not, given her evidence.[15] In contrast to belief, reliance exhibits "an important form of context-relativity" (Alonso, 2014, p.176). The shop owner can rely on her friend not stealing again if her friend works at her shop but not rely on her friend not stealing if her friend were to work at somewhere else, assuming that she has the same body of evidence.

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[14] I use 'rely on' and 'rely on that' as abbreviations to "relying on the fact that" in this paper.

[15] One may say that the shop owner can form two opposing beliefs on whether her friend will not steal again based on where her friend works. For example, she can believe that her friend will not steal again, by virtue of their friendship, if her friend works for her, while not believing the same belief if her friend works for someone else. I agree that this could be the case. Given that belief is truth-tracking and thereby regulated by evidence, however, non-evidential considerations cannot justify the shop owner's different beliefs when her evidence remains the same. The shop owner's belief being governed by partial norms is explicitly in contradiction to the epistemic norm. Thus, even if the shop owner has the belief that her friend will not steal again because her friend works for her, her belief is not justified. By contrast, reliance can be justified by practical considerations and thus be modified by context. Admittedly, one can revise her beliefs at any given time. The modification of belief, however, is grounded in evidence rather than context.

To sum up, belief constitutively aims at truth and is thereby regulated by evidence of truth, whereas reliance constitutively aims at providing appropriate guidance to achieve certain pragmatic goals and thus is regulated by pragmatic concerns. Furthermore, belief is defeasible by evidence, while reliance can be immune to evidence by virtue of being a choice of will. Equipped with the understanding of reliance and belief, I will re-examine the issue of ingroup attitudes in the following section.

4   BELIEF, RELIANCE, AND INGROUP ATTITUDES

In section 3, I presented the cognitive attitude reliance and its differences from belief. Given that belief constitutively aims at truth and thereby ought to be governed by evidence of truth, it seems impossible to square the norms governing belief with the phenomenon of ingroup attitudes where people form beliefs in order to maintain one's group membership. The conceptualization of ingroup attitude in terms of belief faces two difficult issues: how can one *involuntarily* form beliefs that are welcomed by one's group under the demands of group membership, if one knows that the belief is false? Does the ingroup attitude that signals one's group membership require beliefs? To avoid these conceptual difficulties, I propose to examine the cases in light of a different cognitive attitude: reliance.

Recall the examples Levy and De Cruz have discussed. When confronted with the scientific evidence and experts with credentials in the relevant field, an ingroup member would defer to other ingroup members' testimonies on climate change over the experts', even if the ingroup members who offer testimonies on climate change have no expertise in the relevant fields. In some cases, the ingroup member would conform to the view that is welcomed by the group, knowing that such a view is false. Both Levy's and De Cruz's views suggest the mental attitude that this ingroup member has in these cases is belief. A belief-based proposal, however,

brings out a conflict between an impartial epistemic norm governing belief and the role that is played by practical concerns in these cases. Moreover, a belief-based proposal cannot explain cases in which an ingroup member knowingly comes to believe a view that is false. Instead, I propose that the mental attitude at work in cases of ingroup attitudes is reliance. In other words, when this ingroup member cannot decide whose testimony to trust between an ingroup member and an outgroup scientist, he relies on the proposition of the group view and acts accordingly as a way to signal his commitment to the group and his group membership. Similarly, while knowing that the view endorsed by the group might be false, an ingroup member can rely on the proposition of this view in order to meet the demand by his group on its members to hold such a view and to increase group cohesion. Furthermore, this ingroup member's reliance provides him prudential guidance: to be a team player and a collaborative group member. This feature of reliance precisely explains why the ingroup members' attitude does not primarily respond to evidence. Depending on one's practical goals, reliance can be responsive to evidence, or practical matters, or both. Given that reliance in cases of ingroup attitude functions to provide practical guidance to achieve certain pragmatic goals, reliance here mainly responds to practical concerns that can promote one's goals of being a good group member instead of one's epistemic commitment to truth.

Moreover, the reliance-based construal of cases of ingroup attitudes displays a stronger sense of group homogeneity and cohesion than that of a belief-based understanding. For example, when an ingroup member relies on his group's belief that he knows to be false, he prioritizes his commitment to his group membership and group identity over his commitment to truth as an epistemic agent. In turn, his priority of his group membership and identity signals his commitment to his group and his willingness to collaborate with other group members. His

reliance in this case might even motivate other ingroup members, and thus possibly increases group homogeneity and cohesion. At the absence of belief, reliance is sufficient for ingroup members to express their commitment, psychologically and behaviorally, to their group and maintain their ingroup memberships.

By re-construing cases of ingroup attitudes through reliance, a cognitive attitude that is pragmatically advantageous in guiding people to achieve their goals, this account avoids the tension posed by a belief-based analysis. Namely, an ingroup attitude does not necessarily involve doxastic partiality—which essentially involves beliefs—but instead calls for other kind of partiality involving reliance.

5   REPLYING TO OBJECTIONS

One objection to my account is that, according to Funkhouser (2017; 2020), belief has a signaling function that renders truth irrelevant to belief. More specifically, Funkhouser argues that belief has two functions: "navigational function" and "social signaling function" (Funkhouser, 2017, p. 814). When beliefs play a navigational role, they aim at truth since truth contributes to the success of us navigating the world. By contrast, when beliefs play a social signaling role, they "serve as signals by which we alter the beliefs and behavior of others" and thus "need not aim at the truth" (Funkhouser, 2017, pp. 815; 810). Although navigation is the primary function of belief, this function can be in conflict with the signaling function. Thus, when beliefs serve as signals to manipulate others, truth can be irrelevant to such beliefs. If this is the case, then belief would be a fitting mental attitude for cases of ingroup attitudes where an ingroup member conforming to a group view that is known to be false.

If Funkhouser is correct that belief can perform a signaling function, then I agree that it would render the proposal of reliance redundant in cases of ingroup attitudes. The signaling

function of belief makes it possible that belief in cases of ingroup attitudes does not need to aim at truth. In certain cases, it even "aim[s] *away* from truth", as Funkhouser suggests (2017, p. 810). It might be that belief manifests itself differently when performing different functions. This way of thinking, however, presupposes the mental attitude in question is belief. Namely, in order to say that belief, while serving a signaling function in cases of ingroup attitudes, may not be truth-aiming, one has to assume that belief is *the* ingroup attitude. It is this assumption that I challenge in this project.

Instead of investigating different functions of belief based on cases in which the mental attitude is thought as belief yet manifested itself uncharacteristically, I ask a fundamental question whether the mental attitude involved in cases of ingroup attitudes can be something other than belief. There are two reasons for asking this question. First, given that the mental attitude in cases of ingroup attitudes does not resemble the distinctive traits of belief, it is possible that this mental attitude is mistaken as belief. It is this possibility that I exploit to propose that the mental attitude in question here is reliance. Second, reliance can better capture the volitional aspect of ingroup attitudes than belief. As I have noted in this paper, the mental attitude in cases of ingroup attitudes has a tight connection to the will and it is partly subjected to practical concerns. While one cannot choose what to believe due to the involuntary nature of belief, one can choose to rely for the purpose of achieving certain goals. Thus, even if belief's signaling function makes it fitting for cases of ingroup attitudes, an argument based on reliance can still be made on a more fundamental level.

One may also object to my account by saying that an account of ingroup attitude based on reliance seems to invite forms of irrationality akin to those of epistemic partiality. For example,

at a practical level it seems irrational to behave in ways that one knows contradict the evidence or the truth. How can a reliance-based account explain this form of irrationality?

To respond to this objection, I need to clarify two types of irrationality involved in cases of ingroup attitudes: epistemic irrationality and practical irrationality. For one to believe a view that one knows contradict the evidence would be epistemic irrational. As noted, my view is reliance-based and thus avoids this type of irrationality. Thus, it is practical irrationality at issue here. The question is whether it is irrational for one to act against what one knows as true. I think this would depends on one's goal and how one benefits from achieving his goal. In cases where an ingroup member is trying to promote one's image of being a loyal group member, then it would not be irrational for him to behave against what he knows as true in order to impress his fellow ingroup members. Similarly, it would not be irrational for people to act against what they believe as true in order to gain monetary reward. It is the goal that people pursue rationally justifies their acts against what they know as true. In cases where people are relying, it might be that they would stop relying on the group view once their practical goals have been achieved. Moreover, when the practical benefits can be supplied without relying on the group view, it is also possible to stop relying on the view.

Another objection might be that the survey data may fail to track people's genuine attitudes, especially these long-term, confidently-held, stable beliefs. If this is true, then there might be less partiality than these surveys demonstrate.

I agree that surveys can fail to reflect on people's stable and long-term held beliefs. As De Cruz (2020) admits, when offered financial reward for correct responses, "even staunch partisan voters are capable of holding factual beliefs that go against the grain of their preferred party's stance" (p. 445). One might say that people can change their beliefs at given times. But

this objection seems to point to a more fundamental issue here. That is, the attitude reflected by the survey is not what people actually commit to. This objection undermines both belief-based and reliance-based arguments. Note that I do not need to commit to the existence of genuine partial attitudes to make my argument. All I need to commit to is that *if* there is a long-term held attitude in cases of ingroup attitudes, reliance would be more fitting than belief to be this attitude.

One may also object to my account by making a distinction between instrumental behavior and merely symbolic behavior. For example, expressing that "global warming is a hoax" is largely a symbolic behavior because people are not performing actions that *would* fail if that statement were false. They are just making noises that group members like to hear which is merely symbolic. In this case, these group members are not actually relying. By contrast, in the *Rope* case, the agent is genuinely relying on the proposition that the rope will hold his weight because his action of climbing down will *fail* if the relied proposition is false. In other words, my account mixes up merely symbolic behavior with instrumental behavior.[16]

First, to make this objection, a clear distinction between instrumental behavior and symbolic behavior has to be made. In cases of ingroup members expressing views that are favored by their group, however, the distinction between these two types of behavior is not so clear. In other words, when ingroup members perform symbolic behaviors, they are also doing so to achieve other instrumental ends such as to establish their positions as an ingroup member. They are not *simply* making noises. Their seemingly symbolic behavior is connected to other purposes and thus becomes instrumental. Accordingly, these two types of behavior are not mutually exclusive. Secondly, people who go around saying that "global warming is a hoax" typically do not stop at expressing their views verbally. Most likely, they will do other things that

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[16] Thanks to Neil Van Leeuwen for making this objection.

clearly are influenced by the propositions upon which they rely. For someone who relies on that global warming is a hoax, he is more likely to perform other actions connected to his reliance in certain ways to maintain his ingroup membership. Moreover, his action of buying a private jet *would* fail if the statement he relies on were false. Thus, a symbolic behavior is not *merely* symbolic, given that people do act in accordance with the truth of the relied upon statement.

6   CONCLUSION

It is desirable to exhibit an ingroup attitude to those with whom we share social identities and relationships. This phenomenon of ingroup attitudes has been discussed by theorists such as Levy and De Cruz in terms of belief. Namely, the mental attitude in cases of ingroup attitudes is belief. Sometimes an ingroup member would even come to believe the group view that is known to be false. Thinking of ingroup attitudes in terms of belief, however, puts the norm of belief against the practical factors at work in cases of ingroup attitudes. While belief is characteristically governed by evidence, cases of ingroup attitudes involve both practical and epistemic concerns. Thus, I appeal to reliance to illuminate cases of ingroup attitudes, arguing that ingroup attitudes require reliance instead of belief. Moreover, framing the discussion of ingroup attitudes in terms of reliance has three virtues. First, it captures the volitional aspect of ingroup attitude that the norm governing belief fails to offer. Second, it explains the indifference to evidence that occurs in cases of ingroup attitudes. Finally, it resolves the seeming irrationality in acting against what one believes.

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