

UNIVERSIDAD DE NAVARRA
FACULTAD ECLESIASTICA DE FILOSOFÍA

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**A NEW APPROACH TO HUMAN KNOWLEDGE
IN SOSA'S VIRTUE PERSPECTIVISM**

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PRESENTATION

Resumen. El «perspectivismo de la virtud» de Sosa incorpora elementos positivos del fundacionalismo, del coherentismo y del confiabilismo. Se estudian dos nociones claves: la virtud intelectual y la perspectiva epistémica, para proveer un análisis de la justificación y del conocimiento. Se desarrolla un análisis de la noción de virtud intelectual. Se examina la distinción entre conocimiento acertado y justificación, y, finalmente, se considera la distinción entre el conocimiento animal y el conocimiento reflexivo. Se defiende la necesidad de distinguir la virtud intelectual de las facultades cognoscitivas y de las virtudes morales. De este modo, se intenta integrar en el concepto de virtud intelectual los elementos positivos del confiabilismo y del responsabilismo de la virtud. El conocimiento requiere la evaluación del cognoscente. Por tanto, la tesis desarrolla una «nueva aproximación» al conocimiento, que puede llamarse «responsabilismo de las facultades».

Palabras clave: Conocimiento, Justificación, Virtud, Confiabilismo, Responsabilismo.

Abstract. Sosa's Theory of Virtue Perspectivism incorporates the positive insights of foundationalism, coherentism, and reliabilism. It focuses on two key notions: the notion of intellectual virtues and the notion of epistemic perspectivism. Thus, Virtue Perspectivism provides an analysis of justification and knowledge. The thesis will provide an in-depth analysis of Sosa's distinction of aptness and justification and finally, it shall consider Sosa's distinction of animal and reflective knowledge. We shall argue that we need to distinguish intellectual virtue from cognitive faculties and from moral virtues. In so doing, we integrate the positive insight of Virtue Reliabilism and Virtue Responsibilism. Human knowledge requires the evaluation of the knower since it is not possible to speak of human knowledge in isolation of the subject who does the knowing. Hence, the thesis will explicate a «new approach» to human knowledge, to which we might refer to as Faculty Responsibilism.

Key words: Knowledge, Justification, Virtue, Reliabilism, Responsabilism.

Many have turned to a virtue-theoretic approach in epistemology because of the number of issues that have plague epistemology over the past few decades. The Gettier problem, the controversy between foundationalism and coherentism, and the dispute between internalism and externalism, among others, have led to the emergence of Virtue Epistemology. The proposal of developing a virtue approach to epistemology was first suggested by Ernest Sosa in his article entitled «*The Raft and the Pyramid*». The idea came to him due to the epistemological issues at the time, particularly, the dispute between foundationalism and coherentism. He believed that an epistemology-based-virtue could bypass the dispute between these two opposing theories. After Sosa's initial proposal, other philosophers followed and began to develop a virtue-theoretic approach to epistemology, which came to be known as *Virtue Epistemology*.

The application of a virtue approach to epistemology was somehow influenced by the revival of a virtue theory in ethics due to the dissatisfaction towards deontological ethics and consequentialism. Sosa thinks that the same strategy may prove fruitful in epistemology. In other words, if moral virtues have proven useful in ethics then intellectual virtues may also prove valuable in epistemology. Ernest Sosa, on his part, tried to address those epistemological problems by resorting to his theory of *Virtue Perspectivism*. He claims that his theory can handle the debate between foundationalism and coherentism and the controversy between internalism and externalism. He argues that these uncompromising theories are *false dichotomies*. Thus,

Sosa's theory incorporates the positive insights of foundationalism, coheren-tism and reliabilism. In short, *VP* takes on board both the positive insights of internalism and externalism. In the final analysis, we can see that the intent of Sosa is to provide an adequate account of justification and knowledge.

Sosa's *VP*, as the name of his theory implies, focuses on two key notions: the notion of intellectual virtues and the notion of epistemic perspectivism. His epistemology can be described as an «epistemology-based-virtues». Hence, Sosa tries to develop a kind of epistemology in which he provides an analysis of justification and knowledge in terms of intellectual virtue with an emphasis on the agent's epistemic perspectivism. First, Sosa evaluates the epistemic status of beliefs in terms of the epistemic properties of the subject. In so doing, beliefs must be acquired through the exercise of one's intellectual virtue or faculty. Second, he makes a distinction between an apt belief and a justified belief. An apt belief is simply a product of one's intellectual virtue while a justified belief requires that such belief be placed within the epistemic perspective of the subject. Lastly, Sosa distinguishes between animal knowledge and reflective knowledge for which the role of epistemic perspectivism becomes even more apparent.

In our discussion, we shall examine Sosa's account of justification and knowledge to see whether or not his theory can respond satisfactorily to those epistemological problems we mentioned earlier as regards the question of the structure and nature of justification and knowledge. In the final analysis, we shall evaluate Sosa's *VP* in order to see if he does provide an adequate explication of justification and knowledge. Of course, we shall end our discussion with our own proposed account of justification and knowledge. Hence, the discussion that will follow was drawn from Part III of my doctoral dissertation on Ernest Sosa entitled «The New Approach to Human Knowledge in Sosa's Virtue Perspectivism».

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JUSTIFICATION AND KNOWLEDGE

Epistemic justification may be considered as an ambiguous term. There is a lack of unanimity concerning its notion given that there is no single and generally accepted understanding of epistemic justification. Each one employs this term to accommodate one's epistemological concerns. Perhaps, this is simply a consequence of its broad scope; that is, the concept of justification has many applications¹. Nevertheless, we can say that all share a «thin» concept of justification² and that all agree that epistemic justification is important in our understanding of knowledge. Undeniably, we prefer our beliefs to be justified than to be unjustified. In our discussion, we shall focus our attention on Sosa's account of justification. We will consider his conditions for the justification of beliefs. We will examine Sosa's distinction of aptness and justification, his view on epistemic perspectivism, and how he tries to provide solutions to the problems encountered by reliabilism. We will end the first section with a proposed account of justification, an attempt to provide suggestions to improve Sosa's account of justification.

In the second section, we shall focus our attention on Sosa's account of knowledge. We shall consider the conditions for knowledge proposed by Sosa. We shall then try to understand his distinction of animal knowledge and reflective knowledge and to see the viability of such a distinction. Finally, we shall end our discussion with our proposed account of knowledge in which we shall try to integrate the positive insights of Sosa's account and Zagzebski's account into our distinction of *unreflective* and *reflective knowledge*.

1. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Justification», p. 457.

2. The idea of the «thin» concept of justification was suggested by Battaly. Cfr. H. BATTALY, «Thin Concepts to the Rescue», pp. 106-109.

1. EPISTEMIC JUSTIFICATION

Our main question in this section is «*How do beliefs get to be justified?*» It was argued that for a belief to constitute as knowledge, it must be nonaccidentally true. In Sosa's account of justification, «what we can view as justified or unjustified is what we can relate appropriately to someone's faculties»³. In other words, we will consider the *subject* who justifies the belief since it is *he* who justifies a certain belief as to why he believes what he believes and how he arrives at believing what he believes. Sosa emphasizes the importance of the knowing *subject* as the *seat of justification*⁴.

Sosa describes justification as being somewhat analogous to the sport of archery (or any other sports *mutatis mutandis*). In the sport of archery, the aim is to hit the bullseye or at least to hit it as close as possible. To do this, the archer must be skillful enough so that he can hit the bullseye with a high ratio of success. Of course, the success rate will be in proportion to the skill of the archer. This does not exclude the possibility that the archer may hit the bullseye with a minimal skill, but in such case, we may say that he is just lucky. No doubt, there is a difference between hitting the bullseye through skill and hitting it through luck. The former will certainly be more satisfying and rewarding than the latter. Epistemic justification⁵, like a skill, facilitates us to achieve our cognitive aim, which is to acquire truth and avoid falsehood. The idea of the sport of archery underlines the normative character of justification. Based on this, Sosa affirms that «knowledge is not just hitting the mark but hitting the mark somehow through means proper and skillful enough»⁶. Thus, we can draw two ideas involved in the concept of justification: its normative character and its connection to truth⁷.

Sosa defines epistemic justification as follows:

«Epistemic justification is a normative or evaluative property that shares with such properties generally three important features. It is *supervenient*. Its attribution is *universalizable*. And it is *governed by principles*. It is supervenient because whenever it applies to a belief (or the like), there must be more basic properties of that belief such that any belief with such properties would be equally epistemically justified. Its attribution is universaliz-

3. E. SOSA, «Justification», p. 457.

4. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Reflective Knowledge in the Best Circles», p. 278.

5. In our consideration of knowledge, only «epistemic» (or theoretical) justification will be relevant in whether or not one knows that *p*. Thus, *practical justification* or *moral and religious* convictions are not considered in our account of justification. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 86.

6. L. BONJOUR and E. SOSA, *Epistemic Justification*, p. 105.

7. Cfr. R. AUDI, «Justification, Truth, and Reliability», *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 49 (1988) 1-29.

able because if a belief is epistemically justified, then any belief similar to that belief in all relevant respects would be equally epistemically justified. And it is governed by principles because the epistemic justification of a belief must always derive from certain intrinsic or relational properties of it, so that any belief just like it in respect of all such properties must be equally well justified. A principle is thus implied, one that governs epistemic justification by making it consequent on antecedent properties of belief»⁸.

According to Sosa, the first project of epistemology is to come up with an account of the conditions for the justification of beliefs. We need to find an account of the conditions that *S* needs to satisfy to know that *p* is true. This is the *project of understanding*. The second project of epistemology –*project of validation*– is just the consequence of the first project. It evaluates whether or not the conditions for the justification of beliefs are satisfied. This may involve changing our situation with respect to the proposition in question so as to meet the conditions established. Its task is to ensure that our *supposed* knowledge can be considered as *real* knowledge⁹. The all-important question now is, «What are the conditions for the justification of beliefs?»

1.1. The Conditions for Justification

The task at hand is to find an adequate account of epistemic justification. What we need is to look for features which are each necessary and jointly sufficient to justify a belief. As we have seen earlier, there is a disagreement regarding the necessary conditions of justification although all agree that there must be some conditions which must be satisfied to have a justified belief¹⁰. Some suggest an account that is purely *internal* and oth-

8. *KIP*, pp. 86-87.

9. «The Project of Understanding is that of finding as simple, general and convincing an account as we are able to find of the conditions within which our belief of a proposition has the kind of epistemic authority (justification, evidence, warrant) required for one to know its truth. Having completed the Project of Understanding to his full satisfaction... He may thus be brought to face a Project of Validation, of so changing the situation with regard to more and more of the propositions that we commonly take ourselves to know that he may come to satisfy the conditions necessary for knowledge by his own (earlier) account.» *KIP*, pp. 87-88.

10. Alston writes, «...we must clear out of the way a confusion between one's *being* justified in believing that *p*, and one's *justifying* one's belief that *p*, where the latter involves one's *doing* something to show that *p*, or to show that one's belief was justified, or exhibit one's justification. The first side of this distinction is a state or condition one is in, not anything one does or any upshot thereof. I might *be* justified in believing that there is milk on the table because I see it there, even though I have done nothing to show that there is milk on the table or to show that I am justified in believing there to be. It is amazing how often

ers opt for an account that is purely *external*. Of course, such views are based on their supposed *sources of justification*. The knowing subject who justifies the belief must have a *source* from which he obtains his reason/s for believing that *p*. Sosa writes:

«What sorts of conditions can make us thus justified in so believing? It is useful to distinguish next among three things:

B The subject's beliefs

E The subject's sensory experiences

W The world external to the subject's psychology

(All for a given subject *S* at a time *t*)»¹¹

As indicated above, these sources of justification reflect the views of coherentism, foundationalism and reliabilism. Sosa sees these three main options as ways to view epistemic justification¹². Can any of these views provide us with an adequate account of justification?¹³

Sosa highlights two problems with foundationalism. First is the idea that our visual beliefs are said to be justified based on our visual experience. If justification of visual beliefs is based on our visual experience, then are we supposed to understand this as a fundamental principle or as a derived generalization? If we are to accept the former, then we will have the problem of having a multitude of principles with no unifying ground. We need to concern ourselves with beliefs grounded on our vision, our hearing, etc., without any possibility of uniting them. Likewise, if we are to accept the latter, then it will require more explication concerning the question of *fundamental principle*¹⁴. Second, foundationalism admits that knowledge must have a foundation. The rationalist admits that the founda-

these matters are confused in the literature. We will be concentrating on the "be justified" side of this distinction, since that is of more fundamental epistemological interest. If epistemic justification were restricted to those cases in which the subject carries out "justification", it would *obviously* not be a necessary condition of knowledge or even of being in a strong position to acquire knowledge. Most cases of perception knowledge, for example, involve no such activity». W. ALSTON, *Epistemic Justification*, pp. 82-83. In the abovementioned, what Alston is saying is that to require *S* to «show» that he is justified in his believing is *too strong* for epistemic justification. If we admit such condition, we will have very «few» beliefs that we may consider justified. It will suffice to mention the case of children and unsophisticated adults to see that such requirement for justification is indeed *too strong*.

11. L. BONJOUR and E. SOSA, *Epistemic Justification*, p. 107.

12. «It is fair to say that Sosa sees three broad options available in epistemology – not in the sense that these are the only ones logically possible, but in the sense that these are the ones deemed most plausible by those, past and present, who have thought carefully about relevant matters». J. GRECO, «Introduction», p. xv.

13. See Part I, Section 2 and 3. We will examine these views briefly in direct relation to our discussion of epistemic justification and we will see its inadequacy for providing an account of epistemic justification.

14. *KIP*, p. 187.

tion of knowledge must rest on rational intuition and deduction. The empiricist admits a much broader source of justification which includes also sensory experience and induction. However, in spite of having a broader foundation for knowledge, these sources of justification prove to be unreliable since it is possible to obtain beliefs from these sources that are not instances of knowledge. The problem is how are we to distinguish beliefs deriving from such foundations that constitute as real knowledge from those that are not?¹⁵ Sosa claims that there is a way to overcome the problems of foundationalism. Intellectual virtue, according to Sosa, will provide a unifying ground to the foundationalist's epistemic principles regarding perceptual beliefs. Hence, we can consider intuition, deduction, introspection, etc. as intellectual virtues since all of these are abilities that lead the subject to attain true beliefs. Defining epistemic justification in terms of intellectual virtues provides a unifying account of all the sources admitted by foundationalism¹⁶. As regards the second problem, Sosa thinks that what the subject needs is a certain *intellectual virtue* so as to be able to distinguish even complex matter (dodecagon) by simple inspection¹⁷.

Coherentism, Sosa argues, is also unacceptable. Epistemic justification cannot be reduced to a mere *coherence*. Even a comprehensive and coherent set of beliefs is not enough to induce epistemic justification. It seems wrong to admit that a true belief is justified if such belief coheres within a system of beliefs but is totally detaches from one's sensory experience. Take, for instance, the beliefs of a victim of an evil-demon, surely we would not say that he is justified in his beliefs based on relations of *coherence among beliefs only*?¹⁸ Sosa maintains that comprehensive coher-

15. Cfr. *KIP*, pp. 1-3. «Foundational empiricism postulates three ways for a belief to constitute foundational knowledge: rational intuition, introspection of one's own experience, and direct observation of one's environment. For rational intuition there is the problem that one can be right in accepting some necessary truth although one is only guessing – which means, of course, that one does not know... neither introspection nor observation is always a trustworthy source of fundamental knowledge... a belief can be introspective or observational without constituting knowledge or a foundation for further knowledge. Once more the foundationalist needs to explain the difference between, on one the hand, introspective or observational beliefs that constitute knowledge and, on the other, beliefs that are not knowledge despite being introspective or observational». E. SOSA, «Introduction», p. xvii.

16. Cfr. J. GRECO, «Virtues in Epistemology», p. 290.

17. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 9.

18. Cfr. *KIP*, pp. 157-158. «The New Evil Demon problem establishes this as follows. Consider the victim of Descartes's evil demon. In fact, suppose we are now such victims. Could that affect whether or not we are *epistemically justified* in believing what we believe? If we are justified as we are, we would *seem* to be equally justified, in some appropriate sense, so long as nothing changed within our whole framework of experiences and beliefs. However, if by sheer luck one happened to be right in the belief that one faces a fire, one's being *both* thus justified *and* right still would fall short of one's knowing about the fire». E. SOSA, «Introduction», p. xv.

ence is not enough to explain fully why a true belief is justified. He suggests that «coherentism is hence well advised to adopt corresponding requirements of (1) comprehensiveness, (2) perspectival content, and (3) mesh with experience»¹⁹. In so doing, both coherentism and foundationalism score points since we will have a comprehensive (and perspectival) coherence that is complemented with foundational beliefs. This improvement provides a complete account of internal justification. However, we still have yet to consider the external justification to complete fully our account of epistemic justification. Hence, let us now focus our attention on *reliabilism*.

Sosa admits that *reliabilism* has an advantage over internalism because a knower is not required to have *reasons* for believing. It is enough to justify a belief as long as it is a product of one's reliable cognitive process. Hence, reliabilism explains that one can be justified in believing that *p* without reasoning from *prior* beliefs²⁰. Despite the apparent advantage of reliabilism, the necessity and sufficiency of the reliability of the cognitive process in the justification of beliefs is questionable as seen in our discussion of the *evil-demon* problem and the *meta-incoherence* problem. There seems to be a deficiency in *generic reliabilism* because it leaves out the internal aspect required for the justification of beliefs. Sosa points out that true belief must derive from an intellectual virtue instead of cognitive process. In so doing, we put emphasis on the knowing subject and his cognitive faculties²¹. Reliabilism does not adequately explain how beliefs are justified. Thus, Sosa suggests the need of an «epistemic perspective» in the justification of beliefs. BonJour affirms that «part of the motivation for the requirement of an epistemic perspective is the idea that mere external reliability, relying on one's "animal aptitude" [KIP 282] is insufficient for a fully brand of cognition»²². Sosa appears to be right for admitting that a

19. L. BONJOUR and E. SOSA, *Epistemic Justification*, p. 112. To clarify, Sosa describes what kind of comprehensiveness is required. «Two sorts of requirements come to mind... First we might require that the relevant beliefs of the subject be coherent with each other and *also* coherent with that subject's relevant experiences... And, secondly, perhaps the relevant beliefs should include some account of how the subject acquires various other beliefs: thus the subject might know that there is at the time something white and round before him in part because he has some connection of how that belief is owed to his good-enough faculty of vision». E. SOSA, «Virtue Perspectivism», p. 46.

20. Sosa comments that Unger, Goldman and Nozick «each offers a way to explain how one can know that *p* without reasoning from prior knowledge. The key idea exploited here is this: you can know something noninferentially so long as it is no accident or coincidence that you are right». E. SOSA, «Reflective Knowledge in the Best Circles», p. 278.

21. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Introduction», p. xxii.

22. L. BONJOUR, «Sosa's Knowledge, Justification, and Aptness», G. AXTELL (ed.), *Knowledge, Belief, and Character*, Rowman & Littlefield, Maryland 2000, p. 93.

belief must fit coherently within the epistemic perspective of the knowing subject²³. He argues:

«...there is... an immense variety of animal knowledge, instinctive or learned, which facilitates survival and flourishing in an astonishingly rich diversity of modes and environments. Human knowledge is on a higher plane of sophistication, however, precisely because of its enhanced coherence and comprehensiveness and its capacity to satisfy self-reflective curiosity. Pure reliabilism is questionable as an adequate epistemology for such knowledge»²⁴.

It seems correct to affirm that there is a huge difference between «animal» knowledge and «human» knowledge. Our «rational nature» is what puts us on a higher level than animals. In such a case, would this not imply that our justification for our beliefs should also be on a higher level, and should not be compared to the level of «animals»? Can we be content with a kind of justification that reliabilism is suggesting? We are yet to see whether Sosa's account is acceptable but at this point, we can admit that he is in the right direction.

Having considered the views of foundationalism, coherentism and reliabilism, they show that our only alternative is to wed the positive insights of internalism and externalism. This is precisely what Sosa does in his *VP*. He builds his *VP* «from Cartesianism through modest foundationalism, coherence theory, and reliabilism»²⁵. He builds his account of justification in terms of intellectual virtues and epistemic perspectivism. Of course, more is needed to explicate adequately Sosa's view of epistemic justification as we will seek to do in our next discussion.

1.2. Sosa's Account of Epistemic Justification

A common usage of «justification» implies that to justify a certain belief is to provide argumentative reasons in favor of it. Perhaps, we may say that all epistemic justification is «argumentative» justification²⁶. A little probing will show however that argumentative justification is problematic. In fact, this is one of the objections to foundationalism, which Sosa calls the «argumentative account of justification». He considers such an account in a twofold way: first, for a belief to be justified is for the subject to justify it or to have justified it, and second, for one to justify a belief is

23. Cfr. *KIP*, pp. 144-145.

24. *KIP*, p. 95.

25. W. ALSTON, «Knowledge in Perspective», p. 200.

26. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 111.

for one correctly and seriously to use considerations or reasons in its favor²⁷. A threat of vicious circularity lurks. If *S* must *correctly use reasons* to justify a belief, then *S* needs to have *justified reasons* in its favor, and this, in turn, will require justification. Hence, we face a threat of infinite regress. «If a belief is knowledge only by being justified, and if being justified requires being based on further justified reasons, then there will be no end to the process of justifying»²⁸. The question now is how to deal with the threat of infinite regress. Coherentism abandons the argumentative justification and suggests that justification must end in coherence. All that is required to justify a belief is that it coheres within the knower's set of beliefs. Foundationalism maintains that justification must be in terms of non-inferential foundational beliefs. The «problem for foundationalism is to explain how some knowledge can be self-standing [and the] problem for coherentism is to explain how some circles can be virtuous»²⁹.

To look for an alternative source of justification that is not *argumentative*, Sosa suggests the doctrine of *supervenience*. It is a thesis that maintains that evaluative properties must supervene on non-evaluative properties. Thus, Sosa claims that epistemic justification is supervenient.

«The *doctrine of supervenience* for an evaluative property is simply that, for every *x*, if *x* has ϕ then there is a non-evaluative property (perhaps a relational property) *Y* such that (i) *x* has *Y*, and (ii) necessarily, whatever has *Y* has ϕ »³⁰.

It means that a thing will have its evaluative properties in virtue of its non-evaluative properties. Let us consider the case of a good car. We say that a car is good because of some other properties that it has such as its reliability, its look, its acceleration, its comfort, etc. As such, we can say that any car that has those properties is a *good* car. The same reasoning holds true for epistemically evaluative properties. Hence, «if a belief is cognitively justified, it is so presumably in virtue of non-evaluative properties... And any other belief just like it in respect of all such properties

27. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 253.

28. J. GRECO, «Introduction», p. xvii. «Intellectualist Model of Justification, according to which no belief is ever justified simply by being an accurate reflection in a mirror so constituted as to be generally accurate in such reflections. A further meta-belief is always required: that there is the belief in question (and that it is of a reliable sort). Only such meta-belief makes possible sufficient justification for a particular observation or memory belief. But such introspection meta-belief must then fulfill the same requirement... Hence there must be a meta-meta-belief, and we are off on a regress inexorably vicious to particular justified belief by any finite mind». *KIP*, p. 195.

29. J. GRECO, «Sosa, Ernest (1940-)», p. 2288.

30. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 153 (Chapter 9 of *KIP* was drawn from E. SOSA, «The Foundations of Foundationalism», *Nous*, 14 (1980) 547-565).

could not fail to be equally well justified»³¹. Such source of epistemic justification would be «deriving from perception, introspection, or memory, or deriving from a reliable faculty of one's own. No reason has yet been provided to show that there can be no such foundational source of epistemic justification»³². The doctrine of supervenience preserves the insight of foundationalism in the sense that a justified belief is founded on non-epistemic properties such as perception, memory, etc.³³.

Greco comments that the doctrine of supervenience provides insight into the nature of justification and knowledge since the argumentative account of justification fails to explain the nature of the epistemically evaluative properties. Likewise, considerations of supervenience also provide new light concerning the dispute between internalism and externalism on epistemic justification. Internalism claims that justification of beliefs is based entirely on factors that are «internal» to the knowing subject³⁴. But, an internalist justification alone is not enough. We need a further requirement that will explain the causal connection between our belief and the truth of our belief and this can be done through Sosa's intellectual virtue. Sosa argues that knowledge requires both internal and external justification³⁵. Hence, we say that justification supervenes on one's cognitive faculties.

As we shall see later, Sosa describes animal justification as belief arising from a reliable cognitive faculty. With this view, Sosa integrates nicely the insights of foundationalism since not all reliable sources involve inference from other beliefs such as perception and introspection. Furthermore, for requiring epistemic perspective on the reliable source for reflective justification, Sosa incorporates the insights of coherentism in his account³⁶. The «perspectivism is presented as Sosa's form of coherentism (*KIP* p. 97). "Pure" reliabilism is rejected in favor of an account with mixed reliabilist and coherentist elements, for each contains insights that need to be integrated in an account of justification»³⁷. This provides us an account of Sosa's conditions for epistemic justification. Thus, we say that what enables *S* to justify his beliefs is as follows:

31. *KIP*, p. 192. With the doctrine of supervenience, Sosa shows that the argumentative account of justification cannot possibly serve as a source of epistemic justification. It fails to go beyond the epistemically evaluative because to *correctly use reasons* to justify a belief is to reason in its favor in terms of some epistemically evaluative properties. Sosa writes, «For the property of a belief of its *having been supported by argument from something already believed with justification* is not a non-epistemic property, since it talks of *justification*, epistemic justification, already attained». *KIP*, p. 111.

32. *KIP*, p. 120.

33. Cfr. *KIP*, pp. 179-180.

34. Cfr. J. GRECO, «Introduction», pp. xviii-xix.

35. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Reflective Knowledge in the Best Circles», p. 284.

36. Cfr. J. GRECO, «Sosa, Ernest (1940-)», p. 2289.

37. G. AXTELL, «Recent Work on Virtue Epistemology», p. 6.

«They are presumably power or abilities to distinguished true from the false in a certain subject field, to attain truth and avoid error in that field. One's power or ability must presumably make one such, normally at least, in one's ordinary habitat, or at least in one's ordinary circumstances when making such judgments, one *would* believe what is true and *not* believe what is false, concerning matters in that field»³⁸.

According to Sosa, a cognitive faculty or an intellectual virtue is «the fundamental basis for the positive epistemic status of a belief»³⁹. As stated, cognitive faculties will work properly if given the appropriate environment *E*. As such, we may consider two levels of epistemic justification. First, we have the justification of beliefs of *S* in relation to certain intellectual virtues of *S* and second, we have the justification of these cognitive faculties as effective and virtuous cognitive faculties in relation to environment *E*⁴⁰. Sosa writes:

«Epistemic justification of a belief B at a time t may thus require the production of B at t through a virtue V resident in that subject... The epistemic quality of that belief will depend, moreover, at least in part, on the epistemic quality of the operative virtue, on its degree of reliability in normal circumstances»⁴¹.

Sosa's proposed account of epistemic justification will then have two parts: first, is the requirement of the reliability of cognitive faculties and second, is the requirement of epistemic perspectivism.

1.2.1. *Aptness and Justification*

As we have already mentioned, the problem with the argumentative account of justification is the threat of vicious circularity, which «derives from the fact that seriously and correctly to use considerations or reasons in favor of a belief is to use (i) other things one believes with justification and (ii) their (justifiedly believed) appropriate connection with the belief targeted for justification»⁴². One way to deal with the threat of infinite regress is to reject the argumentative account of justification entirely and to claim that a belief can be justified without requiring *S* to provide justified reasons in its favor. If a belief can acquire positive epistemic status independently of any *justifying reasons*, then it shows that justification is not

38. *KIP*, p. 236.

39. L. BONJOUR, «Sosa on Knowledge, Justification, and Aptness», p. 88.

40. Cfr. A. M. LIZ, *Justificar y Explicar*, p. 157.

41. E. SOSA, «Modal and Other A Priori Epistemology», p. 4.

42. *KIP*, p. 254.

always required for knowledge. As we have already argued, a belief can have positive epistemic status *via* non-epistemic property⁴³. Since «justification» is a widely accepted term, which implies the idea of giving reasons in favor of something, Sosa suggests the term «apt» to represent the positive epistemic status that a belief must have in order to be considered as knowledge⁴⁴. Putting aside Gettier-like cases, we can say that a belief must be *apt* and *true* to qualify as knowledge. Thus, an example of an *apt* belief, which does not require the support of *any* reasons, would be that of perceptual belief or memory belief. In such cases, the belief will lack *justification*. And so we can have an *apt belief* without being *justified*⁴⁵.

The issue at hand is that not all justification of beliefs is argumentative. We do not argue that beliefs can be justified if supported by reasons, but we must also take into account that beliefs can also be *justified* without being supported by *reasons*. Sosa uses the term «apt» to describe such beliefs. Justification then is *demoted*. In other words, an *apt* belief is not only acquired *via* justification, but is also acquired *via* perception, introspection, memory, etc. Hence, we have two kinds of beliefs: an *apt belief* and a *justified belief*⁴⁶. Sosa describes *justification* and *aptness* as follows:

«The *justification* of a belief *B* requires that *B* have a basis in its inference or coherence relations to other beliefs in the believer's mind – as in the “justification” of a belief derived from deeper principles, and thus “justified”, or the “justification” of a belief adopted through cognizance of its according with the subject's principles, including principles as to what beliefs are permissible in the circumstances as viewed by that subject.

The *aptness* of a belief *B* relative to an environment *E* requires that *B* derive from what relative to *E* is an intellectual virtue, i.e., a way of arriving at belief that yields an appropriate preponderance of truth over error (in the field of propositions in question, in the sort of context involved)»⁴⁷.

Sosa tries to explain justification and aptness as a division between what is internal and what is external to the subject respectively. *Justifica-*

43. As we have seen earlier, a belief that has positive epistemic status without any supporting reasons is explained through Sosa's doctrine of supervenience. What Sosa intends to show is that reasoning from something already believed with justification cannot serve as a source of justification since it is *not* a non-epistemic property. Cfr. *KIP*, pp. 110-111.

44. For opting to use *aptness* instead of justification, justification becomes a second rate concept in epistemology. Sosa writes, «“Justification is best demoted... to the status of *one* way a belief may be apt for knowledge, while we allow others not dependent on already attained justification: e.g., perception, perhaps, or introspection, or memory.” [KIP 283] Such (demoted) justification is always relative to arguments, premises, reasons, or the like, already themselves justified or apt». E. SOSA, «Virtue Perspectivism», p. 36.

45. Cfr. *KIP*, pp. 254-255.

46. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 256.

47. *KIP*, p. 144.

tion, comments Sosa, amounts to a sort of inner coherence. As such, Sosa views *justification* as *internal*. On the other hand, *aptness* amounts to the truth-conduciveness of the cognitive faculty relative to an environment *E*. Hence, Sosa views *aptness* as *external*⁴⁸. To distinguish between aptness of belief and justification of belief, Sosa writes:

«Justification of belief that *p* requires the (implicit or explicit) use of reasons in favor of *P*. A belief can be apt, however, without being thus justified: if it is a memory belief, for example»⁴⁹.

Let us now consider aptness and justification in more detail. An *apt belief* derives from the exercise of intellectual virtues relative to an environment *E*. It reflects the operation of a reliable cognitive faculty. This implies a restriction on the F-C pair in order to have an appropriate F-C pair relevant to the reliability of the intellectual virtue in question. Such restriction of Fs and Cs provides coherence in our *output* beliefs⁵⁰. The restriction of Fs and Cs is acquired through the epistemic perspective of the subject⁵¹. As such, Sosa points out that «there is no aptness without coherence or without at least our potential for coherence... for aptness is defined in terms of Fs and Cs that ensure such potential»⁵². Note that there is no mention concerning the active role of the cognitive agent in acquiring an *apt belief*. Hence, the passive nature of the cognitive agent is duly implied. On the other hand, a *justified belief* has its basis in the *epistemic perspective* of the knowing subject. As BonJour comments, «it is the presence of such an epistemic perspective, according to Sosa, that allows a body of beliefs to be epistemically justified rather than merely apt»⁵³. Thus, a belief is justified if it coheres within the epistemic perspective of the knowing subject⁵⁴. «Subjectively, then, Sosa looks to justify the person in a fully internalist way, according to the coherency of her beliefs via reflection and perspective»⁵⁵. Aptness and justification may be considered then as a distinction

48. Cfr. *KIP*, pp. 289-292.

49. *KIP*, p. 290.

50. «It is hence only the coherence of the reliability of a faculty whose reliability is noted within a world view that helps to make apt the beliefs attained by that faculty (or intellectual virtue)». *KIP*, p. 210.

51. We will discuss in detail the necessary restriction that we have to make regarding the F-C pair relevant to our cognitive faculties when we examine how Sosa deals with the generality problem in the latter part of this thesis. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 274. See also Part II, Section 1.2.4.

52. *KIP*, p. 292.

53. L. BONJOUR, «Sosa on Knowledge, Justification, and Aptness», p. 88.

54. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 145.

55. R. UMBERS, *Virtue Epistemology in Linda Zagzebski: The Virtuous Use of our Cognitive Faculties*, Doctoral Dissertation, University of Navarra, Pamplona 2002, p. 95 (Manuscript).

between external and internal justification. As BonJour comments, «the factors that confer epistemic authority on beliefs thus fall into two radically different categories: aptness, which is essentially external in character; and a coherent epistemic perspective, which is essentially internal»⁵⁶.

In accord with the distinction between justification and aptness, Sosa sometimes speaks of reflective justification as opposed to animal justification. Reflective justification pertains to beliefs that are not only *apt* but also *justified*. In other words, the reflective justification of beliefs resulting from a certain reliable faculty is acquired through the coherence of those beliefs within the epistemic perspective of the subject. An apt belief is a virtue-derived belief. We grasp the relevant cognitive faculty through our awareness of the appropriate F-C pair. It follows that if one is to believe out of a reliable faculty and if one has some awareness of the reliability of such faculty from which the belief arises given the appropriate F-C pair then one's animal justification can be brought to a higher level of reflective justification through the epistemic perspective of the knowing subject. One can bring his *animal* justification to the level of *reflective* justification if one has some awareness of one's belief, the source of such belief and the reliability of such source. An awareness of one's animal endowments is necessary in order to bring one's justification to a higher level⁵⁷. Consider now the following, Sosa writes:

«The belief of a *rational* animal... would seem never to issue from *unaided* introspection, memory, or perception. For reason is always at least a silent partner on the watch for other relevant data, a partner whose very *silence* is a contributing cause of the belief outcome»⁵⁸.

As we have already stated, «animal» justification seems inappropriate for the kind of justification proper to rational beings. If our reasoning faculty has the final say on all our cognitive activities and that it guides the rest of our cognitive faculties, would we not always aim for some kind of justification that is comparable to Sosa's reflective justification? Can we be content with animal justification only? Do we even have to consider animal justification in our notion of epistemic justification?

1.2.2. *Epistemic Perspectivism*

Sosa emphasizes the importance of *epistemic perspectivism* in his account of epistemic justification. What is epistemic perspective? Why is it

56. L. BONJOUR, «Sosa on Knowledge, Justification, and Aptness», p. 88.

57. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 282.

58. E. SOSA, «Virtue Perspectivism», p. 30. See also Part II, Section 1.2.1.

important and necessary for the justification of beliefs? What is its role in justifying one's beliefs? How is it connected to truth? These are some of the key questions worth considering. Perhaps, we begin by asking, «What is an epistemic perspective?» Sosa writes:

«An account at least in broad outline of the ways in which member beliefs in various categories acquire epistemic justification: an account of how one gets to know various sorts of things covered by beliefs in that body»⁵⁹.

In addition, epistemic perspective consists of having:

«meta-beliefs which positively attribute... object beliefs... to some faculty or virtue, ...and further meta-beliefs which explain how such a faculty or virtue was acquired, and how such a faculty or virtue, thus acquired, is bound to be reliable in the circumstances as (the believer) views them at the time»⁶⁰.

It was argued that a comprehensive and coherent set of beliefs does not suffice to guarantee justification. Sosa argues that it is equally important that *S* has some awareness of it to some extent. The knowing subject must have some awareness that his beliefs do in fact cohere⁶¹. To provide clarification, let us consider the «*I*/*now* system vs. *N*/*t* system»⁶².

<i>I</i> / <i>now</i> System	<i>N</i> / <i>t</i> System
I am standing now.	N is standing at t.
I am speaking now.	N is speaking at t.
I flew from Providence to Cleveland yesterday.	N flew from Providence to Cleveland a day before t.
I now remember a JFK speech.	N at t remembers a JFK speech.

In the *I*/*now* system, one has an account of one's own faculties and of how these faculties serve as reliable sources for what one believes as opposed to the *N*/*t* system where one does so in the absence of such *awareness*⁶³. Hence, the notion of epistemic perspective tells us that one has some awareness of one's belief, its source and the reliability of its source. We can easily appreciate how it may help the knowing subject to justify his beliefs if he does, in fact, have some awareness of the source of his first-

59. *KIP*, p. 97.

60. *KIP*, p. 136.

61. Cfr. L. BONJOUR and E. SOSA, *Epistemic Justification*, p. 113.

62. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 221.

63. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 222.

order beliefs in the faculty from which they originated and have some awareness of the reliability of such faculty⁶⁴.

Why is epistemic perspective important and necessary? Consider the problem of *ostensible* beliefs. These are beliefs taken as originating from a certain cognitive faculty such as reason, memory, etc., without really being such. In other words, these are beliefs that *do not* derive from the operation of our *true* reason, memory, etc. The question is how are we going to explain the epistemic justification for these beliefs? Will they, in fact, enjoy the kind of justification that is pertinent to knowledge? Sosa argues that *epistemic perspectivism* provides the solution.

«Someone might have an excellent ability to retain beliefs once acquired, and yet suffer from a terrible propensity to believe new things out of the blue which come as apparent memories, as beliefs from the past»⁶⁵.

The *ostensible* memory belief *m* cannot be said to have resulted from the faculty of memory, its «*supposed*» corresponding faculty. To explain the «*supposed*» justification of such belief, we must consider the following assumptions: (1) the source for any given belief must be its corresponding relevant faculty hence a memory belief *m* must have its source from its faculty of memory, and (2) if the subject *S* «(a) is aware of his relevant faculty *F* and its reliability, (b) finds himself with a belief *B* which he justifiably attributes to his faculty *F*, and (c) on the basis of (a) and (b) justifiably sustains his belief *B*»⁶⁶. Consequently, we can say that the basis for the justification of an *ostensible* memory belief *m* is that *S* attributes the *ostensible* memory belief *m* to have resulted *ostensibly* from the faculty of memory and *S* believes in the reliability of his faculty⁶⁷. Sosa comments:

«What justifies accepting one's ostensible memory *m* in such cases is, I suggest, a metabelief in the virtue of one's memory which delivers *m*»⁶⁸.

Cases such as the ostensible beliefs shown above indicate the importance of epistemic perspective in the conception of epistemic justification. Sosa thinks that «the requirement of an epistemic perspective seems an indispensable prerequisite for an apt system of beliefs. This epistemic perspective would be constituted by beliefs about one's basic sources of

64. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Virtue Perspectivism», p. 30.

65. *KIP*, p. 226.

66. *KIP*, p. 233.

67. The source of the *ostensible* memory belief *m* is not its faculty of memory, but its *ampliative, coherence-seeking reason*. The ampliative, coherence-seeking reason «is just reason in its role as seeker of coherence and comprehensive». *KIP*, p. 233. We will speak more of the importance of the *coherence-seeking reason* later.

68. E. SOSA, «Beyond Scepticism, to the Best of Our Knowledge», p. 177.

knowledge»⁶⁹. In addition, he affirms that the epistemic perspectivism may also help in dealing with the generality problem, and with the new evil-demon problem⁷⁰. We can add the meta-incoherence problem in the list. Of course, we will discuss these problems in their proper moment. In any case, the point of our discussion is to show the importance and necessity of having an awareness of one's belief, the source of such belief and the reliability of such source. It is not enough that one believes out of intellectual virtue, but it is equally important that one must be aware in doing so⁷¹. It will certainly explain how a knowing subject can have a reflective justification in his believing that *p* if he has «epistemic perspective» of his beliefs. «Placing beliefs in epistemic perspective means taking note of the sources of one's first order beliefs and of how reliable these sources are in different kinds of circumstances, say, of lighting and distance for beliefs based on the faculty of visual perception»⁷².

Can we admit that one can be reflectively justified without some kind of awareness of his beliefs, its source, and the reliability of its source? Take the case of Magoo, who is unaware of the appropriate F-C pair for his visual faculty. He emits judgments that most often mislead him. He has no idea of the reliability of his visual faculty from which his beliefs originate. Given his situation, we will say that reflective justification for his beliefs is unattainable. The Magoo example shows us that through epistemic perspective, one comes to know about the reliability (or, at least, one would know the limitation) of his cognitive faculties. As Sosa points out, it is important to «...attain some grasp of the true extent and nature of [one's] competence (or quasi-competence)»⁷³. With this, we can appreciate the important role of epistemic perspective in Sosa's *VP*; that is, one acquires good awareness of his intellectual aptitude which is an essential factor to be considered in the justification of one's own beliefs. One will know that he is likely to be right in his «believings» and not just accidentally so.

As regards our question concerning the connection of epistemic perspective to truth, we can say that if one has some awareness that «one has been persistently successful in a certain field F and circumstances C, and one is then able to make an explanatory induction or projection that one is the sort of being who would be successful in that field given the pertinent circumstances that have persistently prevailed»⁷⁴, then one would have no reason to think why he would not obtain the truth. One would think that he is reliable in acquiring true beliefs and avoiding falsehoods.

69. *KIP*, p. 222.

70. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Beyond Scepticism, to the Best of Our Knowledge», p. 178.

71. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Virtue Perspectivism», p. 30.

72. G. AXTELL, «Recent Work in Virtue Epistemology», p. 4.

73. E. SOSA, «Virtue Perspectivism», p. 34.

74. *Ibid.*, p. 35.

All is needed to have a general perspective of one's own beliefs and the reliability of their source to establish the connection between epistemic perspective and truth.

The question now is, «Is it possible to fulfill the epistemic perspective that Sosa requires for reflective justification?» Is it plausible to admit «that believers typically have a true grasp of their cognitive faculties or a true grasp of which faculty has produced a particular belief?»⁷⁵ Greco tells us that it is implausible to accept epistemic perspectivism, since typically we do not seem to have it. We lack beliefs about the source of our first order beliefs and the reliability of their source. Take, for instance, our belief that there is a bird outside our window. Do we have further beliefs about the source of that belief and about the reliability of that source? Of course, as seen earlier, Sosa would tell us that epistemic perspective only requires that we have some kind of awareness even if it is only sketchy and generic⁷⁶.

«...in the typical case a believer will not have a true grasp of the inventory of cognitive faculties she possesses, nor will she have a perspective on which faculty is responsible for producing the particular belief in question. On the other hand, there does seem to be something importantly right about Sosa's proposal. I want to argue that Sosa is right to invoke S's point of view as an important element for having knowledge, but that he invokes S's point of view in the wrong sense»⁷⁷.

Greco does acknowledge the positive insight behind epistemic perspective in the sense that it underlines the *subjective* aspect of justification. However, Greco thinks that *subjective* justification can be explained in some other way⁷⁸.

1.2.3. Coherence-Seeking Reason

«Epistemic perspectivism is a view one is led to in response to certain problems with coherence theories of epistemic justification»⁷⁹. One of

75. J. GRECO, «Virtues and Vices in Virtue Epistemology», p. 563.

76. Whether it is possible or not to have «epistemic perspective» is an all-important question because it eventually leads to the question of the possibility of reflective knowledge. Greco argues that requiring epistemic perspective is *too strong* as a requirement for knowledge. In such case, it poses a problem to Sosa's distinction between animal knowledge and reflective knowledge. We will discuss this problem in the next section. Cfr. J. GRECO, «Virtues in Epistemology», pp. 299-303. See also E. SOSA, «Virtue Perspectivism», p. 30.

77. J. GRECO, «Virtues and Vices in Virtue Epistemology», p. 563.

78. See Part II, Section 2.3.2.

79. E. SOSA, «Beyond Scepticism, to the Best of our Knowledge», p. 178.

the advantages of having «epistemic perspective» is that it promotes *coherence* of beliefs and the likelihood of obtaining true beliefs. An awareness of the coherence of beliefs is necessary for justification⁸⁰. How can we know that our perspectival beliefs are true? To place our first order beliefs in «epistemic perspective» entails that we have a reason to think that such beliefs are true. The truth of our beliefs is just a consequence of our awareness of the reliability of the faculty that is «responsible» for our beliefs. Hence, we have a reason to think that our beliefs are *true* and *reliable*⁸¹.

As seen earlier, comprehensive coherence alone is not enough to induce epistemic justification. Can we conclude that having a comprehensive coherent set of beliefs is without cognitive worth? Sosa tells us that internal coherence of beliefs –by itself– is without cognitive value, but it becomes valuable if combined with other faculties because it provides a more comprehensive grasp of the truth. Internal coherence may be thought of as a *coherence-seeking reason*. Internal coherence of beliefs requires the operation of reason⁸². Thus, we say that a «coherence-seeking reason is also a reliable source of true belief and hence a source of epistemic justification»⁸³. Perhaps, we can try to explain this in more detail. Sosa says that one hopes to aim for coherence and that one also hopes to have other faculties aside from reflexive reason (or coherence-seeking reason). Of course, one can say that it is better to have both than to have a mere internal coherence or to have the other additional faculties. Accordingly, if we now consider a transmission faculty such as retentive memory by itself, we can say that it will not guarantee that it will yield much truth. Obviously, the quality of beliefs produced by transmission faculties will depend upon the quality of the transmission and the quality of the input beliefs. In any case, Sosa tells us that it is wrong to think that such faculty is without cognitive worth because if such faculty is to be combined with the other faculties, it will increase the total yield of true beliefs as compared to its absence. Again, we prefer to have the retentive memory along with the other cognitive faculties than not to have it at all. *Mutatis mutandis*, a coherence-seeking reason, if combined with the other faculties, will surely provide a better grasp of truth as compared to its absence. This is what Sosa proposes⁸⁴.

80. «The coherence needed for epistemic justification in a system of beliefs requires that the system be appropriately comprehensive, which means that it must include an epistemic (meta) perspective, and a suitable complement of *foundational* beliefs!» L. BONJOUR and E. SOSA, *Epistemic Justification*, p. 112.

81. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Perspectives in Virtue Epistemology», p. 103.

82. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 106.

83. J. GRECO, «Virtues in Epistemology», p. 291.

84. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Perspectives in Virtue Epistemology», p. 106.

«How does internal coherence, of little significant epistemic value in itself, become more valuable when combined with external aptness? Coherence-seeking inferential reason, like retentive memory, is of epistemic value when combine with externally apt faculties of perception, because when so combined it, like retentive memory, give us a more comprehensive grasp of the truth than we would have in its absence»⁸⁵.

We need to take into account that the constitution and the persistence of our comprehensive coherent set of beliefs indicate the operation of our virtuous faculty of reason⁸⁶. How else can one have a comprehensive coherent set of beliefs if not by *reasoning well*? Coherence comes in degrees. Hence, to have a *broader coherence* is of more value because it provides a more likelihood of acquiring true beliefs and avoiding falsehoods. In other words, it shows that *broad coherence* is valuable because it is truth conducive. No doubt, one can disagree with Sosa as regards the truth conduciveness of having a broad coherence such as the case of the Cartesian demon's victim⁸⁷. How Sosa will respond to this will just have to wait until we discuss the *New Evil Demon Problem*.

1.3. A Remedy to Reliabilism

If *VP* is an improved reliabilism, then let us find out if Sosa is able to handle the three problems akin to reliabilism. We may begin our discussion with the «new evil demon» problem.

The New Evil Demon Problem

Our intuition tells us that the evil demon victim is somehow justified in his believing despite the *unreliability* of his cognitive process. His belief that *p* is justified insofar as it is produced by his cognitive faculties that are said to be virtuous in our «actual» environment. The problem with reliabilism is that he cannot explain the *internal* justification of the evil demon victim. Let us look into Sosa's proposal.

85. E. SOSA, «Reflective Knowledge in the Best Circles», pp. 279-280.

86. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 280.

87. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Perspectives in Virtue Epistemology», p. 107. What does a broader coherence involve? Sosa writes, «This broader conception of the coherence of one's mind involves not only the logical, probabilistic, and explanatory relations among one's first-order beliefs, but also coherence between these beliefs and one's sensory and other experiences, as well as comprehensive coherence between first-order experiences, beliefs, and other mental states, on one side, and beliefs about first-order states, on the other». E. SOSA, «Reflective Knowledge in the Best Circles», p. 280.

«On the present proposal, aptness is relative to an environment. Relative to our actual environment A, our automatic experience-belief mechanisms count as virtues that yield much truth and justification and aptness. Of course, relative to the demonic environment D, such mechanisms are not virtuous and yield neither truth nor aptness. It follows that relative to D the demon's victims are not apt, and yet *relative to A their beliefs are apt*»⁸⁸.

As the above indicates, «it is in this relativized sense that the victim of the demon can have epistemically justified beliefs even when being deceived»⁸⁹. We can show the above argument of Sosa as follows.

Knowing subject S <i>(Cognitive faculties of S)</i>	}	<p>Demonic environment D <i>*S's cognitive faculties are said to be vicious relative to the demonic environment. S's belief that p is not apt.</i></p> <p>Our «actual» environment A <i>*S's cognitive faculties are said to be virtuous relative to our «actual» environment. S's belief that p is apt.</i></p>
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If we now consider the *evil demon victim*, we can say that relative to our actual environment A, the victim's belief is both justified and apt. However, relative to the demonic environment D, the victim's belief is not justified or apt. Thus, we say that the evil demon victim is considered virtuous and internally justified in his beliefs. The evil demon victim, Sosa argues, «seems not deprived of *ordinary* justification, since his beliefs still derive from sources that we recognize as justification-conferring: namely, sensory experience, memory, etc. The environment changes radically, but the victim retains and uses a repertoire of intellectual virtues. True, because the environment is so radically abnormal and wrong for his normal virtues, those virtues may not qualify as virtuous relative to that environment»⁹⁰. Hence, Sosa claims that the demon victim would lack knowledge, but he would certainly be blameless and virtuous⁹¹. We can conclude that Sosa's strategy to deal with the *new evil-demon* problem is to distinguish internal justification from external justification, which is a distinction between *justification* and *aptness*.

Can we not say that it is the epistemic community that evaluates which faculties are virtuous or vicious? In Part II, we stated that it is the epistemic community that evaluates the *relevant cognitive faculties* pertinent to the *relevant F-C pair*. Thus, the above shows that we estimate the

88. *KIP*, p. 289.

89. R. FOLEY, «A Trial Separation between the Theory of Knowledge and the Theory of Justified Belief», p. 68.

90. L. BONJOUR and E. SOSA, *Epistemic Justification*, p. 156.

91. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 289.

victim's belief that *p* to be in some way justified since we deemed virtuous the cognitive faculties from which his beliefs derived relative to our environment. As Sosa would claim, it is reasonable to say that the victim is somehow *justified* in his believing. Hence, we may say that it is the epistemic community that dictates the *relevant* correlation between the cognitive faculties and the appropriate environment for such faculties. Accordingly, it must be the epistemic community that states which cognitive faculties are pertinent in the formation of beliefs, and which environment is congenial for the cognitive faculty in question⁹². The important point we can draw from all these is that epistemic justification does have a social dimension which we need to take into account in order to provide an adequate view of epistemic justification. Aside from considering the environment *E* as part of the external factors that may influence the knowing subject to justify his beliefs, we should also consider the epistemic community to which the knowing subject belongs.

The Meta-Incoherence Problem

In the *meta-incoherence* problem, *S* is now *internally unjustified* despite having a reliable cognitive process. Again, Sosa's distinction of *justification* and *aptness* nicely handles the problem. In this case, the subject *S*'s belief –being internally unjustified despite its reliable cognitive process– is said to be *apt* but not *justified* due to *S*'s absence of *epistemic perspective*⁹³. Greco says that Sosa tries to resolve the problem by resorting to his idea of epistemic perspectivism. Thus, «the general idea is that an appropriate perspective on one's belief and its source affords one a kind of internal justification that the clairvoyant lacks: specifically, one is allowed to see one's belief as reliably produced, and so not just "out of the blue"»⁹⁴.

92. «What makes the subject epistemically blameless and even admirable seems not just a matter of his internal "justification" so much as a matter of the intellectual virtue and total internal aptitude of that subject relative to an assumed group *G* and environment *E*, which absent any sign to the contrary one would take to be the group of humans in a normal human environment for the sort of question under consideration. Given these assumptions, the victim of the evil demon is virtuous and internally apt in every relevant respect, not just in respect of enjoying internal justification, for the victim is supposed to be just like an arbitrarily selected normal human in all cognitively relevant respects. Therefore, the internal structure and going-on in the victim must be at least up to par, in respect of how virtuous that internal nature makes the victim, relative to a normal one of us in our usual environment for considering whether or not we have a fire before us or the like». *KIP*, p. 288.

93. Cfr. L. BONJOUR, «Sosa on Knowledge, Justification, and Aptness», p. 90.

94. J. GRECO, «How to Preserve your Virtue while Losing Your Perspective», J. GRECO (ed.), *Ernest Sosa and His Critics*, Blackwell, United Kingdom 2004, p. 99.

The Generality Problem

To handle the «generality problem», Sosa suggests that we need to establish restrictions on the F-C pair that are pertinent to our cognitive faculties. In so doing, we will be able to acquire the relevant animal justification. For instance, «any proposition P, let F be just {P, Not-P}, and let C be the condition that: *one-believes-P if P-is-true and one-believes-Not-P if Not-P-is true*»⁹⁵. In this situation, we will have an impeccable faculty that will always yield a true belief. To put it in another way, our true beliefs will always be a product of our impeccable faculty. Hence, we need to provide restrictions on our F-C pair. «What kind of restrictions should *F-C pair* have?» Sosa writes:

1. «That F and C not be made so specific that one is always perfectly reliable and justified whenever one's belief is true; but also
2. That they not be made so generic that one cannot explain how a subject could have two beliefs both derived from the given faculty (e.g. from his sight, or, more generally yet, from his sensory perception), though one is justified while the other is not»⁹⁶.

Sosa suggests that we generalize F-C pair, but to the extent that it will be useful to the *epistemic community* to which *S* belongs and to *S* himself. Not just any F-C pair will be acceptable. Likewise, we must restrict *F-C pair* to the extent that it can be usable by the *epistemic community* to which *S* belongs and by *S* himself (this will allow *S* to acquire reflective knowledge and not just to limit himself to animal knowledge)⁹⁷. In the final analysis, Sosa makes use of his idea of *epistemic perspectivism* to provide a solution to the generality problem⁹⁸. As Greco says, «Sosa's position requires an epistemic perspective on one's own cognitive virtues in order to have reflective justification, and in order to solve the generality problem»⁹⁹.

To provide a solution to the generality problem, Conee and Feldman suggest that we must meet three conditions: (1) there must be a general basis for the identification of the relevant type of cognitive process for the justification of beliefs; hence, it must be principled; (2) the identification of the relevant type of process must be reliable in correlation with the justification of the product beliefs; and (3) the solution must be in keeping with the spirit of reliabilism. Given these conditions, the thesis of Conee

95. *KIP*, p. 277.

96. *KIP*, p. 284.

97. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 291.

98. «To my mind the key is the requirement that the field F and the circumstances C must be accessible within one's epistemic perspective». *KIP*, p. 274.

99. J. GRECO, «Virtues and Vices of Virtue Epistemology», p. 559.

and Feldman is that the prospects for a solution to the generality problem are «worse than bleak»¹⁰⁰. And so, Conee and Feldman conclude:

«In the absence of a brand new idea about relevant types, the problem looks insoluble. Consequently, process reliability theories of justification and knowledge look hopeless»¹⁰¹.

Zagzebski argues that the generality problem is unavoidable for any theory that includes the aspect of reliability as a necessary condition for knowledge including her own theory. She suggests that a solution to the generality problem may be provided through an empirical examination of habit formation¹⁰². Likewise, Moros and Umbers point out that it is doubtful that one can find a possible solution based on a purely reliabilist response¹⁰³.

As indicated above, Sosa focuses on the restrictions that need to be applied on the F-C pair pertinent to the relevant cognitive faculty instead of on the generality/specificity of the reliable cognitive process itself as a way to handle the generality problem *via* his epistemic perspectivism. In doing so, we are now left with the question as regards the generality/specificity required for the F-C pair needed for our relevant cognitive faculty. Hence, the problem seems to be unresolved even with *VP* approach. Is a solution possible for the generality problem?

The Circularity Problem

Recall that in Part I, one of the objections made by Sosa against reliabilism is the problem of circularity. The problem consists in the justification of the reliability of the faculty in question by relying on that very same faculty. Hence, we have «If P, therefore P». If Sosa's basis for the justification of beliefs is also reliability then he needs to provide us with an explanation concerning the reliability of those cognitive faculties. In other words, if beliefs are *apt* because of the reliability of the cognitive faculties that produce them, then how can we know that these cognitive faculties are

100. Cfr. E. CONEE and R. FELDMAN, «The Generality Problem for Reliabilism», pp. 373-374. «It is reasonable to look for a solution to the generality problem in three places: common sense, science, and context... We shall argue that none of these approaches works out. This might raise the concern that our way of posing of the generality problem for reliabilism is somehow ill-conceived. It might be thought that the relevant types are obvious when the question is properly understood, or that no general solution is actually needed. We shall take up this line of thinking as well». *Ibid.*, p. 374.

101. *Ibid.*, p. 384.

102. Cfr. L. ZAGZEBSKI, *Virtues of the Mind*, pp. 309-310.

reliable? Is it possible for Sosa to avoid vicious circularity in order to show the reliability of such cognitive faculties?

Part of Sosa's motivation for requiring *epistemic perspective* is that external reliability is not enough to build on in order to explain adequately the account of justification proper to rational beings. Indeed, this is part of the limitations of reliabilism. Valeriano Iranzo agrees with Sosa that «pure reliabilism is not an appropriate account of justification because it overlooks the agent's epistemic perspective»¹⁰⁴. Hence, with epistemic perspectivism, Sosa is able to show the internal aspect needed for the justification of beliefs. Through epistemic perspective, the knower takes note of the reliability of the faculty from which his beliefs originated. If one has some awareness of the reliability of his cognitive faculties given the appropriate F-C pair then it is understandable to see why such knower will think that he is likely to be right with his beliefs. The knower does have a *reason* for thinking that his perspectival beliefs are correct. The question now is, «Do we need to have a further awareness of the awareness of the reliability of our cognitive faculties?» In other words, should not our awareness be a justified awareness? Should we not justify also our perspectival beliefs? A vicious circle lurks! BonJour comments:

«...the crucial question that must be asked is: are these perspectival beliefs genuinely *justified* from the person's internal perspective in the epistemologically relevant sense that he has a reason to think that they are true?»¹⁰⁵.

If the justification of the first-order belief derives from the justification of believing that one is likely to be correct for believing that p, then perspectival belief cannot derive its justification in terms of a justified higher meta-belief. This will certainly lead to circularity. Sosa suggests that we invoke the internal coherence of the knower's system of beliefs which includes perspectival beliefs and proposes such coherence for the justification of the knower's beliefs¹⁰⁶. Sosa writes:

103. Cfr. E. MOROS and R. UMBERS, «Distinguishing Virtues from Faculties in Virtue Epistemology», p. 66. Recall that Conee and Feldman suggest that one of the conditions that must be satisfied to provide solution to the generality problem is that it must keep the spirit of the reliabilist approach. This may appear contrary to what Zagzebski, Moros and Umbers point out above. Perhaps, we may understand that Conee and Feldman suggest that the solution must be in keeping with the spirit of reliabilism for the simple reason that it is a problem proper to a reliabilist theory. In so doing, one can show that the theory of reliabilism is indeed plausible.

104. V. IRANZO, «Justificación y perspectiva epistémica», *Revista de Filosofía*, 31 (2006) 22.

105. L. BONJOUR, «Sosa on Knowledge, Justification, and Aptness», p. 93.

106. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Perspectives in Virtue Epistemology», p. 105. «...some sort of awareness of the coherence of one's beliefs is required for justification. But this aware-

«“...the fact that the pattern fits one’s experience and is accepted or sustained in part at least because of that”. For if this answer can be sustained, then it provides a way of stopping the threatening regress»¹⁰⁷.

Sosa’s suggestion may still appear circular given that the reliability of the cognitive faculty is shown by making use of that very same faculty. Suffice it to say that in terms of epistemic perspective one may have the confidence about the reliability of his faculties. For the sake of simplicity, we can state that part of Sosa’s strategy to handle the problem of circularity is to admit that it is not necessary for the knower to *know* that his faculties are reliable; all that is necessary is that one’s faculty be reliable. Hence, for unreflective or animal knowledge, one is required only to «track» the truth, but for reflective knowledge, aside from tracking the truth, one must also *know* that one’s faculty is reliable¹⁰⁸. A closer look –as Sosa would say– will show that the apparent circularity is only an illusion¹⁰⁹.

In any case, it is important to note that the appeal to comprehensive coherence for justification must also take into account the reliability of the cognitive faculties. Sosa argues that knowledge requires both internal justification and external aptness. We have to be both in good internal order and appropriately connected to the world¹¹⁰.

1.4. A Proposed Account of Justification

Part of the problem in providing an adequate account of justification is the ambiguity of the concept itself. Aside from the fact that there is a lack of consensus in understanding epistemic justification, what may call our attention is the «confusion between one’s *being* justified in believing that *p*, and one’s *justifying* one’s belief that *p*»¹¹¹. If we take the *former* to

ness may be constituted by the sensitivity to such coherence that one manifests by accepting one’s system of beliefs (or a large enough fragment thereof) *partly in virtue of its coherence*, and by adjusting one’s degree of assurance partly to the degree of coherence involved». E. SOSA, «Virtue Perspectivism», p. 45.

107. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

108. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Reflective Knowledge in the Best Circles», p. 282.

109. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Perspectives in Virtue Epistemology», p. 109. For a more detailed explication concerning the problem of circularity, see Sosa’s «Philosophical Scepticism and Epistemic Circularity», *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary vol. 24 (1994) 263-290. See also Sosa’s «Reflective Knowledge in the Best Circles» and Barry Stroud’s «Scepticism, “Externalism”, and the Goal of Epistemology», *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary vol. 24 (1994) 291-307.

110. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Reflective Knowledge in the Best Circles», p. 284.

111. W. ALSTON, *Epistemic Justification*, p. 82.

understand epistemic justification, it shows that we are not required to prove that we are justified in our belief such as being justified in our belief that there is a bird outside our window. If we see a bird outside our window, then we must be justified in our belief just by seeing it. There is no need to provide reasons for so believing. Hence, our perceptual beliefs would fall under this category. If we take the *latter*, then it would mean that we are required to show why we are justified for so believing. This would entail that we must be capable of justifying our belief. As Sosa would say, we must be able to *defend our belief in the arena of reflection*¹¹². But if we accept this to be the correct understanding of epistemic justification, then we will have a problem «justifying» our perceptual beliefs which do not require such condition. As Alston comments:

«It may be claimed that the activity concept is fundamental in another way, viz, by virtue of the fact that one is justified in believing that *p* only if one is *capable* of carrying out a justification of the belief. But if that were so, we would be justified in far fewer beliefs than we suppose. Most human subjects are quite incapable of carrying out a justification of any perceptual or introspection beliefs»¹¹³.

As indicated above, we have two ways of looking at epistemic justification. *Internalism*¹¹⁴ admits the former. Generally speaking, the internalist maintains that for a belief to be justified one has to have adequate grounds for believing that *p* and the belief in question must be based on those grounds, be it through reasons or evidence¹¹⁵. Others also maintain that one must fulfill his epistemic duty, such as conducting one's cognitive inquiries so as to attain truth and avoid falsehood in the light of some norms or principles, or to look for more reasons or evidence, or to do what one should do so as to exclude those factors that are incompatible with his believing that *p*, or the need of «perspective» of the knower, etc.¹¹⁶. In any

112. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Two False Dichotomies Foundationalism/Coherentism and Internalism/Externalism», Walter Sinnott-Armstrong (ed.), *Pyrrhonian Skepticism*, Oxford University Press, New York 2004. Online: <http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Philosophy/Sosa/Archives/TwoFalseDichotomies.pdf>. (Last Checked: April 15, 2007).

113. W. ALSTON, *Epistemic Justification*, p. 83, Footnote 3.

114. See Part I, Section 3.

115. «Nearly everyone agrees that it isn't sufficient for a belief's justification that one *has* good reasons or adequate evidence for it. In addition, the belief must be *based on* those reasons or that evidence if it is to count as justified. This latter is called a "basing requirement"». M. BERGMANN, *Justification without Awareness: A Defense of Epistemic Externalism*, Oxford University Press, New York 2006, p. 4.

116. Alston provides a detailed explication on the notion of epistemic justification. In a nutshell, Alston concludes that epistemic justification is not a necessary condition for knowledge. Some of the ideas presented above were taken from Alston's explication of justification. Cfr. W. ALSTON, *Epistemic Justification*, pp. 172-182. Other examples

case, these conditions for the justification of beliefs can be satisfied, at best, by a normal mature human being. Obviously, we need to exclude children and unsophisticated adults in these cases. Perceptual beliefs would be a problem for normal mature people given that perceptual beliefs (conscious or unconscious) do not require epistemic obligations or providing reasons/evidence as described above. On the other hand, *externalism* such as reliabilism chooses the *latter*. Reliabilism claims that a belief is justified if such belief derives from a reliable process. Reliabilism does not require that the subject must have some awareness concerning the reliability of the cognitive process for justification and it does not require that the belief to be justified must cohere with the rest of the subject's set of beliefs. From reliabilism's point of view, the justification of beliefs of children and unsophisticated adults can be easily explained. Goldman maintains that the degree of justifiedness is a function of the reliability of the cognitive process used to arrive at a given true belief¹⁷. One is more justified than others insofar as one's cognitive process is more reliable. As we have already seen, it does not provide us a complete picture of justification since it neglects the internal aspect of epistemic justification. So, we have two opposing ways of looking at epistemic justification. The alternative is to combine these two insights.

As a way to improve reliabilism, Sosa suggests that we add the «epistemic perspective» of the subject aside from having a reliable cognitive faculty in order to take into account the internal aspect of justification. In view of reliabilism, is the reliability of cognitive faculties not a consequence of the virtuous use of cognitive faculties? If so, then the degree of justifiedness will be a function of the proper exercise of cognitive faculties on the part of the epistemic agent. It follows that the more intellectually virtuous the epistemic agent is, the more he would be in a position to justify his «believings». The use of cognitive faculties as part of justifying one's beliefs agrees with the insights of reliabilism. Likewise, the acquisition of intellectual virtues –thanks to the personal effort of the epistemic agent– and the exercise of these virtues agree with the insights of Sosa's reflective justification of beliefs. Hence, our earlier suggestion of distinguishing cognitive faculties from intellectual virtues remains to be advantageous in providing an adequate account of epistemic justification.

If *epistemic justification* requires the knower to have adequate grounds for believing, then beliefs of children and unsophisticated adults are considered *unjustified*. They do not provide reasons for their beliefs or better yet, they are *incapable of justifying* their beliefs. Nonetheless, Sosa

of epistemic obligations may be, for instance, «one should refrain from believing that *p* if one does not possess adequate evidence that *p*». Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 174.

117. Cfr. A. GOLDMAN, «What is Justified Belief», p. 345.

would say that their beliefs are *apt* since their beliefs derive from the use of their cognitive faculties and thus can be considered *knowledge*. Moros and Umbers comment:

«If a child who is not yet using her reason can be justified in her beliefs, this will be to the involuntary but proper functioning of her cognitive faculties»¹¹⁸.

This agrees with our intuition that they do in fact possess knowledge without needing to justify their beliefs. It appears that Sosa's distinction of *aptness* and *justification* provides, at least in part, a correct understanding of epistemic justification and it does explain nicely how both children and mature adult people can possess knowledge. Nonetheless, Sosa's *animal justification* appears to be a bit confusing. It is clear that animal justification refers to *aptness*. But for the sake of simplicity, why not just call a child's belief *apt* instead of referring to it also as «animally» justified and call a normal adult's beliefs *justified* if such belief derives from the exercise of intellectual virtues. Hence, this will agree with our intuition that some beliefs are *justified*¹¹⁹ and some beliefs are *apt*. Sosa would certainly agree with that as he writes:

«So there must be ways to acquire epistemically justified beliefs without reaching them as conclusions from premises known with epistemic priority. If that is so, might not beliefs acquired perceptually attain epistemic justification precisely by being so acquired? Such beliefs might be “directly” justified, in the sense of acquiring justification, but *not* through a process of reasoning that leads to their acceptance as a conclusion»¹²⁰.

Accordingly, what we are suggesting is to understand epistemic justification as a necessary condition for *reflective* knowledge. In other words, justification is required for «reflective beliefs»¹²¹ because we need to provide adequate grounds in accepting or believing them. These kinds of beliefs require the exercise of our intellectual virtues understood as the virtuous use of one's cognitive faculties. Aptness, on the other hand, entails the use of cognitive faculties.

We accept Sosa's distinction of aptness and justification. Alternatively, we may call such distinction *unreflective* justification and *reflective*

118. E. MOROS and R. UMBERS, «Distinguishing Virtues from Faculties in Virtue Epistemology», p. 69.

119. In this sense, a justified belief is also an apt belief since intellectual virtues are understood as habits of cognitive faculties. Thus, an apt belief does not necessarily imply that it is a justified belief but a justified belief does imply that it is an apt belief.

120. E. SOSA, «Tracking, Competence, and Knowledge», p. 282.

121. As Sosa would claim, these are beliefs that one can defend in the arena of reflection. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Two False Dichotomies» [Online].

justification. This will provide continuity to Sosa's *unreflective* and *reflective* knowledge as we shall see later¹²². Sosa is right in distinguishing knowledge acquired by small children and animal from the knowledge acquired by mature adult persons. Undeniably, there is a *huge* difference in epistemic quality between the two. It is important to recognize such difference. However, we reject the term «animal» knowledge so as to avoid humanizing the brutes. We do not deny the commonality of knowledge acquired by small children and animals, but we must recognize that there is an «ontological» difference between children and animals. We can say that children are «rational in potency» whereas animals are not. And because of the rational nature of human beings, human knowledge is never on par with animal knowledge. We can maintain that we *humans* have two different levels of knowledge¹²³. In accord with Sosa, we may refer to it as *unreflective* and *reflective knowledge*. No doubt, more is needed to explain *human knowledge* as we shall discuss in the next section. This is just a passing remark so as to stress the importance of understanding justification as pertinent to «reflective» beliefs while aptness is pertinent to «unreflective» beliefs. Reflective beliefs may be regarded as «belief of high epistemic quality» as Sosa describes:

«Belief of high epistemic quality is belief that is not only true but manifests good command of the subject matter and full competence on its questions, and especially on the very question at issue, the question, let us say, whether *p*... It may now be argued that someone can really know that *p*, can have the best knowledge that *p*, only if his belief that *p* manifests full competence on the question whether *p*. Knowledge manifesting only partial competence is a lesser grade of knowledge... plain knowledge, as ordinarily understood, should not be confused with fully competent believing»¹²⁴.

In accord with Alston¹²⁵, we have shown that epistemic justification is not a necessary condition for knowledge. Likewise, we do not deny the importance of epistemic justification in our theory of knowledge. As ration-

122. We think that the term *unreflective justification* is also an appropriate term to describe a child's belief. Given that it is *unreflective*, it shows that providing reason for a child's belief is not required. Hence, we continue to have the advantage of Sosa's distinction of *aptness* and *justification*.

123. J. A. CUADRADO, *Antropología filosófica: Una introducción a la filosofía del hombre*, EUNSA, Pamplona 2001, p. 53. Cuadrado speaks of two levels of human knowledge: the sensible knowledge and the intellectual knowledge. The intellectual knowledge requires the sensible knowledge. It shows that without the sensible knowledge, it is not possible for «man» to have intellectual knowledge. In fact, this is how human knowledge is understood in the classical sense. We shall speak more of this in the next section.

124. E. SOSA, «Tracking, Competence, and Knowledge», p. 274.

125. Cfr. W. ALSTON, *Epistemic Justification*, p. 172.

al beings, we cannot content ourselves with having *apt beliefs*. Rather, we strive for «beliefs of high epistemic quality» which require the kind of justification that manifests our epistemic responsibility¹²⁶ in areas such as history, science, philosophy, etc. Our intellectual inquiry should always be in accord with our epistemic responsibility in fulfilling that need of acquiring true beliefs and avoiding falsehoods. Hence, should we not attempt to exercise our cognitive faculties in a virtuous manner so as to bootstrap our «justification» to a higher level that is proper to us humans? As William James¹²⁷ would say, if we have the epistemic obligation to know the truth and avoid falsehood, it follows that we will try to justify our beliefs in a somewhat similar fashion as described by Sosa's reflective justification. It is precisely in this sense that the epistemic justification proper to us is not what we may call *super-justification* as maintained by Descartes. We might be able to describe the kind of justification appropriate to us *humans* as a middle ground justification between animals and angels. We are not *gods* hence the possibility of error is always before us. Nonetheless, in trying to fulfill our epistemic responsibility in acquiring true beliefs we acquire *truths* already. The epistemic means that we employ should already be considered as ways of acquiring true beliefs since those «epistemic means» may already be considered as our way of justifying our beliefs¹²⁸. Undeniably, infallibility is not a possibility, but nonetheless we do possess knowledge hence truth. The more intellectually virtuous we are in our cognitive activities, the more reliable we will be in acquiring true beliefs and avoiding falsity.

126. Code provides us with a brief description of epistemic responsibility. She writes, «Questions about epistemic responsibility take some of their thrust from what are best called the “empirico-realist” implications of some version of foundationalism. There is a realist imperative at the center of all the exhortations to responsibility I have cited in my opening examples: an insistence that responsible knowledge claims can arise only out of investigations, in part empirical and inductive, that attempt to discover how things really are, both actually and potentially. To this extent, questions about epistemic responsibility arise out of sympathy with some conceptions of the foundationalist project: the goal is to ensure that knowledge claims are well-grounded in the world, that they respect the constraints the world imposes upon those who would know it». L. CODE, *Epistemic Responsibility*, p. 6.

127. Cfr. W. JAMES, «The Will to Believe», p. 558.

128. Michael Lynch points out the following: «...I can control how I go *about pursuing the truth*, by paying careful attention to the evidence, giving and asking for reasons, doing adequate research, remaining open-minded, and so on. In short, in saying that truth is a worthy goal, we imply that you ought... to adopt policies, methods, and habit of *inquiry* that are reliable, or that are likely to result in true beliefs. We ordinarily think that it is good to give and ask for reasons, good to be open-minded, good to have empirical evidence for one's scientific conclusions, because these are methods of inquiry that lead us to the truth. If we didn't value true belief, we wouldn't value these sorts of activities; and we value these sorts of activities because we think they will, more often than not, lead us to believing truly rather than falsely». M. LYNCH, *True to Life: Why Truth Matters*, p. 14.

Can we think of justification as an epistemic need on the part of the knowing subject in order to show the active role of the agent in his acquisition of knowledge? Is justification not a manifestation that when we accept or believe that p , we believe it because it is reasonable to do so? It is right to admit that epistemic justification comes in degrees. Some of our beliefs are more justified than others. Hence, it is plausible to speak of a *minimal* and a *maximal* justification¹²⁹. A *minimal* justification would imply the virtuous use of our cognitive faculties even if only a minimal amount of virtuousness and reasoning, whereas a *maximal* justification would imply the exercise of intellectual virtues (with a certain degree of stability and reliability) complemented –although not essential– with Zagzebskian-type virtues. We will speak of the role of cognitive faculties and intellectual virtues in detail –Sosean and Zagzebskian virtues– in our discussion of knowledge. At this point, it is enough to take into account that degrees of justification can be admitted in the acquisition of beliefs with the implied use of intellectual virtues.

Part of the motivation for the justification of beliefs is to strengthen the connection between our beliefs and the truth of our beliefs. If our epistemic duty is to acquire beliefs and avoid falsehoods, then the question worth considering, Riggs points out¹³⁰, is which end of our goal carries the more weight? In other words, should we give more importance to acquiring true beliefs or avoiding false beliefs? No doubt that we value truth inasmuch as we disvalue falsehood. Whether we prefer to acquire true beliefs or avoid false beliefs is another topic of debate. In any case, what we can say is that a high standard of epistemic justification would put more weight on the importance of avoiding falsehood as opposed to acquiring true beliefs. Likewise, a low standard of epistemic justification would have the opposite

129. One may think of using the term «low-grade» and «high-grade» justification to describe that justification comes in degrees, that is, to admit that justification of beliefs will depend upon how intellectually virtuous the person is, who does the justifying. We opt not to use these terms for it might create some confusion in relation to our understanding of knowledge. Sosa claims that knowledge seems a matter of degrees in the sense that one may know more than others, e.g. how sure one is, how safe or unsafe, how rationally justified one is, etc. (cfr. E. SOSA, «Human Knowledge, Animal and Reflective», *Philosophical Studies*, 106 [2001] 194.) If we admit the term «low-grade» knowledge and «high-grade» knowledge to describe thus, it will refer to something different to what Zagzebski affirms. Zagzebski's «low-grade» knowledge refers to knowledge acquired by children and animals, which may be compared to Sosa's animal knowledge. On the other hand, Zagzebski's «high-grade» knowledge refers to knowledge acquired by mature adult persons, which may be compared to Sosa's reflective knowledge. We suggest that it is important that we define these terms with more precision as to avoid confusion. We shall make the necessary adjustment to use precise terms in our discussion of Sosa's animal and reflective knowledge. For Zagzebski's *low-grade* and *high-grade* knowledge, see her *Virtues of the Mind*, pp. 273-283.

130. Cfr. W. RIGGS, «Balancing Our Epistemic Goals», *Nous*, 37 (2003) 342-352.

result. Riggs comments that there are no such theories of epistemic justification that would provide criteria to the proper weightings of these two cognitive goals. Hence, our question remains unanswered. Hilary Kornblith argues that we must accept truth as our epistemic goal. He writes:

«I have argued that epistemic evaluation finds its natural ground in our desires in a way which makes truth something we should care about whatever else we may value. This provides us with a pragmatic account of the source of epistemic normativity, but an account which is universal and also allows truth to play a central role. Pragmatists have typically suggested that epistemic evaluation will have little to do with truth; but if I am right, it is for pragmatic reasons that truth takes on the importance it does in epistemic evaluation»¹³¹.

However, Moros thinks –in accord with Leonardo Polo– that it is wrong to have a pragmatic understanding of truth. Rather, truth should not only be regarded as an *end* for which we tend towards and which serves as a guiding principle to our conduct, but it should also be considered as a source of inspiration that can move our «hearts». It is right to say that we desire truth and it is right to say also that in obtaining the truth, we are being perfected¹³². Indeed, «the very capacity to search for the truth and make inquiry about it has of itself created the initial response. Man would never embark on the search for anything he knew nothing about or which he supposed to be quite beyond his reach»¹³³. That not only we are capable of discovering the truth but the truth itself continues to inspire us. We will always seek the truth¹³⁴ and we can never remain indifferent to the truth¹³⁵.

Speaking of truth, Aquinas points out that intellectual virtue confers a good aptitude for the working of the intellect, which is to consider the truth. He further admits that wisdom, science and understanding are all

131. H. KORNBLITH, «Epistemic Normativity», *Synthese*, 94 (1993) 373.

132. «Por eso, no se trata solamente de buscar la verdad, sino de realizarse a partir de ella, de acuerdo con el carácter efusivo del ser humano y la índole donante o trascendental de la libertad. Si el hombre no tuviera carácter efusivo, encontrar la verdad sería estéril, porque la verdad está destinada y no se estanca en su encuentro». L. POLO, *La persona humana y su crecimiento*, EUNSA, Pamplona 21999, p. 202. «La verdad no es, por tanto, sólo el fin o el término a partir del cual hemos de dirigir la conducta, sino que puede ser una fuente de inspiración capaz de movilizar a la persona». E. MOROS, «Observaciones polianas a la definición del conocimiento», p. 205.

133. JOHN PAUL II, «Fides et ratio», n. 29, in L. HEMMING and S. PARSONS (eds.), *Restoring Faith in Reason*, University of Notre Dame Press, Indiana 2002.

134. «Man may be defined... as the one who seeks the truth». JOHN PAUL II, «Fides et ratio», n. 28.

135. «Nadie puede permanecer sinceramente indiferente a la verdad de su saber. Si descubre que es falso, lo rechaza; en cambio, si puede confirmar su verdad, se siente satisfecho». J. A. CUADRADO, *Antropología filosófica*, p. 71.

considered intellectual virtues insofar as they all provide aptness for the consideration of truth¹³⁶. To return to our *initial* question concerning our two epistemic goals –to acquire truth and to avoid falsehood– Riggs suggests that the answer may be found if we put our attention to *understanding*¹³⁷. Understanding entails a clear grasp of some significant part of reality and achieving such understanding of the reality requires that we achieve our two traditional epistemic goals to some extent¹³⁸. Aquinas tells us that *understanding* is the habit that perfects the intellect for the consideration of truth in itself. Hence, it is called the habit of principles¹³⁹. Of course, more could be said about *understanding* but at this point, it suffices to say that intellectual virtues such as wisdom, science and understanding may provide the solution to our problem insofar as these intellectual virtues enable a person to consider the truth in a virtuous manner. Hence, would these intellectual virtues not serve the knower to weigh correctly the relative values of our two traditional cognitive goals?¹⁴⁰ Aquinas writes:

«...a virtuous habit has a fixed relation to good, and is nowise referable to evil. Now the good of the intellect is truth, and falsehood is its evil. Wherefore, those habits alone are called intellectual virtues, whereby we tell the truth and never tell a falsehood»¹⁴¹.

To end this section, what we would like to point out above all is that our account of epistemic justification can be based on our distinction of cognitive faculties and intellectual virtues. The use of cognitive faculties provides *aptness* and the use of our intellectual virtues provides *justification* for our beliefs. Justification depends upon the person who does the *justifying*; hence, the possession of intellectual virtues complemented with moral virtues will no doubt play an important role in the justification of beliefs and in the final analysis, in the acquisition of knowledge¹⁴².

136. Cfr. *S. Th.*, I-II, q. 57, a. 2.

137. Zagzebski comments that interest in virtue epistemology makes the recovery of *understanding* more likely. Cfr. L. ZAGZEBSKI, «Recovering Understanding», M. STEUP (ed.), *Knowledge, Truth, and Duty: Essays on Epistemic Justification, Responsibility, and Virtue*. Oxford University Press, New York 2001, pp. 235-251. See also W. RIGGS, «Understanding Virtue and the Virtue of Understanding», pp. 203-226.

138. Cfr. W. RIGGS, «Balancing Our Epistemic Goals», p. 350.

139. Cfr. *S. Th.*, I-II, q. 57, a. 2.

140. Cfr. W. RIGGS, «Balancing Our Epistemic Goals», p. 349.

141. *S. Th.*, I-II, q. 57, a.2.

142. It will suffice to consider the words of John Paul II to see the relevancy of moral virtues in the pursuit of knowledge and truth. John Paul II writes, «The pursuit of truth... is not always conducted with the same clarity and coherence. The natural limits of reason and vanity of spirit may overshadow individual enquiries and not infrequently divert them. The various demands of our different personal characters can overthrow the truth. Yet, for all that they may evade it, the truth still influences life...». JOHN PAUL II, «Fides et ratio», n. 28. See also Part II, Section 3.2.

2. KNOWLEDGE

After having discussed aptness and justification, let us now examine Sosa's view of *knowledge*. The all-important question that we will consider in this section is «What is knowledge?» Earlier, we admitted that children and unsophisticated adults as well as normal adults have knowledge although *distinctly*. As such, Sosa proposes to explain knowledge in terms of animal knowledge and reflective knowledge.

There seems to be a confusion concerning how knowledge should be understood. For instance, consider the following:

«...there is a sense in which even a supermarket door “knows” when someone approaches, and in which a heating system “knows” when the temperature in a room rises above a certain setting. Such is “servo-mechanic” knowledge. And there is also an immense variety of animal knowledge, instinctive or learned, which facilitates survival and flourishing in an astonishingly rich diversity of modes and environments. Human knowledge is on a higher plane of sophistication, however, precisely because of its enhanced coherence and comprehensiveness and its capacity to satisfy self-reflective curiosity»¹⁴³.

No doubt, the word *knowledge* is used in a wide variety of ways. As indicated above, we may even go as far as attributing knowledge to a supermarket door or to computers, or to animals such as dolphins and dogs, capable of learning a number of tricks. It makes sense to admit that human knowledge must be different and on a higher plane. We should bear in mind the following questions: How is *human knowledge* different from that of «animal» knowledge or «servo-mechanic» knowledge? What is involved in human knowledge? Why is our knowledge superior to that of animals? What are the conditions for knowledge? In short, we shall examine what epistemology traditionally inquires into concerning knowledge, that is, its nature, its conditions and its extent. Sosa maintains that the concept of knowledge involves the following: «(a) “belief”: how sure must one be? (b) “justification”: how much rational support is required for one's belief? (c) “reliability”: how reliable are one's operative sources or faculties? (d) “safety”: how easily might one have been wrong; how remote is any possible belief/fact mismatch?»¹⁴⁴. A full account of Sosa's *VP* involves the requirements of safety, of reliable faculties and of epistemic perspective¹⁴⁵. Hence, our discussion of knowledge will take into

143. *KIP*, p. 95.

144. E. Sosa, «Neither Contextualism nor Skepticism», S. LUPER (ed.), *The Skeptics: Contemporary Essays*, Ashgate, Aldershot 2003, p. 169.

145. Cfr. L. BONJOUR and E. Sosa, *Epistemic Justification*, p. 170.

account all these factors noted by Sosa. We shall see if Sosa's view provides an adequate account of knowledge.

2.1. The Conditions for Knowledge

Knowledge puts us in contact with reality. It is undeniable that we associate ourselves with the things around us. Aside from our need of having an interpersonal relationship with other people, we also have a need to make «contact» with nature, so to speak. No doubt, we use things in order to be in this world. Even the simple act of eating or drinking can be considered already as a way of putting ourselves in contact with sensible things. In short, we connect with reality. *Mutatis mutandis*, knowledge also connects us with reality. When we say that «we know something», we are affirming that we know a certain portion of reality. We know when we grasped the object known. Thanks to our senses and our intellect, it is possible for us to capture a certain portion of reality. To see a bird outside our window is to put ourselves in contact with the bird *via* our faculty of sight. «Our knowledge begins with being (*ens*), known through the senses»¹⁴⁶.

Accordingly, knowledge is a relation between the knower and the object known, without which knowledge will be impossible. *S* knows that *p* when *S* establishes a relation with *p*. The link between the knowing subject and the object known is established by the true proposition that the knower accepts or believes. In other words, the relation between the knower and the true proposition is established when the knower believes such true proposition and consequently, puts the knower in contact with the reality known. In consequence, the concept of *belief* shows that there is a necessary connection between the knower who knows and what is known by the knower¹⁴⁷. If knowledge is nonaccidentally true belief, then we need to explain the nonaccidental connection between the belief and the fact believed. We need to find out the conditions a belief must have in order to qualify as knowledge. The knower must satisfy those conditions upon believing so that that his belief that *p* can qualify as knowledge. Now, the conditions we established earlier for the justification of beliefs can be applied to our conditions for knowledge. Hence, if it is required to integrate the positive insights of internalism and externalism to provide an adequate account for justification, we must do likewise to our account for knowl-

146. A. LLANO, *Gnoseology*, p. 140.

147. «El concepto de creencia viene a señalar la necesaria conexión entre la persona que conoce y lo conocido por ella». E. MOROS, «Observaciones polianas a la definición del conocimiento», p. 189.

edge. As a minimal requirement for knowledge, Sosa tells us that knowledge must be *safe* and it must be *virtuous*. Sosa holds:

«What distinguishes the case of 48 speckles where one guesses right and does not know from the case of three speckles where one does enjoy foundational knowledge by acquaintance? The relevant distinction is that in the latter case, unlike the former, one's belief is both *safe* and *virtuous*»¹⁴⁸.

Sosa argues that *S* fails to *know* even if *S* has the image of the 48 speckles in his consciousness such that *S*'s belief that *p* corresponds to what is «given» in his consciousness since *S* could easily have believed that the image before him has 48 speckles while it had one more speckle or less. Of course, the situation dramatically changes if the image has 3 speckles. In such a situation, we would easily attribute *S*'s belief that *p* to be in accord with the image in his consciousness. We can conclude that *S*'s belief that *p* is *safe* since he will hold his belief that *p* only if *p* is true. Sosa points out, however, that *S*'s belief that *p* being *safe* is not sufficient for knowledge. Accordingly, he argues that it must also be *virtuous*. If such conditions are satisfied, we can say that *S* *knows* that *p*¹⁴⁹.

One's belief must be safe

Why is it better to be safe than sensitive? The likes of Dretske, Nozick and DeRose, among others, each in his own way, suggest the requirement of *sensitivity* for knowledge. A belief is said to be sensitive if and only if were it not so that *p*, *S* would not believe that *p*¹⁵⁰. The question now is «what is it about *sensitivity* that makes it unacceptable as a requirement for knowledge?» First, the problem with *sensitivity* as a condition for knowledge is that it is *too strong* a requirement. If *S* will not believe that *p* if *p* were false, then it appears that we are admitting that *S* is *infallible* in his believings. Thus, *S*'s beliefs will always be true for he would not believe that *p* if *p* were false. Furthermore, since necessary truths can never be false, it shows that the sensitivity requirement is not a necessary condition for knowledge. And second, to know that *p*, Sosa argues that we must be able to rule out every alternative that is incompatible with our knowing that *p*. An «alternative» denotes any incompatible possibility. This only ap-

148. E. SOSA, «Consciousness and Self-Knowledge», p. 259.

149. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 260.

150. Cfr. E. SOSA, «How Must Knowledge Be Modally Related to What is Known?», pp. 376-377.

151. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Neither Contextualism nor Skepticism», p. 173.

plies to contingent truths and not to necessary truths since there is no possibility that can be incompatible with a necessary truth¹⁵¹. Such principle is what Sosa calls the «principle of exclusion».

«PE In order to know a fact *P* one must exclude (rule out, know to be false) every alternative that one knows to be incompatible with *one's knowing that fact*»¹⁵².

Considering the abovementioned, the sensitivity requirement becomes problematic. The condition of sensitivity is subject to skeptical scenarios. For us to know that *p*, we need to rule out the possibility that we are being fooled by an evil-demon, say *q*. Ruling out such possibility is *unlikely* for we may be fooled by an evil-demon into thinking that we are *not* now being fooled by an evil-demon. Hence, by sensitivity requirement we will not know that *q* and with PE, we will not know that *p*. The problem with sensitivity requirement is that one may know that *p* without being able to know whether one is *wrong* in thinking that he knows that *p*.

For a belief to qualify as knowledge, it must be related to the true proposition, or such belief must be based on a deliverance that is appropriately related to the true proposition. Sosa suggests that if sensitive requirement is inappropriate, then the alternative is the *safety* requirement¹⁵³. He writes:

«Rather than requiring, as a necessary condition for knowing P, that if P were false one would not believe it, the alternative is to require instead that one would believe it only if it were true. According to this new condition, which I call «safety», in order to qualify as knowledge a belief needs to be safe rather than sensitive. The new condition requires not that if P were false one would not believe it, but rather this: that not easily would one believe P without being right. Since subjunctive conditionals do not contrapose, the sensitivity conditional (not-P _ not-BP) is not equivalent to the safety conditional (BP _ P)»¹⁵⁴.

Sosa argues that for a belief to be safe, such belief must be based on a reliable indication. These indications are deliverances of epistemic sources such as perception, memory, inference, etc. As such, if we refer to the 3 speckles, one will take the deliverance of his faculty of sight as a reliable indicator that what he sees is a 3 speckles, hence in that «circumstances not easily *would* one believe as one does without being right»¹⁵⁵. Sosa writes:

152. E. SOSA, «Tracking, Competence, and Knowledge», p. 277.

153. Cfr. E. SOSA, «How Must Knowledge Be Modally Related to What Is Known?», p. 378.

154. E. SOSA, «Modal and Other A Priori Epistemology», p. 6.

155. E. SOSA, «Privileged Access», A. JOKIC and Q. SMITH (eds.), *Consciousness: New Philosophical Perspectives*, Oxford University Press, New York 2003, p. 290.

«Different sources correlate with different ways in which it may be said that *p*. Someone may say it literally, of course, in person or in writing, and *S* may hear it or read it. If we can believe our eyes or ears, moreover, it's because they tell us things. We experience visually or aurally as if *p*. Normally we accept such deliverances of our senses, unless we detect something untoward»¹⁵⁶.

In order to accept the deliverances of an epistemic source, it is important to *trust* such a source. Deliverances must track the truth. Thus, one must be attuned to the trustworthiness of the source responsible for such deliverance. It is not enough for *S* to be guided by the deliverances of some source to believe that *p*, rather it is equally important that *S* accepts the deliverance as a deliverance that tracks the truth, thanks to the reliability of the source, in order to believe that *p*. Deliverance enables knowledge only if it tracks the truth. Hence, we can say that *S*'s belief *p* is *safe* if *S* will accept such deliverance as deriving from a reliable source¹⁵⁷. Sosa explains:

«*S* knows that *p* on the basis of an indication *I*(*p*) only if either (a) *I*(*p*) indicates the truth outright and *S* accepts that indication as such outright, or (b) for some condition *C*, *I*(*p*) indicates the truth dependently on *C*, and *S* accepts that indication as such not outright but *guided* by *C* (so that *S* accepts the indication as such *on the basis* of *C*)»¹⁵⁸.

Note that the safety requirement will also encounter a problem as regards necessary truths for it will trivially satisfy the safety condition. As Sosa argues, the safety condition alone is not enough¹⁵⁹. He tells us that «knowledge requires one's belief to be not only safe but also virtuously sustained, through the use of a reliable ability or faculty, through an intellectual virtue»¹⁶⁰.

One's belief must be virtuous

We already discussed the importance of intellectual virtue in our account of knowledge¹⁶¹. Hence, we will look at its importance briefly in our present discussion. At this point, we have seen that one's belief must derive «from a way of forming beliefs that is an intellectual virtue, one that in our normal situation for forming such beliefs would tend strongly enough

156. E. SOSA, «Tracking, Competence, and Knowledge», p. 269.

157. Cfr. *ibid.*, pp. 271-272.

158. *Ibid.*, pp. 275-276.

159. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Modal and Other A Priori Epistemology», p. 6.

160. E. SOSA, «Privileged Access», p. 291.

161. See Part II, Section 1 for a detailed explication of Sosa's account of intellectual virtue and its role in the justification of beliefs and in the acquisition of knowledge.

to give us beliefs that are safe»¹⁶². Such beliefs must be derived through the use of intellectual virtues. If deliverances must track the truth and such deliverances depend on the reliability of its source, then it is obvious that such source must be «an intellectual virtue». Thanks to our intellectual virtue, Sosa would say, we will acquire true beliefs in a non-accidental way hence knowledge since our intellectual virtue will lead us to believe what is true and avoid what is falsehood.

Can we accept these conditions?

To claim that knowledge must be safe and virtuous seems to be more appropriate to the sort of knowledge that a normal adult can possess. It is true that Sosa nicely explains how a 3 speckles can be known by *S* and that such knowledge can be considered *safe* since one will not easily believe it without being right. However, the safety requirement appears to be *too strong* for a child's knowledge since a child simply believes things without considering whether he is right or wrong in believing what he believes. A child does not consider the circumstances in which he is situated in such a way that he will not easily believe as he does without being right. Hence, a «doxastic ascent»¹⁶³ is not required for his beliefs, that is, to have a «further belief that one's senses work well in the circumstances, or the like»¹⁶⁴. Sosa tells us that we know that *p* only if our belief that *p* is safe, that is, it must be that we will believe that *p* only if our belief that *p* were true¹⁶⁵. If that is the case, does this not imply that belief *p* requires a *doxastic ascent* on the part of *S*? If we are correct in our claim, then it is obvious that a doxastic ascent cannot be required from a child for he is incapable of such. He simply takes things as they come. If Sosa claims that knowledge being safe and virtuous pertains to animal knowledge, then it can never be attributed to a child's knowledge in virtue of our understanding of intellectual virtues as distinct to cognitive faculties. «[A child does] not doubt when it is not virtuous to do so, but [he does] not doubt when it *is* virtuous

162. L. BONJOUR and E. SOSA, *Epistemic Justification*, pp. 138-139.

163. «Doxastic (from Greek *doxa*, 'belief'), of or pertaining to belief. A doxastic mental state, for instance, is or incorporates a belief. Doxastic states of mind are to be distinguished, on the one hand, from such non-doxastic states as desires, sensations, and emotions, and, on the other hand, from subdoxastic states. By extension, a doxastic principle is a principle governing belief. A doxastic principle might set out conditions under which an agent's forming or abandoning a belief is justified (epistemically or otherwise», J. HEIL, «Doxastic», R. AUDI (ed.), *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, Cambridge University Press, New York ²1999, p. 243.

164. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 182.

165. Cfr. «Tracking, Competence, and Knowledge», p. 278.

to do so either»¹⁶⁶. For a child to know that *p*, safety and intellectual virtues are not necessary. A child can know that *p* through the *involuntary* use of his cognitive faculties. Perceptual beliefs are certainly considered as cases of knowledge¹⁶⁷.

Can we not say that knowledge that is safe and virtuous does not pertain to animal knowledge, but to a sort of knowledge similar to Sosa's reflective knowledge? If one is intellectually virtuous, then he will be in a better *position to know* that *p*. As a consequence, it is «safe» to say that his knowledge of *p* will be *safe* and *virtuous*. In accord with Juan Comesaña, we conclude that safety is not a necessary condition for knowledge. A child's knowledge is not a sort of knowledge that requires safety. If we cannot consider a child's knowledge a *safe* knowledge, perhaps, we may call it «*unsafe* knowledge», to borrow Comesaña's suggestion¹⁶⁸. The point of our argument is that one can have knowledge without satisfying the requirements of safety and virtuousness, which Sosa deems as necessary. If a child can know that *p* through the *involuntary* use of his cognitive faculties, then it must be due to the proper functioning of his cognitive faculties which do put him in contact with the reality. Note that there is no *doxastic ascent* on the part of the child in order to know that *p*.

Another point worth noting is the requirement of intellectual virtues. Again, consider Sosa's example of the 48 speckles and the 3 speckles. Would we not say that it is *more* necessary to have intellectual virtues in order to believe correctly the image of the 48 speckles as having 48 speckles as opposed to the image of the 3 speckles as having 3 speckles? Since it is easier to tell a 3 speckles from a 48 speckles, we do not think that it is necessary to have intellectual virtues to form such belief in the way that we require intellectual virtue for reflective knowledge. We grant Sosa's proposal that knowledge must be safe and virtuous, but he must provide us with an adequate explication concerning how we form beliefs in a virtuous manner¹⁶⁹. The point to make is that it requires a lesser

166. L. ZAGZEBSKI, *Virtues of the Mind*, p. 280.

167. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 279.

168. Cfr. J. COMESAÑA, «Unsafe Knowledge», *Synthese*, 146 (2005) 395-404. Comesaña's argument for rejecting the safety requirement is different from the argument we present above. Comesaña writes, «...why is it that safety is not a necessary condition for knowledge?... It might be thought that by attacking safety as a necessary condition on knowledge I am arguing against epistemic externalism – the thesis that the epistemic status of a belief can depend on factors that are “external” to the subject, either in the sense that they are not part of the subject's mind or in the sense that they are not accessible in a privileged way by the subject. The safety conditional can, after all, be seen as an attempt to capture what it is for a belief to be reliable, and the requirement of reliability is a paradigmatically externalist requirement». *Ibid.*, p. 401.

169. «The consideration just advanced put a considerable burden on the virtuousness condition. Sosa must say that the method by which the unjustified believer arrives

degree of virtuousness to exercise one's cognitive faculties to know a 3 speckles than to know a 48 speckles. Granted that the belief formed of a 3 speckles manifest an intellectual virtue, but what precludes us from forming our belief of the 48 speckles in such a way that it will also manifest an intellectual virtue?

2.2. Sosa's Account of Knowledge

Sosa's account of knowledge is structurally Cartesian since his account reflects Descartes's distinction of *cognitio* and *scientia*. Sosa's proposal is a «bi-level epistemology that distinguishes *animal* knowledge, and its constitutive cognitive virtues, from a *reflective* knowledge that in addition requires one's beliefs to be defensible in the arena of reflection»¹⁷⁰. To cast doubts regarding the reliability of one's intellectual virtues, one's beliefs must be placed under the epistemic perspective of the knower. It is worth noting, however, that Sosa's distinction of animal and reflective knowledge is «freed of the theological dependency of the Cartesian distinction and its associated infallibilism»¹⁷¹.

Let us examine briefly Descartes's epistemological project¹⁷². There are three commitments that can be attributed to Descartes. These are as follows: (1) to show that intuition and deduction are the most secure routes to knowledge, and the mind should admit no other; (2) to attain certain knowledge of anything by, first, proving that there is a God who is not a

at the 48-speckle belief is not virtuous. This means that it does not "derive from a way of forming beliefs that... in our normal situation for forming such beliefs would tend strongly enough to give us beliefs that are safe". But suppose that the person just looks at a 3-speckled image and thinks "3 speckles" and just looks at a 48-speckled image and thinks "48 speckles". Sosa must say that the latter belief, even when it is safe, derives from a different, and less virtuous, way of forming belief. Perhaps it does, though this is difficult to assess». R. FELDMAN, «Foundational Justification», J. GRECO (ed.), *Ernest Sosa and His Critics*, Blackwell, United Kingdom 2004, p. 51.

170. E. SOSA, «Modal and Other A Priori Epistemology», p. 7.

171. R. AUDI, «Intellectual Virtue and Epistemic Power», p. 6.

172. We will follow Sosa's proposed interpretation of Descartes's epistemology. It is not our intention to provide an elaborate interpretation of Descartes's epistemology. We are simply highlighting the similarities between Descartes's *cognitio* and *scientia* and Sosa's animal and reflective knowledge. Hence, it is not our intent to defend or to refute Sosa's interpretation of Descartes's epistemology. Of course, to provide an elaborate explication of Descartes's epistemology entails a full project of its own which is beyond the scope of this thesis. Even Sosa admits the following: «Admittedly I have done little more than to sketch my proposed interpretation of Descartes's epistemological project. A proper defense would require a full textual study. My own reading inspires optimism, but the full project must await another occasion». E. SOSA, «How to Resolve the Pyrrhonian Problematic: A Lesson from Descartes», *Philosophical Studies*, 85 (1997) 240. See also Sosa's «The Mythology of the Given», *The History of Philosophical Quarterly*, 14 (1997) 275-286.

deceiver; and finally, (3) to demonstrate through appropriate reasoning God's existence and nondeceiving nature¹⁷³.

In view of Descartes's epistemological project, his desire is to cast doubts concerning the unreliability of the epistemic sources. Such doubts may derive from the fallibility of the senses, from the possibility that one may be dreaming, from the possibility that one has fallen victim of an evil-demon, etc. The point to make is that one has to eliminate these doubts if one can assure himself of the reliability of his epistemic sources. In so doing, it will respond nicely to Sosa's «principle of the criterion», which means that a high-level knowledge entails that one must be justified in taking his epistemic sources to be reliable¹⁷⁴.

The Pyrrhonists admit that an *enlightened* knowledge requires awareness of one's epistemic doings. Only with such awareness can one have *knowledge* worthy of its title. Knowledge then may be compared to a person who discovers gold in clear light, thanks to his efforts, as opposed to finding it in the dark through mere luck. Hence, to acquire knowledge, it is better to proceed with adequate perspective on one's own cognitive efforts. Accordingly, Descartes makes his distinction of *cognitio* and *scientia*. Sosa explains:

«Cognitio is the attaining of the truth, which can happen through one or more layers of good luck, in the environment, in oneself, and in the adjustment between the two. One might of course luck in the truth through a mere guess that the fair dice will come up seven, and surely this does not yet qualify as cognitio. Cognitio requires at a minimum that one attain the truth by being appropriately constituted, and appropriately situated, to issue reliable judgments on the subject matter. So constituted and situated, one *would* be right on that question... Scientia requires more. It is attained only through an adequate perspective one one's epistemic doings. Only if one can see how it is that one is acquiring or sustaining the belief in question does one attain scientia. What is more, one must see that way as reliable, as one that would tend to lead one aright, not astray. But this is just what is required by our Principle of the Criterion»¹⁷⁵.

Between *cognitio* and *scientia*, what Descartes wants is a *reflective, enlightened* scientia, which sets up the Cartesian Circle since reflective scientia has to satisfy the *principle of the criterion*¹⁷⁶. In other words, one must be justified in taking one's epistemic source to be reliable. The circularity

173. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Two False Dichotomies» [Online].

174. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Plantinga's Evolutionary Meditations», J. BIELBY (ed.), *Naturalism Defeated?: Essays on Plantinga's Evolutionary Argument against Naturalism*, Cornell University Press, New York 2002, p. 92.

175. E. SOSA, «Two False Dichotomies» [Online].

176. E. SOSA, «How to Resolve the Pyrrhonian Problematic», p. 238.

emerges if awareness of the reliability of the epistemic source were to be challenged. Does the awareness of the reliability of the epistemic source needs to be a *justified* awareness? Such circularity is a *virtuous circle*, comments Sosa¹⁷⁷. In any case, Descartes's defense consists of having a «coherence-inducing theological reasoning yielding an epistemic perspective on himself and his world, through which he might confidently trust his faculties. And these faculties must include those employed in arriving, via a priori theological reasoning, at his perspective on himself and his world, the perspective that enables confidence in the reliability of those very faculties»¹⁷⁸.

As indicated above, Sosa's account of animal and reflective knowledge closely reflects Descartes's *cognitio* and *scientia*. Sosa explains:

«...whether one is externalist or an internalist in epistemology; and in fact, along with Descartes, I am both. I am an externalist about animal knowledge, as was Descartes about *cognitio*. And I am an internalist about reflective knowledge, as was Descartes about *scientia*»¹⁷⁹.

After having shown the similarities between Sosa's account and that of Descartes's, we end our discussion by recalling that Sosa's distinction of animal and reflective knowledge is a consequence of his distinction of apt belief and justified belief. Sosa says that his animal knowledge involves *aptness* and his reflective knowledge involves not just *aptness* but also *justification*¹⁸⁰. Of course, more is needed to justify our explication of animal and reflective knowledge. Let us now discuss these two varieties of knowledge in detail bearing in mind Descartes's *cognitio* and *scientia* in order to appreciate the similarities between Sosa and Descartes's account of knowledge.

2.2.1. Animal and Reflective Knowledge

Knowledge that is safe and virtuous refers to Sosa's animal knowledge. «Animal knowledge is a matter of being reliably connected to the

177. We discussed the problem of circularity already in Part III, Section 1.2.4.

178. E. SOSA, «Plantinga's Evolutionary Meditations», p. 93. To show that the circle is in fact virtuous, Sosa explains, «We may explicate Descartes's project by placing it in the context of the Pyrrhonian problematic. This also helps explain why the circle is virtuous, and how certain stages of the Cartesian project, which might seem incoherent at first blush, are defensibly coherent in the end. (Example: the apparently incoherent claim about needing to first prove the veracity of God.)». *Ibid.*

179. E. SOSA, «Reliability and the A Priori», T. GENDLER and J. HAWTHORNE (eds.), *Conceivability and Possibility I*, Oxford 2002, p. 381.

180. Cfr. R. FOLEY, «The Epistemology of Sosa», *Philosophical Issues*, 5 (1994) 2. See also R. FUMERTON, «Sosa's Epistemology», *Philosophical Issues*, 5 (1994) 15-27. Fumerton comments on Sosa's epistemology, particularly on Sosa's account of justification and knowledge.

world –having one’s belief be safe–»¹⁸¹. Such belief must be produced reliably out of intellectual virtues hence one’s belief must be virtuous. Sosa describes his animal knowledge as follows:

«One has *animal knowledge* about one’s environment, one’s past, and one’s own experience if one’s judgments and beliefs about these are direct responses to their impact –e.g., through perception or memory– with little or no benefit of reflection or understanding»¹⁸².

Animal knowledge is a result of a direct response of one’s intellectual virtues. Note that in the above description, there is *little* or *no* benefit of reflection or understanding. However, as Sosa continues to explain his views on animal knowledge, he states the following:

«Animal knowledge is yielded by reaction to the relevant field unaided by reflection on the place on one’s belief and its object within one’s wider view»¹⁸³.

The above shows that Sosa puts more emphasis on the fact that there is neither reflection nor understanding involved in *animal knowledge* on the part of the knower. Suffice it to admit that to acquire animal knowledge, the cognitive faculty or the intellectual virtue yielding the belief is *truth-conducive*¹⁸⁴. In other words, to yield animal knowledge, the knower *S* must have the relevant faculty given the appropriate *F-C* pair so that *S* can discern the truth and avoid error with a good ratio of success. To put it in another way, animal knowledge is possible if the cognitive faculty in question is working properly given the appropriate «normal» circumstances¹⁸⁵. If Sosa defines knowledge in terms of intellectual virtue, then it makes sense to admit that the acquisition of knowledge will depend upon the circumstances in which *S* is in. Hence, absent «proper circumstances», *S* will not acquire animal knowledge because his intellectual virtue will not achieve the desired results. Recall that «[a]nimal knowledge that *p* does not require that the knower have an epistemic perspective on his belief that *p*, a perspective from which he endorses the source of that belief, i.e., from which he can see that source as reliably truth conducive»¹⁸⁶. What matters is that *S* must track the truth reliably without requiring *S* to be aware that

181. S. COHEN, «Structure and Connection: Comments on Sosa’s Epistemology», J. GRECO (ed.), *Ernest Sosa and His Critics*, Blackwell, United Kingdom 2004, p. 17.

182. *KIP*, p. 240.

183. *KIP*, p. 242.

184. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 290.

185. The environmental aspect of intellectual virtue is well-discussed in Part II, Section 1.2.4.

186. E. SOSA, «Human Knowledge, Animal and Reflective», p. 193.

his belief does in fact track the truth. In any case, whether *S* is aware or unaware that his belief tracks the truth is irrelevant. It is in this sense that we can say that Sosa's animal knowledge is in keeping with reliabilism.

Again, if knowledge is true belief out of intellectual virtue, then the intellectual virtue of *S* must be up to par with the epistemic community to which *S* belongs. This is based on the idea that Sosa admits the relativity of intellectual virtue to *S*'s epistemic community. If the intellectual virtue of *S* does not meet the *community standard*, then *S* does not acquire animal knowledge. As Sosa would say, a *true and relevant faculty* must not only serve a particular subject, but must also serve the epistemic community. Hence, *relevant faculties* must be based on an appropriate *F-C pair* that is repeatable not only to individuals but also to all members of the epistemic community. Only in such case can we say that the cognitive faculties of *S* will be useful for the acquisition of knowledge¹⁸⁷.

A simple way to describe animal knowledge is as follows:

«*S* has animal knowledge regarding *p* only if

1. *p* is true, and
2. *S*'s belief *B(p)* is produced by one or more intellectual virtues of *S*»¹⁸⁸.

Sosa's reflective knowledge is a kind of knowledge that is above animal knowledge. It can be considered as a *fully* human knowledge where the belief in question is placed under the epistemic perspective of the knower¹⁸⁹. True enough, we acquire a certain awareness of our intellectual aptitude and a certain sureness that we are likely to be right in our «believings» in a nonaccidental way. Thanks to our *epistemic perspectivism* that the «truth of our beliefs and the coherence of our minds, which if constituted by interbelief explanatory relations is of a piece with the value of understanding. We want our beliefs to be true, reasonably enough, and so integrated as to enable answers for our many and varied whys»¹⁹⁰. We would rather believe in a way that is reflectively right than believing correctly but unreflectively so¹⁹¹. As such, animal knowledge implies a less cognitive sophistication than reflective knowledge. It does not require the knower to know how he acquires his beliefs, whereas reflective knowledge certainly does¹⁹². As Sosa points out, «belief amounts to reflective knowledge only if

187. For a detailed discussion of the social aspect of intellectual virtue, see Part II, Section 1.2.5.

188. J. GRECO, «Virtues in Epistemology», p. 291.

189. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Introduction», p. xxii.

190. E. SOSA, «Two False Dichotomies» [Online].

191. Cfr. E. SOSA, «How to Resolve the Pyrrhonian Problematic», p. 232.

192. Cfr. R. FOLEY, «The Epistemology of Sosa», p. 2.

one can say that one does know, not just arbitrarily, but with adequate justification»¹⁹³. Reflective knowledge has to depend ultimately upon the *less demanding* animal knowledge since, as Sosa would say, «we cannot climb infinite ladders of reflection»¹⁹⁴. To have reflective knowledge, one must have animal knowledge since an *apt* belief must derive from the exercise of one's cognitive faculties. Sosa describes reflective knowledge as follows:

«One has *reflective knowledge* if one's judgment or belief manifests not only such direct response to the fact known but also understanding of its place in a wider whole that includes one's belief and knowledge of it and how these come about»¹⁹⁵.

Reflective knowledge, as the term implies, involves *reflection* and *understanding*. Aside from the fact that our belief must derive from the exercise of our cognitive faculties or intellectual virtue, we must also have certain understanding as to how such belief come about. In short, reflective knowledge pertains to those beliefs deriving from the exercise of intellectual virtues with *epistemic perspective*. Greco describes Sosa's reflective knowledge as follows:

«S has reflective knowledge regarding *p* only if

1. *p* is true,
2. *S*'s belief B(*p*) is produced by one or more intellectual virtues of *S*, and
3. *S* has a true perspective on B(*p*) as being produced by one or more intellectual virtues, where such perspective is itself produced by an intellectual virtue of *S*»¹⁹⁶.

Reflective knowledge is the sort of knowledge that we all should aspire to have. It is better than animal knowledge since we will have a better chance of being right and of being justified thanks to our «epistemic perspective»¹⁹⁷. As stated earlier, reflective knowledge implies that a belief is not only *apt* but also *justified*. Aptness alone will yield us animal knowledge but if combined with a coherent epistemic perspective, we can boot-

193. E. SOSA, «Two False Dichotomies» [Online].

194. «...human reflective knowledge is most likely to depend ultimately on unreflective knowledge, since we cannot climb infinite ladders of reflection». *KIP*, p. 290.

195. *KIP*, p. 240.

196. J. GRECO, «Virtues in Epistemology», p. 291.

197. «Since a direct response supplement by such understanding would in general have a better chance of being right, reflective knowledge is better justified than corresponding animal knowledge». *KIP*, p. 240.

strap our animal knowledge to reflective knowledge¹⁹⁸. Sosa claims that *S* attains a high-level of knowledge when *S* does not wonder whether he knows, but when he can consciously say that he does know in a way that he can defend his belief in the arena of reflection¹⁹⁹. In cases where *S* *unconsciously* knows that *p*, he is still said to have *reflective knowledge* if he can defend his belief *if called upon* in the arena of reflection. In other words, «[w]hen challenged in the arena, one simply reveals the support that one's belief already enjoyed pre-entry»²⁰⁰. Note that the beliefs involved in these two varieties of knowledge –animal and reflective– must be *true beliefs* insofar as they both derive from the exercise of intellectual virtues. Even in cases of animal knowledge, «despite its lack of endorsing perspective, it does involve belief that is *true*, well-supported, and the output of reliable cognitive virtue»²⁰¹. Hence, Sosa claims that the sources of our beliefs must be at least minimally reliable to qualify as knowledge. In combination with Sosa's principle of exclusion (PE), he derives the «principle of criterion» (PC), which may be described as follows:

«One knows that *p* and grasps (understands) the proposition that one knows that *p*, only if one is justified in believing that the sources of one's belief that *p* are minimally reliable (i.e., not extremely unreliable)»²⁰².

Sosa claims that this *principle* does not only apply to *conscious beliefs*, but also to *implicit beliefs* or *unconscious beliefs*. At this point, we can see that knowledge of a minimally reliable source of our beliefs provide us with a «minimal» *knowledge* whereas knowledge of a highly reliable source of our beliefs provides us with a «maximal» *knowledge*. If both require a certain awareness of the reliability of the source of one's beliefs –be it minimally or maximally– then we can hold that both the minimal and the maximal knowledge pertain to Sosa's reflective knowledge. In

198. «The factors that confer epistemic authority on beliefs thus fall into two radically different categories: aptness, which is essentially external in character; and a coherent epistemic perspective, which is essentially internal. Where both are present in harmony, we have reflective knowledge, while aptness alone yields only animal knowledge». L. BONJOUR, «Sosa on Knowledge, Justification, and Aptness», p. 88.

199. To be able to defend one's belief in the arena of reflection is simply an extension of how we can understand Sosa's principle of exclusion. Sosa writes, «Exclusion thus implies that in order really to know something, one must be able to "defend it in the arena of reflection": one must be able to view oneself as meeting every condition that one recognizes as required in order then really to know; or, alternatively and to the same effect, one must be able to exclude justifiedly any possibility one thinks incompatible with one's then knowing». E. SOSA, «Two False Dichotomies», [Online].

200. *Ibid.*

201. E. SOSA, «Replies», J. GRECO, *Ernest Sosa and His Critics*, Blackwell, United Kingdom 2004, p. 306.

202. E. SOSA, «How to Resolve the Pyrrhonian Problematic», p. 233.

short, reflective knowledge comes in various degrees²⁰³. Reflective knowledge is governed by the «principle of the criterion». Thus, «knowledge is enhanced through justified trust in the reliability of its sources»²⁰⁴. The degree of knowledge will depend upon our awareness of how reliable our epistemic sources are. Since awareness is necessary for reflective knowledge, it is plausible to admit that awareness may come in degrees. There will be some situations in which our awareness will be sketchy and, at times, it will be more precise. Sosa points out:

«Animal knowledge requires only that the belief reflect the impact of its subject matter through the operation of a faculty or virtue. For reflective knowledge one not only must believe out of virtue. One must also be aware of doing so. Of course one need not know with precision and detail the relevant *C* and *F*. Some grasp of them is required, however, even if it remains sketchy and generic»²⁰⁵.

Sosa gives special emphasis concerning the importance of epistemic perspectivism in his view of reflective knowledge. Goldman points out that «Sosa builds a strong coherence requirement into his notion of reflective knowledge»²⁰⁶. Reflective knowledge builds on animal knowledge and what reflective knowledge adds on animal knowledge is that one's first order beliefs are placed under the epistemic perspective of the subject. If unreflective knowledge is without *perspectivism*, then we can say that reflective knowledge supervenes on unreflective knowledge²⁰⁷. No doubt, reflective knowledge is more favorable to have than unreflective knowl-

203. «...a whole family of “principles of the criterion”, whose unifying thread is that they all concern the satisfaction of requirements for various degrees of knowledge. Thus certain levels of knowledge would be compatible with one's knowing only that the sources of one's belief are minimally reliable, but higher degrees would require that one know one's sources to be quite reliable, or highly reliable, etc.» Again, consider another text taken from the same article which may help to provide more clarification: «According to this family of principles, various levels of knowledge will require various degrees of perceived reliability in the sources of the belief constitutive of the knowledge». E. SOSA, «Two False Dichotomies» [Online]. As we have already mentioned, we will use the term «low-grade» and high-grade knowledge in accord with Zagzebski, in comparison with Sosa's animal and reflective knowledge respectively. In so doing, we will avoid the possibility of *confusion*.

204. E. SOSA, «Plantinga's Evolutionary Meditations», p. 91. «There is a higher state of knowledge, reflective knowledge, but one subject to our Principle of the Criterion... Attaining such knowledge requires a view of ourselves –of our belief, our faculties, and our situation– in the light of which we can see the sources of our beliefs as reliable enough...», *ibid.*, p. 97.

205. E. SOSA, «Virtue Perspectivism», pp. 29-30.

206. A. GOLDMAN, «Sosa on Reflective Knowledge and Virtue Perspectivism», J. GRECO (ed.), *Ernest Sosa and His Critics*, Blackwell, United Kingdom 2004, p. 87.

207. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 291.

edge. The former is like searching for gold in daylight and discovering it through one's own effort as opposed to the latter which can be described as hitting upon it in the dark through mere luck. Furthermore, the increment of comprehensive coherence that reflective knowledge entails is a source of epistemic worth for it is a source of certainty. Having the awareness of the reliability of one's cognitive faculty as *truth-conducive* is what renders certainty to one's set of beliefs²⁰⁸.

2.2.2. *The Problem with Animal and Reflective Knowledge*

In human knowledge, Sosa admits two sorts of knowledge, the animal and the reflective. Sosa tells us that sometimes knowledge can mean the first, and sometimes the second²⁰⁹. Although he makes a distinction between animal and reflective, he does not mean that «the former is restricted to lower animals, or brutes, and the latter to human beings»²¹⁰. Rather, these two sorts of knowledge pertain to humans. Sosa points out:

«Animal, unreflective knowledge is largely dependent on cognitive modules and their deliverances. The visual deliverances of someone with 20/20 eyesight will differ in quality from those of someone nearly blind. Reflective knowledge manifests not just modular deliverances blindly accepted, but also the assignment of proper weights to conflicting deliverances, and the balance struck among them»²¹¹.

Is there a problem with Sosa's animal knowledge? If intellectual virtue is relative to an environment *E*, then animal knowledge will evidently depend upon the presence of an appropriate environment *E*. Absent the appropriate environment, *S* will not have *animal knowledge* of *p*. Similarly, if intellectual virtue is relative to an epistemic community *C*, then *S*'s

208. Cfr. E. SOSA, «How to Resolve the Pyrrhonian Problematic», p. 241. «What favors reflective over unreflective knowledge? Reflective acquisition of knowledge is, again, like attaining a prized objective guided by one's own intelligence, information, and deliberation; unreflective acquisition of knowledge is like lucking into some benefit in the dark. The first member of each pair is distinguished from the second in being more admirable, something that might be ascribed admiringly to the protagonist, as his doing. And we can after all shape our cognitive practices, individually and collective, enhancing their epistemic virtue, their effectiveness in putting us in touch with how matters stand. [...] A further advantage of reflective knowledge is its entailed increment of comprehensive coherence, something accepted by Descartes himself as a source of epistemic worth, indeed as a source of certainty». E. SOSA, «Plantinga's Evolutionary Meditations», pp. 94-95.

209. Cfr. E. SOSA, «Human Knowledge, Animal and Reflective», p. 193.

210. E. SOSA, «Replies», p. 290.

211. *Ibid.*, p. 291.

cognitive faculty exercised to know that p must satisfy «community standards». If S fails to meet such *standard*, then S fails to have animal knowledge of p .

As regards the requirement of having an adequate environment E (F - C pair) for the proper functioning of intellectual virtues, a child will not have animal knowledge absent the appropriate environment since a child is incapable of making the necessary adjustment to accommodate himself in a given situation in order to know that p . For instance, the reasoning faculty of an adult has the capacity to overcome unfavorable conditions. Despite insufficient lighting and inadequate distance, an adult can use some night vision devices so as to see a certain object that is far beyond the capacity of his faculty of sight. Of course, such recourse is something that would never occur to a child given that he is incapable of using his reasoning faculty. Hence, a child is totally at the mercy of what is provided to him, but that is not to say that he cannot know that p if the conditions are favorable. Cognitive faculties will achieve their results if proper circumstances are present. In this sense, Sosa does have a point. If a child acquires animal knowledge, it is due to the presence of an adequate F - C pair. In addition, we can affirm that the child's cognitive faculty exercised to know that p does satisfy the community standard since the F - C pair must be something repeatable not only to the child, but also to all members of a particular group to which the child belongs. The cognitive faculty used by the child to know that p must be a *relevant faculty* recognized by his epistemic community.

Part of the difficulty in Sosa's account is that he does not distinguish cognitive faculties from intellectual virtues. Hence, an intellectual virtue, claims Sosa, may be considered as innate or acquired²¹². If animal knowledge is defined as true belief out of intellectual virtue, then how are we supposed to understand intellectual virtues in our consideration of animal knowledge? To build an account of knowledge and justification in terms of intellectual virtues understood also as cognitive faculties will lead to *confusion*²¹³. Consider a child's knowledge. Can we describe *his* knowledge as a result of the *use* of his cognitive faculties or as a result of the *virtuous use* of his cognitive faculties? The former is acceptable but the latter is not. It is *unlikely* for a child to have cognitive faculties that are *virtuous* in the first place. A child's way is not an adult's way. We cannot expect a child to make mature judgments the same way as adults. A child does possess cognitive faculties but not intellectual virtues, but that is not to say that he is not in the process of acquiring them. Be that as it may, we cannot

212. See Part II, Section 1.2.2.

213. We already made comments on the disadvantages of not distinguishing cognitive faculties from intellectual virtues. See Part II, Section 3.

deny a child of knowledge. He can acquire knowledge thanks to his cognitive faculties.

To provide a solution to Sosa's animal knowledge, a distinction between cognitive faculty and intellectual virtue will prove advantageous. In so doing, it will permit us to affirm that the use of cognitive faculties will pertain to *unreflective* knowledge such as that knowledge acquired by a child. A child's belief is apt insofar as his belief derives from the use of his cognitive faculties hence knowledge. This prepares the way for a more «complex» knowledge as the child matures and acquires intellectual virtues. Moros and Umbers comment:

«The first step in knowledge is perception, but as we grow we become more perceptive. As a person matures, so do her cognitive capacities, and our definition of knowledge needs to be flexible enough to recognize the increasing role of the agent and hence, motivation, in her own knowledge. This calls for a distinction, but not a separation between faculty-based inputs to valid knowledge and virtue-based ones»²¹⁴.

The use of intellectual virtues pertains to *reflective* knowledge such as that knowledge acquired by an adult person without denying the adult person of *unreflective* knowledge. An adult person can acquire both the *unreflective* and the *reflective* knowledge²¹⁵. The point to make is that *reflective* knowledge requires more effort on the part of *S* in order to know that *p*, which entails the exercise of one's intellectual virtues. This, we believe, will satisfy the conditions laid out by Sosa for his reflective knowledge.

Another problem with Sosa's animal knowledge is that it is difficult to say whether such knowledge involves the use of *reason*. We think that Sosa would claim that it does not. We have already seen that Sosa's animal knowledge is a direct response of one's intellectual virtue unaided by reflection. In addition, Sosa refers to his animal knowledge as unreflective knowledge. Based on these premises, it is unlikely that animal knowledge will involve any sort of *reasoning*²¹⁶. If it is *unreflective* then how can such knowledge involve *reasoning*? It is Sosa's reflective knowledge that requires the operation of reason²¹⁷. However, as we shall see below, Sosa

214. E. MOROS and R. UMBERS, «Distinguishing Virtues from Faculties in Virtue Epistemology», p. 72.

215. This agrees with our claim that a *justified belief* is also an *apt belief* but an *apt belief* is not necessarily a *justified belief*.

216. Cfr. *KIP*, p. 290.

217. Consider the following: «Note that no human blessed with reason has merely animal knowledge of the sort attainable by beasts. For even when perceptual belief derives as directly as it ever does from sensory stimuli, it is still relevant that one has *not* perceived the signs of contrary testimony. A reason-endowed being automatically monitors his background information and his sensory input for contrary evidence and auto-

seems to claim that reasoning is involved for both animal and reflective knowledge. Consider this:

«Reasoning is related epistemically to knowledge in two ways, corresponding to the two sorts of knowledge, the reflective and the unreflective. The latter, animal knowledge is concerned with the acquisition and sustainment of apt, reliable belief, whereas the former requires the belief to be placed also in a perspective within which it may be seen as apt... Reasoning that provides animal knowledge is required to hold up with truth, aptness, and justification at every lemma on which it relies essentially for the sake of connecting its conclusion back eventually with the relevant portions of external reality... If one is to attain animal knowledge, such reasoning must unfold with independence from its conclusion»²¹⁸.

It is important to clarify whether or not animal knowledge requires the involvement of the faculty of reason. We accept that Sosa's animal knowledge puts us in contact with reality. Through one's cognitive faculty, one acquires «animal» knowledge of *p*, but what is not plausible to admit is the intervention of the faculty of reason. Thus, Sosa is in the right direction if he is admitting that animal knowledge is *unreflective*. A child who is not yet capable of using his reasoning faculty relies on his proper functioning cognitive faculties to acquire animal knowledge of *p*. A child's reasoning faculty can be described as a faculty of «reason in potency.» For this reason, we can admit the commonality of knowledge between small children and animals. To put it in another way, the sort of knowledge common to both higher animals and children do not go beyond the sensory order. Of course, such claim can only be sustained if we *reject* the idea that reasoning is involved in animal knowledge. Small children and animals can acquire knowledge via sensory faculties, e.g., perceptual beliefs.

In accord with contemporary thinking, an adequate account of knowledge must take into account cases of perceptual beliefs. Hence, «beliefs arising from perception put us into cognitive contact with reality in a straightforward and uncontroversial sense»²¹⁹. Thanks to our cognitive faculties, it is possible for us to «know». If cognitive faculties put us in con-

matically opts for the most coherent hypothesis even when he responds most directly to sensory stimuli. For even when response to stimuli is most direct, *if* one were also to hear or see the signs of credible contrary testimony that would change one's response. The beliefs of a *rational* animal hence would seem never to issue from *unaided* introspection, memory, or perception. For reason is always at least a silent part on the watch for other relevant data, a silent partner whose very *silence* is a contributing cause of the belief outcome». In this occasion, we think that Sosa is speaking of *reflective knowledge* and not *animal knowledge*. *KIP*, p. 240.

218. Taken from an interview with Ernest Sosa: Fall 2001. Cfr. Sosa's homepage. [Online] Available: <http://homepage.mac.com/ernestsosa/Menu2.html>.

219. L. ZAGZEBSKI, *Virtues of the Mind*, p. 282.

tact with reality, then *animal knowledge* can be considered as «true knowledge» in spite of the fact that it is not «knowledge of the truth». Faculties possess different capacities, which permit us to capture different aspects of reality. Seeing is to our faculty of sight, hearing is to our faculty of hearing, etc. As we can see, if we are devoid of a certain faculty, we will not be able to capture certain aspects of reality that pertains to the faculty in question. Hence, a blind person is incapable of knowing aspects of reality that a sighted person *can* know. We say that it is not *knowledge of the truth* because we are speaking of «unreflective beliefs». Sensory faculties are not reflexive²²⁰. Therefore, they do not capture the «conformity [that] exists between the thing seen and the image which it perceives. In every sensation there is awareness of sensing but –since the sense faculty is not reflexive– this is not equivalent to knowing the conformity between the thing and what the senses grasp about the thing»²²¹.

In spite of the inability of small children to use their faculty of reason, we think that it is inappropriate to call their knowledge *animal knowledge*. Again, we do not deny the commonality of knowledge between small children and animals, but we reject «animal knowledge» to avoid *humanizing* the brutes. As we have mentioned, there is an «ontological» difference between small children and animals that requires our attention. Small children cannot *use* their faculty of reason but they are «rational beings» in the making, so to speak. Animals, on the other hand, are *not*. This explains why small children can grow and mature *intellectually* and eventually, can acquire *complex* knowledge as adults do thanks to their reasoning faculty. Of course, animals are incapable of such kind of development and maturity no matter how old they get. To make our point clear, it is enough to consider that the learning capacity of a child is extremely advanced as compared to some advanced brutes. Is not a child's capacity to call his mother «mama» after a certain age, a manifestation of his *rational* nature? If we can admit that we are rational beings, then our knowledge can never be compared to that of animals. In other words, part of what distinguishes us from animals is our reasoning faculty hence animal knowledge can never be up to par with our knowledge²²². Zagzebski points out:

220. «Como los sentidos no pueden reflexionar, es evidente que la verdad, formalmente, o se encuentra en ellos. Esto no quiere decir que los sentidos no se adecuen a la realidad o que nos engañen siempre. Los sentidos pueden poseer la verdad «materialmente», pero sin saber que la poseen». R. CORAZÓN, *Filosofía del conocimiento*, p. 153. Cfr. *S. Th.*, I, q. 16, a. 2.

221. A. LLANO, *Gnoseology*, p. 33.

222. «Cuando Aristóteles definió al hombre como un “ser vivo que tiene logos”, *zoon logos ejon*, estaba apuntando no sólo al hecho de que el ser humano se distingue del resto de los animales por tener una razón, sino al hecho mismo de tener lenguaje. En efecto, el ser humano, a diferencia de los animales, es un ser que tiene lenguaje, un ser que habla: “El hombre es el único ser vivo que tiene palabra”». F. CONESA and J. NUBIO-

«Rationality, after all, has traditionally been understood as that property which makes us most distinctively human. While there are no doubt other aspects of human nature that are also distinctive (e.g., human emotions), the ability to perceive white is not one of them...»²²³.

As a child grows, he becomes more perceptive, his cognitive capacities become more developed, and his role as an active epistemic agent, scarcely visible as it may seem, becomes more and more noticeable. Sosa is right for making the distinction in knowledge; hence, we accept his distinction of *unreflective knowledge* and *reflective knowledge*, but we reject the term «animal knowledge» for reasons already mentioned. It is important to understand that human knowledge is not animal knowledge and animal knowledge is not human knowledge. To deny the «ontological» difference between humans and animals will lead to problems. Consider the writings of Kornblith:

«First, human knowledge might seem to be different in kind from animal knowledge because it is thought that it essentially involves some sort of social dimension, either because having propositional attitudes requires being a user and interpreter of language..., or because having propositional attitudes, or being justified, requires being part of a linguistic community which engages in the social practice of giving and asking for reasons... Secondly, one might think that human knowledge requires a degree of self-reflectiveness unavailable to animals... Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, one might think that knowledge is an interesting philosophical category because of its normative dimension...»²²⁴.

Kornblith, comments Martin Kusch²²⁵, is not sympathetic with the idea that there is a distinction between animal and human knowledge. For instance, Kornblith thinks that animals also have beliefs hence it is wrong to assume that a social dimension is required to be a *believer*. Kornblith also rejects the importance of belonging to an epistemic community and he does not agree with the idea of requiring a degree of «reflection». Consequently, «Kornblith has established his general thesis according to which there are no epistemically relevant differences between animal and human beliefs»²²⁶. Undeniably, Sosa does not follow the same line of thinking as

LA, *Filosofía del Lenguaje*, Herder, Barcelona 1999, p. 19. Aristotle writes, «...man is the only animal who has the gift of speech». ARISTOTLE, *Politics*, I, 2, 1253a 10.

223. L. ZAGZEBSKI, *Virtues of the Mind*, pp. 278-279.

224. H. KORNBILTH, «Précis of Knowledge and Its Place in Nature», *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 71 (2005) 401.

225. Cfr. M. KUSCH, «Belief, Kinds and Rules: A Comment on Kornblith's Knowledge and Its Place in Nature», *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 71 (2005) 411-419.

226. *Ibid.*, p. 411.

Kornblith. Sosa does acknowledge that we aspire for a *higher-level* knowledge. Hence, it shows that it is important to make a distinction between animal knowledge and human knowledge.

We do not deny the commonality that exists between a child's knowledge (or we can even mention an adult's knowledge in this regard) and an animal's knowledge (e.g. the tricks that a dog can learn), but it is important to have a proper understanding of what this «commonality» consists in. The common denominator between human knowledge and animal knowledge are those beliefs acquired which do not go beyond the sensory order. Classical authors call this sort of knowledge *sensible knowledge*, which captures external sense qualities. Hence, it does not penetrate the essence of things²²⁷.

Consider human activities in comparison with animal activities. In the case of sensory evaluations, animal activity belongs to the sensory order since they do not possess «spiritual power». Animal activity presents itself in their instinctive activity²²⁸. Such activity is said to be *conscious* and *unlearned*. Klubertanz makes a good point in saying that «there is no problem if we are careful not to humanize the brute»²²⁹. Hence, there is nothing wrong in admitting that *animals* have knowledge, but we must be careful in our understanding of what we mean by *animal knowledge*²³⁰. Klubertanz writes:

«The often quoted statement, “The sheep fears the wolf and flees”, is correct if we understand it correctly. We cannot suppose that the sheep fears the wolf as *wolf*—the sheep has no notion of wolf, for this is an intellectual understanding—. A chick does not follow its *mother*; at the right time it follows anything that moves, including the man who brings it its food; it might just as well follow a mechanical device...»²³¹.

Animals have knowledge of good and evil. Such knowledge is not to be attributed to the external sense but to the *estimative power*. Animals can capture the favorable or unfavorable conditions they are in. As indicated above, a sheep can capture the imminent danger when it sees a wolf.

227. Cfr. A. LLANO, *Gnoseology*, p. 122.

228. Comments Klubertanz: «The term “instinctive activity” can well be used to point out to behaviour that is conscious and unlearned. It is better not to use noun, “instinct”; there are very many controversies over the meaning of this word and disputes over what it refers to. The descriptive adjective “instinctive” can be used without entering into these controversies; in fact, in our explanation, we do not use the term “instinct” as a technical term at all; if it had to be defined, we would give it the vague meaning of “natural impulse”». P. KLUBERTANZ, *Habit and Virtues*, p. 36, footnote 28.

229. *Ibid.*, p. 36.

230. Cfr. *ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

231. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

Thanks to its estimative power, such an animal can evaluate the external reality with respect to its own subjectivity²³². Hence, «a sheep fears the wolf but not a dog». Similar situations happen also to small children. They also have a sense of danger which manifests their knowledge of good and evil. We call this *pure estimative*, but not *discursive estimative* (or cogitative sense)²³³. The cogitative sense may be described as «an internal sense which is rational by participation. Since it is a sense faculty (it acts by means of an organ) it grasps the particular; and since it is rational by participation it can “see” the universal essence realized in the particular thing»²³⁴. Hence, in the case of an adult, the estimative power is under rational judgment. His activity is not limited within the confinements of his nature thanks to his *reason*.

As regards reflective knowledge, we have seen that what distinguishes reflective knowledge from animal knowledge is the presence of epistemic perspectivism, but it seems to leave out other aspects which need considering. The advantage of our proposal is that intellectual virtues contemplate implicitly the personal effort of the agent in acquiring such virtues. In addition, if complemented with Zagzebskian virtues, it also underlines the epistemic responsibility of the knower to acquire such knowledge, not to mention the aspect of education, historical character make-up of the agent, cultural background, the epistemic community to which the agent belongs, etc., which are all contemplated in his effort to know that *p*. Hence, it provides a more complete account of knowledge.

In any case, if we ask the question, «Is epistemic perspectivism necessary for knowledge?» We will respond by saying that if *epistemic perspective* is not necessary for an apt belief then it is not necessary for knowledge. However, as we attempt to acquire «complex» knowledge, it will certainly be an advantage to have some awareness of our capacities and limitations in order to know that *p*. It does not mean that it is the only important factor that we need to consider as already explained above. Nonetheless, it is better to have epistemic perspective than not to have it. Take, for instance, the case of Magoo who has no idea of the reliability of his visual faculty. Surely, we would say that he is *not* in the *position to know* that *p*, and if he *appears* to acquire «knowledge» of *p*, we will automatically conclude that he is just lucky enough to get it right. Hence, we

232. «¿Cómo la oveja “sabe” que el lobo es peligroso y debe huir? Porque es capaz de valorar o estimar la realidad exterior con respecto a su propia subjetividad». J. A. CUADRADO, *Antropología filosófica*, p. 58.

233. «We speak of the *pure* estimative power in man when the power of sensory evaluation acts without rational guidance, but of the *discursive* estimation when the power of sensory evaluation acts under the guidance of reason...» P. KLUBERTANZ, *Habits and Virtues*, p. 39, footnote 30.

234. A. LLANO, *Gnoseology*, p. 125.

grant Sosa's epistemic perspectivism to have an important role in the acquisition of reflective knowledge, but not for animal knowledge.

On the other hand, Iranzo thinks that it is *not* necessary to make a distinction between animal and reflective knowledge, as Sosa would like to pretend. Iranzo maintains the importance of epistemic perspective to improve *pure reliabilism*, but he understands epistemic perspectivism differently from Sosa. He considers epistemic perspectivism to have two main components: epistemic assessments and epistemic explanations²³⁵. According to Iranzo, epistemic perspective does not necessarily require the participation of reflexive reason. No doubt, epistemic explanations can promote coherence of beliefs, but they do not guarantee the likelihood of obtaining true beliefs²³⁶. Thus, considering the fact that epistemic justification must be connected to truth, Iranzo thinks that epistemic assessments will suffice to overcome the limitations of pure reliabilism. If coherence provided by epistemic perspective leads to truth, comments Iranzo, then it is the *epistemic assessment* that is of more importance²³⁷. If Iranzo is correct, Sosa's distinction of animal knowledge and reflective knowledge will not be necessary. Iranzo admits a kind of knowledge that may be compared to Sosa's animal knowledge. Knowledge and justification, claims Iranzo, requires epistemic assessments only. So, Iranzo might say that knowledge acquired by children and animals does not involve *epistemic assessments* given that they are not capable of making an assessment of the reliability of a given faculty or process based on experience. On the other hand, Iranzo might explain that knowledge acquired by mature adult persons will certainly involve *epistemic assessments* hence they would have a tally concerning the ratio of success of the faculty in question based on experience. The difference in epistemic quality among the adult persons will depend upon the degree of precision of their epistemic assessments²³⁸. The question now is whether we can accept Iranzo's account of justification and knowledge.

The point of argument of Iranzo is that *epistemic assessments* will suffice to have justification and knowledge. Epistemic assessments can

235. «Las estimaciones establecen un porcentaje (aproximado, claro está) de éxito, esto es, un porcentaje de creencias verdaderas sobre el total de creencias obtenidas por la facultad o procedimiento en cuestión. Las explicaciones epistémicas se superponen a las estimaciones y proporcionan razones de por qué unas facultades o procedimientos son exitosos y otros no». V. Iranzo, «Justificación y perspectiva epistémica», pp. 27-28.

236. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 22.

237. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 35.

238. «En definitiva, pues, con las estimaciones epistémicas podemos encajar las intuiciones que resultan problemáticas para un fiabilismo puro..., y podemos también conservar la idea de “desarrollo epistémico”, esto es, de diferencias entre los sujetos en cuanto a su grado de sofisticación epistémica, sin necesidad de comprometernos con una distinción cualitativa entre conocimiento animal y conocimiento humano». *Ibid.*

also augment one's coherence of beliefs hence without involving reflexive reason in contrast to Sosa's claim. All that is needed is that the subject refines his evaluation concerning the reliability of the faculty in question as he acquires more experience so as to provide precision concerning his epistemic assessments. Considerations of other subfaculty will be helpful in the agent's *epistemic assessment*. Iranzo claims that it is not necessary to have reasons concerning as to why the faculty in question is reliable or has a good ratio of success²³⁹. It is enough to believe that one's faculty is reliable thanks to his epistemic assessment.

Beyond sensory order, it is not possible to speak of knowledge without the participation of the reasoning faculty. Earlier, we stated that sensory faculties must be coordinated by the reasoning faculty. Hence, it is difficult to see how one can build an adequate account of knowledge without considering the role of the faculty of reason. For instance, consider the role of experience in epistemic assessments maintained by Iranzo. Does epistemic assessment not involve the reasoning faculty? How can one make assessments concerning the reliability of a certain faculty without reasoning? Furthermore, it is undeniable that experience helps in the formation and sustenance of beliefs. Indeed, experience is helpful because when one acquires experience, one learns what he ought to do and what he ought not to do. In other words, the subject learns to make the necessary adjustments, which in this case, he learns to refine his epistemic assessments concerning his capacities and possibilities to obtain true beliefs given his acquired experience. Note that it is through the reasoning faculty that the epistemic agent learns what adjustments he needs to make so as to refine his epistemic assessments. It is not something that the agent does *unreflectively*. Consequently, we argue that building an account of justification and knowledge without considering the role of the faculty of reason is not plausible. We must take into account the role of the faculty of reason in knowledge and justification. Consequently, we agree with Sosa that it is necessary to make a distinction of knowledge in order to explain the difference in the epistemic quality between knowledge acquired by children/animals and knowledge acquired by mature adult persons.

Lastly, Iranzo claims that it is not clear that coherence of beliefs *via* reflection and perspective promotes true beliefs²⁴⁰. We can have a good epistemic assessment with a bad epistemic explanation. As such, Iranzo thinks that we can still have justification and knowledge in spite of having *poor* explanations as to the «whys» of the reliability of our cognitive faculties. Hence, reflexive reason is not necessary and it does not guarantee an increase in the amount of truth. There is no pretext, however, of infallibili-

239. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 34.

240. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 35.

ty in Sosa's account²⁴¹. Sosa does not admit *super*-justification and *super*-knowledge. For this reason, we can admit that the possibility of error is compatible with Sosa's epistemic perspectivism. As we have seen earlier, coherence of beliefs is acquired by reasoning well. No doubt, one can admit that coherence must be truth-conducive. Any epistemic agent who can defend his beliefs in the arena of reflection would certainly have a better chance of possessing true beliefs than false beliefs. As Sosa would say, to defend one's belief is to be «able to view oneself as meeting every condition that one recognizes as required in order then really to know; or, alternatively and to the same effect, one must be able to exclude justifiedly any possibility one thinks incompatible with one's then knowing»²⁴². It is certain that we prefer to believe *reflectively* than *unreflectively*.

To end our discussion regarding the viability of Sosa's animal and reflective knowledge, we conclude that it is necessary to make the distinction between animal and reflective knowledge. It highlights the difference between what small children and animals can know from that of mature adult persons. The difference between them is the use of the faculty of reason in acquiring knowledge. This provides emphasis that high epistemic quality in knowledge necessitates the involvement of the reasoning faculty. We reject «animal knowledge» because it creates confusion. Either it will lead to *humanizing* the brutes or it may lead to *reducing* human knowledge to animal knowledge. Either way would be a mistake. Regardless of the inability of a child to acquire «reflective» knowledge, the child's knowledge is still «human knowledge» although *unreflective*. It is not just a question of semantics that we reject Sosa's animal knowledge, but above all, we reject it because there is an «ontological» difference between a child and an animal. A child is a «rational being» in the making whereas an animal is not. We suggest that we distinguish human knowledge into *unreflective* and *reflective knowledge* to show the important role of the *reasoning faculty* in knowledge. Thus, there is continuity –not a separation– between *unreflective* and *reflective knowledge* in which *unreflective* knowledge prepares the way for reflective knowledge. A simple way to describe the distinction is to admit that one may acquire knowledge either without reasoning or with reasoning.

As for reflective knowledge, we accept that epistemic perspectivism does have an important part to play in the acquisition of knowledge. Comprehensive coherence does help. As Sosa would say, «we would prefer that our minds not house a clutter of mere facts sitting there loose from one another»²⁴³. What we want is to have a set of beliefs that will very well

241. See Part II, Section 1.2.1.

242. E. SOSA, «Two False Dichotomies» [Online].

243. E. SOSA, «Human Knowledge, Animal and Reflective», p. 194.

hang together. As argued before, the advantage of epistemic perspectivism is that it puts *S* in touch with the reality in a more effective way hence a source of certainty. However, it is not the only important factor to consider. If we admit that it is the *person* «who knows» and that it is the *person* who is the «seat of justification», then other factors that may influence a person in his acquisition of knowledge need to be considered. Aside from the intellectual virtues, the moral virtues and the personal efforts that *S* employs to acquire these virtues, factors such as history, geography, education, cultural, social, religion, natural endowments, and other relevant factors will certainly influence *S* in his acquisition of knowledge²⁴⁴.

We think that our suggestion continues to be in keeping with contemporary thinking and it will accommodate nicely the knowledge that a child and an adult possess; hence providing us with an adequate account of knowledge. We conclude that for rational beings, it is only proper to speak of «human knowledge», a kind of knowledge that may be *unreflective* or *reflective*.

2.3. A Proposed Account of Knowledge

In our proposed account of knowledge, we shall focus our attention on the two distinct levels that we suggested earlier: the unreflective and the reflective knowledge. We shall provide an adequate explication of these two distinctions of knowledge. In doing so, we shall make use of our distinction of cognitive faculties and intellectual virtues to explain *unreflective* and *reflective* knowledge respectively²⁴⁵. It is important to stress that such distinction will not follow Sosa's view in its entirety. Of course, there will be aspects of Sosa's view, which we will integrate in our proposal. We shall make some adjustments with the intent of providing a more adequate account of knowledge. We think that this is only possible if we include some aspects from Zagzebski's account in our new version. This will provide us with a better way of dealing with knowledge of «high-level», which is not possible with Sosa's account. In the end, our proposed account will be able to satisfy both the «low end» and the «high end» of knowledge.

Unreflective and reflective knowledge parallel the classical distinction of sense knowledge and intellectual knowledge, which, in the final analysis, is a distinction between knowledge «without reasoning» and «with reasoning» respectively. However, it is worth pointing out that there

244. Cfr. R. CORAZÓN, *Filosofía del conocimiento*, pp. 92-93. See also W. J. WOOD, *Epistemology*, pp. 51-52.

245. See Part II, Section 3.

is «a long list of philosophers [who] have been unwilling or at least hesitant, to ascribe knowledge to states that engage the senses without significant contribution from the intellect. This is not to deny that there can be simple beliefs based on perception, such as «This is a white piece of paper», which are good enough to be states of knowing, but the dominant view in philosophical history has been that such states are states of knowledge only if they are based on *more* than sensory data»²⁴⁶. It is only through our reasoning faculty that we *know*. One does not know when one is asleep despite the fact that one may feel the coldness or the warmth of the air²⁴⁷. For instance, when we say that «this paper is white», are we not saying the *truth* that the paper is white? In the classical sense, when one captures the conformity of truth, the operation of the intellect is duly implied²⁴⁸. As we can see, this is not in accord with the contemporary thinking since the majority of contemporary philosophers do think that perceptual beliefs are cases of knowledge. It is for this reason that they claim that knowledge of small children and animals are *true knowledge* in spite of the fact that it is not *knowledge of the truth*.

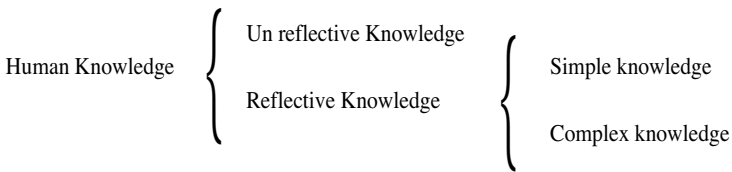
Nonetheless, we think that there are positive insights we can draw from the classical distinction of sense knowledge and intellectual knowledge such as the role of sense faculties and reasoning faculty in the acquisition of knowledge. In addition, it will provide us with a better understanding as regards the relation between *unreflective* and *reflective* knowledge by considering the continuity that exists between sense knowledge and intellectual knowledge. In the same manner that intellectual knowledge depends on sense knowledge, we can also say that *reflective knowledge* depends on *unreflective knowledge*. In addition, intellectual knowledge puts emphasis on the active role of the epistemic agent in knowing. We receive information from our sensory faculties, but it is the *person* who does the *knowing* and does so through his *reasoning faculty*. Intellectual knowledge underlines the radical difference between human knowledge and animal knowledge. Hence, it helps to avoid a «reductionist» view of human knowledge. In this section, we shall first consider the role of cognitive faculties and thereafter, we shall examine the role of intellectual virtues in knowledge. Lastly, we shall end this section with our proposed account of knowledge. As we have seen earlier, the role of cognitive faculties pertains to knowledge of the *unreflective* and the role of intellectual virtues pertains to knowledge of the *reflective*. We shall argue that the

246. L. ZAGZEBSKI, *Virtues of the Mind*, p. 278.

247. «La persona... sólo conoce mediante su inteligencia... el hombre no conoce nada cuando está dormido, aunque sienta entonces frío o calor. Por esta razón sólo es conocimiento para la persona su conocimiento intelectual». J. A. GONZÁLEZ, *Teoría del conocimiento humano*, EUNSA, Pamplona 1998, p. 18.

248. Cfr. A. LLANO, *Gnoseology*, p. 37.

sort of knowledge that is proper to us *humans* is what we may call *human knowledge*, which admits two levels of knowledge: the *unreflective* knowledge and the *reflective* knowledge. Given that our reasoning faculty can always «know» more, we admit that knowledge comes in degrees. It is true that no human being possesses *absolute knowledge*, but that is not to say that one cannot *advance* in knowledge. Indeed, there is a correlation between one's knowledge and one's good intellectual character. The more intellectually virtuous a person is, the more he will be in the position to know *p* hence such person can advance more in his knowledge of *p*. The account of knowledge that we are suggesting can be shown as follows:



2.3.1. *Faculties and Unreflective Knowledge*

In our present discussion, we shall focus our attention on the low end of knowledge. A typical example that falls under this category is that knowledge of small children and animals. However, when we speak of this sort of knowledge, what exactly do we mean? What is involved in acquiring knowledge at the low end of the scale? Sosa tells us that *unreflective* knowledge is acquired through the exercise of one's cognitive faculties. Hence, perceptual beliefs and memory beliefs would be considered as paradigms of this sort of knowledge. «[S]uch beliefs are formed in an unconscious manner without the agency of the agent»²⁴⁹, comments Zagzebski. To put it in another way, unreflective knowledge is acquired by the knower without the intervention of the faculty of reason. Thus, the passive nature of the agent is duly implied. As argued earlier, it is only in this sense that we can admit the commonality of knowledge between small children and animals; otherwise, it will be difficult to sustain such commonality if small children were to acquire unreflective knowledge through their reasoning faculty, even if only a minimal amount of reasoning were involved. As such, acquiring unreflective knowledge through the use of cognitive faculties entails the use of external senses and internal senses only. In short, unreflective knowledge is acquired *via* sense faculties (or cognitive sensibles). In the classical sense, one may describe such knowledge as sense knowledge, which –traditionally speaking– was not considered as true

249. L. ZAGZEBSKI, *Virtues of the Mind*, p. 278.

knowledge²⁵⁰. However, in the contemporary context, philosophers are not hesitant to think of perceptual beliefs as cases of knowledge. Given that sense faculties do put us in contact with reality, beliefs arising from such faculties are regarded as cases of true knowledge²⁵¹. It is undeniable that sense faculties do not bring about knowledge of the truth, but they can certainly provide us with knowledge since knowledge begins with sense faculties.

What we need to highlight is that unreflective knowledge is essential to human knowledge. It is not possible to provide a complete account of human knowledge without its consideration. The use of sense faculties makes it possible to acquire reflective knowledge. Thus, Sosa and Goldman are correct in saying that beliefs derive from one's cognitive faculties. We say that there is a white board in front of us because we can *see* that there is. Thanks to our faculty of sight, it is possible for us to have such beliefs²⁵². The problem with Sosa and Goldman's view is the lack of demarcation regarding the relevant cognitive faculties involved in knowing. Basically, both admit that any faculty «beneath the skin» may be considered as cognitive faculties as long as they are truth-conducive. In addition, there is no mention of how such cognitive faculties are interrelated. It is important to consider these aspects in order to understand unreflective knowledge adequately²⁵³.

Let us now examine the role of sense faculties in the acquisition of unreflective knowledge. The first thing to notice about sense faculties is that they are not virtues; hence, these faculties are not normative. They function accordingly without normativity. Faculties are innate powers which we are endowed with. We need not determine the relevant faculties for knowing since our very own nature has already determined that for us. Thus, the relevant faculties for unreflective knowledge are as follows:

250. This is the main reason why we think that it is more appropriate to use Sosa's «unreflective knowledge» instead of using «sense knowledge» to describe that the knowledge that we acquire through our sense faculties are cases of true knowledge. Knowledge, strictly speaking, is acquired when the faculty of the intellect is involved, which in classical term is referred to as «intellectual knowledge».

251. Sense knowledge is said to be aspectual because our sensory faculties can only capture aspects of reality. Nevertheless, we consider sense knowledge as *true knowledge* insofar as our sensory faculties connect us to the world. If we were to have another *faculty*, then it is obvious that we would have another way of knowing a different aspect of reality depending on what this added *faculty* can provide us. Cfr. R. CORAZÓN, *Filosofía del conocimiento*, pp. 71-72.

252. «Como el conocimiento es la apertura y aprehensión de la realidad por parte del sujeto, es preciso que haya un punto de encuentro entre la realidad y el sujeto que conoce. Todo conocimiento (sensitivo o intelectual) debe partir de la sensibilidad externa... Pues bien, el punto de contacto entre la realidad material y el sujeto cognoscente se da en los sentidos externos». J. A. CUADRADO, *Antropología filosófica*, p. 53.

253. See Part II, Section 3.1.

touch, taste, smell, hearing, sight, common sense, imagination, memory and cogitation; of course, we shall reserve the faculty of intellect for reflective knowledge. We need to carry out different operations which entail different faculties to connect us with the world since one single faculty will not suffice to do it. As we have seen earlier, each faculty performs a certain operation which is distinct from the other faculties. As such, the different faculties that we have must be unified and interrelated in order to acquire unreflective knowledge. Let us see how our external senses can work for us. Aristotle writes:

«...we can say that a sense is what has the power of receiving into itself the sensible forms of things without the matter, in the way in which a piece of wax takes on the impress of a signet-ring without the iron or gold»²⁵⁴.

As indicated above, our external senses receive the sensible forms of things. Hence, to sense is to know and to know is to know something. This «something» is the *object* captured by the external sense, which is the sensible form. In the act of sensing, the object is given insofar as it is captured by the particular sense in question. Hence, the relation between the *act-object* does not admit divorce²⁵⁵. Our external senses are actualized if sensible things are present. In other words, our external senses receive a certain stimulus and react to such stimulation. Thus, we can say that such faculties are not *totally* passive. When sensible forms are received by these faculties, a transition from potency to act takes place. We say that we *see* when there is light, we *hear* when there is a sound, etc., but to see implies seeing and to hear implies hearing. If knowledge is an immanent operation, as we admit earlier, then it follows that the act of sensing is also an immanent operation²⁵⁶. External senses provide us with knowledge of the singulars. We only see when there is something to see, we only hear when there is something to hear, etc. Aquinas points out:

«Now our soul possesses two cognitive powers; one is the act of a corporeal organ, which naturally knows things existing in individual matter; hence sense knows only the singular. But there is another kind of cognitive power in the soul, called the intellect...»²⁵⁷.

Aside from the fact that external senses capture individual things, external senses only «know» sensible things if they are *present*. As mentioned already, it is not possible to see if there is nothing to see or to hear

254. ARISTOTLE, *On the Soul*, II, 12, 424a 12-21.

255. Cfr. J. F. SELLÉS, *Curso breve de teoría del conocimiento*, p. 60.

256. Cfr. R. CORAZÓN, *Filosofía del conocimiento*, p. 63.

257. *S. Th.*, I, q. 12, a. 4.

if there is nothing to hear. If our external senses receive the sensible forms of things, it is only possible to do so because physical objects are present. Since external senses are forms of the organs which receive the stimulus, *sensation* then implies a relation between «form and form» and not «material and form»²⁵⁸. This makes sense since a sensible faculty is not reduced to its organ, but has the capacity to perform a certain operation²⁵⁹. Finally, our external senses do not trick us. There is conformity between the sensible thing and what our external senses grasp about the sensible thing. Of course, we are not affirming that our external senses *know* such conformity. Sense faculties do not *know* the conformity because it is *not reflexive*²⁶⁰. Hence, we grant Sosa for claiming that unreflective knowledge is a matter of reliably being connected to the world since it is undeniable that sense faculties do put us in touch with reality. Our external senses track the truth²⁶¹. What our external senses have to report is not right by accident.

Despite the importance of external senses in knowledge insofar as it puts us in contact with reality, we realize that external senses are not enough to explain unreflective knowledge. External senses only capture a certain aspect of reality according to its capacity. They do not capture the thing itself but only a certain aspect of it such as colours, sounds, smell, etc. This forces us to go beyond what our external senses can grasp. We also need to rely on our internal senses which conserve and coordinate those sensations captured by our external senses. Thanks to our internal senses, we are not only capable of grasping external present realities, but also external «absent» realities. Hence, internal senses enable us to search for these *absent* realities in a knowing way²⁶². Sensations captured by our external senses are unified in the subject, which enables the subject to capture the reality as a whole. Since sensations are unified in the subject that grasps the reality, there is an interrelation between our sense faculties for which some faculties are coordinators of other *inferior* faculties. Aquinas nicely explains the interrelation and coordination of our sense faculties, comments Llano:

258. Cfr. R. CORAZÓN, *Filosofía del conocimiento*, p. 64.

259. Cfr. J. F. SELLES, *Curso breve de teoría del conocimiento*, p. 60. See also ARISTOTLE, *On the Soul*, II, 12, 424a 24-28.

260. Cfr. A. LLANO, *Gnoseology*, p. 33 «In both sense knowledge and in simple apprehension there is conformity between the knowing faculty and the thing». *Ibid.*, p. 34.

261. «In a normal person proper perception is habitual, and sense error is rare. The senses, of themselves, are always truth. They can only make mistakes per *accidens* about common sensibles, and then only the organic malfunction in regard to proper sensibles». *De Veritate*, q. 1, a. 11. Cited by A. LLANO, *Gnoseology*, p. 78.

262. Cfr. E. MOROS and R. UMBERS, «Distinguishing Virtues from Faculties in Virtue Epistemology», p. 64.

«Aquinas... maintained that repeated sensations receive a first sense structuring in the perception of the *common sense*, which integrates the data brought by the *external sense* (*common* and *proper* sensibles). This perception is further integrated and structured by the imagination and the memory: from many sensations the *image* is formed, from many images the *memory*. Finally, the height of sense perception takes place through the cogitative sense, which produces an *experience*, the act of comparatively apprehending singular perceptions received in memory»²⁶³.

The interrelation and coordination of sense faculties happens within the subject. This shows that the *subject* who possesses the faculties is the final coordinator of all. Faculties will function accordingly in virtue of their capacities, but we need a *subject* who has to govern these faculties²⁶⁴. Of course, we cannot limit ourselves in our consideration of sense faculties to explain *human knowledge* fully. We still have yet to explain the role of the faculty of reason. Hence, we now turn to our reflective knowledge.

Before we discuss reflective knowledge, it is important to see the continuity between *unreflective* and reflective knowledge. We can understand such continuity if we consider the link between sense knowledge and intellectual knowledge. Aquinas writes:

«In our knowledge there are two things to be considered. First, that intellectual knowledge in some degree arises from sensible knowledge: and, because sense has singular and individual things for its object, and intellect has the universal for its object, it follows that our knowledge of the former comes before our knowledge of the latter... knowledge of the singular and individual is prior, as regards us, to the knowledge of the universal; as sensible knowledge is prior to intellectual knowledge»²⁶⁵.

As indicated above, it makes sense to claim that sensible knowledge is prior to intellectual knowledge since our faculty of reason has to rely on the information provided by our sense faculties. Sensible knowledge is important since intellectual knowledge begins with sensible knowledge.

2.3.2. *Virtues and Reflective Knowledge*

Sosa tells us that reflective knowledge is acquired *via* cognitive faculties with epistemic perspective. To place our first order beliefs in epis-

263. A. LLANO, *Gnoseology*, p. 123.

264. «... we need a *subject* who... is the final coordinator of these faculties... It is the rational (or irrational) agent who freely governs her cognitive faculties as the head of that hierarchy, subject, of course, to the constraints and possibilities of her cognitive powers». E. MOROS and R. UMBERS, *Distinguishing Virtues from Faculties in Virtue Epistemology*, pp. 64-65.

265. *S. Th.*, I, q. 85, a. 3.

temic perspective entails that we will have a reason to think that such beliefs are true. The truth of our beliefs is a just consequence of the reliability of the faculty that produces them for which we are aware. The internal coherence of our beliefs requires the *operation of reason*. Thus, Sosa is right for maintaining that reflective knowledge requires the intervention of the faculty of reason, which resembles the intellectual knowledge viewed by classical authors. We realize that our sensory faculties will not bring us far. We need to resort to our faculty of reason to make sense of whatever our sensory faculties have to report. This shows that there is continuity between the faculty of reason and the sensory faculties. From *senses to reason*, we say that our sensory faculties prepare the way for the faculty of reason in order to capture the sensible thing itself thanks to the information they provide²⁶⁶. Our faculty of reason provides us with knowledge of the nature of sensible things. Thus, we acquire «knowledge of the truth» since our faculty of reason *knows* the conformity between our knowing faculties and the sensible thing itself. This is possible because such faculty is reflexive. From *reason to senses*, we can say that the faculty of reason guides the sensory faculties in order to acquire «knowledge of the singulars»²⁶⁷. We think that it is central to understand the continuity between the sensory faculties and the faculty of reason because it also underlines the continuity between our unreflective knowledge and reflective knowledge. As we can see, there are two things that our faculty of reason does. First, it guides our sensory faculties and second, it provides us with knowledge of the truth. The key idea to bear in mind in reflective knowledge is the role of our faculty of reason in intellectual virtues and consequently, in knowledge.

In unreflective knowledge, we admit that it is based on sensory faculties without the agency of the agent. In other words, it does not require the agent to decide how to make use of his sensory faculties. It is for this reason that we admit that small children and animals have *unreflective knowledge*. This is the view of Sosa and his companions. However, we realize that such a view is not enough since we also need to consider the *proper use* that the agent may choose to make of his cognitive faculties. Sosa admits that «no human blessed with reason has *merely* animal knowledge»²⁶⁸. The moment that we admit the active role of the agent in his knowing, we are forced to consider his reasoning faculty and his decisions or choices in using his cognitive faculties. It follows that it is possible for the agent to use his cognitive faculties properly or improperly. This is how intellectual virtues are ingrained in the epistemic agent. The moment that

266. «... the proper of human intellect is material being known by the senses and present to the intellect through immaterial species». A. LLANO, *Gnoseology*, p. 133.

267. Cfr. *De Veritate*, q. 10, a. 5. Cited by A. LLANO, *Gnoseology*, p. 126.

268. E. SOSA, «Virtue Perspectivism», p. 30.

the epistemic agent puts to use his cognitive faculties in the virtuous manner, he is said to be on his way to becoming an intellectually virtuous agent. Virtues can make us a better cognitive agent²⁶⁹. He can bootstrap his unreflective knowledge to reflective knowledge thanks to the virtuous use of his reasoning faculty, guiding the rest of his sensory faculties in obtaining knowledge of the truth.

Is it necessary to have intellectual virtues in knowing? We have already shown that unreflective knowledge does not require the agent to be intellectually virtuous, but we admit that it is undeniably necessary for reflective knowledge. The definition of knowledge given by Moros and Umbers will show that it is. We think that a minimal amount of *virtuousness* in the use of one's cognitive faculties is necessary in order to have *reflective knowledge of p* since an improper use of one's cognitive faculties will lead us to error. As it happens, no one would say that intellectual vices would help us in the pursuit of truth. Moros and Umbers define knowledge thus:

«*S* knows *p* if, and only if, *S* forms the belief *p* from an epistemically virtuous use of *S*'s cognitive faculties»²⁷⁰.

A faculty is an operative power that produces a certain effect whereas a virtue is a disposition that leads the agent to achieve such an effect. Virtues lead *S* to produce the ability of the faculty in question in a reliable way. If *S* is devoid of intellectual virtues, then the success component in knowing that *p* will be minimal and therefore, one will be prone to having «knowledge of *p*» in an *accidental way*. The stable disposition of the subject is not something that just comes about unexpectedly; rather, it is something that the knowing subject acquires through the successful repetition of applying one's faculties in the acquisition of reflective knowledge. If «the true and the false are not in things but in the mind»²⁷¹, then it is central that the agent learns to use his reasoning faculty and to guide his sensory faculties in a virtuous manner. If one's cognitive faculties are properly employed in his knowing that *p*, then one becomes more reliable in knowing that *p* insofar as one becomes a more *intellectually virtuous* agent. The virtuous use of our reasoning faculty is what provides reliability of our cognitive faculties. If the reasoning faculty is in the «driver's seat», so to speak, which directs the rest of our cognitive faculties then the reasoning faculty must learn *how* to direct the rest of the cognitive faculties properly. In consequence, knowledge is acquired through the successful and proper use of one's cognitive faculties.

269. E. MOROS and R. UMBERS, «Distinguishing Virtues from Faculties in Virtue Epistemology», p. 69.

270. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

271. A. LLANO, *Gnoseology*, p. 33. Cfr. ARISTOTLE, *Metaphysics*, V, 4, 1027b 25-28.

Aquinas writes:

«For knowledge is regulated according as the thing known is in the knower. But the thing known is in the knower according to the mode of the knower. Hence the knowledge of every knower is ruled according to its own nature»²⁷².

According to our nature, we are endowed with different cognitive faculties in order to connect us with the world. Each of our faculty performs its task in order to grasp a certain aspect of reality. The different aspects captured by our cognitive faculties are unified in the person who does the knowing. Thanks to his reasoning faculty, he makes something out of what our sensory faculties provide and *sees* it as a complete picture. Of course, our reasoning faculty has the power to transcend the information that our sensory faculties provide. For this, Aristotle reminds us that our «soul is in a way all existing things»²⁷³. From what Aquinas is telling us, it shows that sensory faculties and reasoning faculty are indispensable in human knowledge. Knowledge will not be possible without cognitive faculties. Likewise, it is equally important to note that without the person who does the knowing, knowledge will not be possible either, be it unreflective or reflective knowledge²⁷⁴. As such, a computer –which is capable of providing ample information and can calculate any mathematical problems in a matter of seconds, faster than any capable person– can never be compared to any human person, be it on the intellectual level or on the sensory level, precisely because a human person is capable of knowledge whereas computers are *not*²⁷⁵. The point to make is that it is the person who possesses intellectual virtues and knowledge. For this reason, he must put efforts not only into acquiring intellectual virtues, but also in employing such intellectual virtues as to acquire *reflective knowledge*. An anthropological conception of knowledge maintains that «neither the senses nor the intellect know, but rather that man knows by means of these faculties»²⁷⁶. Moros and Umbers are right in saying that the consideration of the role of cognitive faculties in knowledge should never be isolated from the subject²⁷⁷. Indeed the subject must satisfy certain condi-

272. *S. Th.*, I, q. 12, a. 4.

273. ARISTOTLE, *On the Soul*, III, 8, 431b 21.

274. «...sin alguien que conozca, sin personas, no hay conocimiento en *sentido estricto*, por muchas información que se procese». J. A. GONZÁLEZ, *Teoría del conocimiento humano*, p. 19.

275. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 21.

276. A. LLANO, *Gnoseology*, p. 38.

277. Cfr. E. MOROS and R. UMBERS, «Distinguishing Virtues and Faculties in Virtue Epistemology», p. 78.

tions in order to acquire intellectual virtues and, in turn, through the exercise of one's intellectual virtues will acquire knowledge.

Knowledge comes in degrees. One thing is to acquire reflective knowledge, but another thing is to *advance* in one's reflective knowledge. It is undeniable that we can always know more²⁷⁸. No doubt we have *no* absolute knowledge hence our reasoning faculty is not absolutely infinite, but that is not to say that it is not *operatively infinite*²⁷⁹. We can never exhaust our capacity to know. We believe that it is worth considering this phenomenon, which is an essential part of our knowledge of knowledge. There are people who can *know* more than others can. It is undeniable that there is a difference of epistemic quality in the knowledge acquired by a person who *knows* more such as in the field of science, philosophy, art, etc., as compared to another person who does not. We suggest that we describe the differences in the degrees of knowledge acquired by these persons as *complex* and *simple* knowledge respectively. Obviously, complex knowledge will require more effort on the part of the agent in order to be proficient in such fields. The question is what are the conditions involved in acquiring complex knowledge and simple knowledge.

Perhaps, we may describe simple knowledge as beliefs deriving from the virtuous use of one's cognitive faculties in a minimal degree. In other words, to acquire simple knowledge, one must be minimally intellectually virtuous and must minimally use his reasoning faculty in a coherent way. This is based on the assumption that knowledge depends upon the epistemic virtuousness of the person who knows. It is a given fact that there are people who are *less* intellectually virtuous than others are. Thus, they are only capable of knowing matters that are cases of simple knowledge. This implies a minimal amount of effort on the part of the person in order to know that *p*. In any case, simple knowledge is still preferable than unreflective knowledge since small children and animals have no awareness of their knowledge. They *know* without *knowing*. They are not *aware* of what they know. On the other hand, simple knowledge implies an awareness of the information provided by sensory faculties as opposed to unreflective knowledge where such awareness is not possible²⁸⁰. We may say that Sosa's reflective knowledge (*via* cognitive faculties with epistemic

278. Cfr. ARISTOTLE, *On the Soul*, III, 5, 430a 14-15.

279. Cfr. J. A. GONZÁLEZ, *Teoría del conocimiento humano*, p. 45.

280. González claims that the first act of the human intelligence is the «conscience» (we think that we can also use the word «awareness» to imply the same thing). González writes, «El primer acto de la inteligencia humana es la conciencia. La conciencia es el enterarse de algo: de que llueve, de que ahí delante hay una silla, de que me duele la muela o de que alguien me pregunta la hora. Conciencia, por tanto, llamamos aquí a la captación de información, al enterarse de algo, a la recepción de una noticia». *Ibid.*, p. 23.

perspective) can be considered as *simple knowledge*. To borrow Sosa's words, simple knowledge is said to be as follows:

«[Simple] knowledge requires not only internal justification or coherence or rationality, but also external warrant or aptness. We must be *both* in good internal order *and* in appropriate relation to the external world»²⁸¹.

Complex knowledge may be regarded as a high-grade knowledge, understood in a somewhat similar way to Zagzebski's account of knowledge²⁸². Hence, it demands more effort on the part of the agent in order to acquire such knowledge. This entails that the agent must exercise his intellectual virtues to a higher degree if he is to be successful in obtaining this sort of knowledge, such as knowledge of science, philosophy, arts, etc. Aside from Sosean virtues, Zagzebskian virtues would certainly be an asset (virtues of *open-mindedness*, *intellectual humility*, etc.²⁸³). Knowledge entails *personal freedom*. We have seen that our cognitive faculties depend upon how the agent decides to make use of them. Hence, we can say that cognitive faculties are subject to our personal freedom. We decide not only how to make use of our cognitive faculties, but we also decide what sort of knowledge we would like to acquire and how to go about acquiring it. We need to be epistemically responsible in order to put those necessary means that will effectively lead us to obtain our target knowledge. In this sense, Zagzebski is right in affirming that one needs to be properly motivated²⁸⁴. To be properly motivated entails that one will guide his actions in the pursuit of acquiring the target knowledge. He will evidently employ his intellectual virtues and he will fulfill his duty both morally and intellectually so as to be successful in attaining his goal. Such a person will try to be *open-minded*, to be *conscientious*, etc. aside from reasoning well and using his cognitive faculties in a proper manner. In short, one will proceed in a way that will manifest that he is a *person with phronesis*. Of course, we should not disregard other factors such as: culture, education, community, family, religion, natural endowments, etc., which undoubtedly may contribute to our knowledge of complex matters. Moros and Umbers comment:

281. E. SOSA, «Reflective Knowledge in the Best Circles», p. 284.

282. «The definition of knowledge I have given is fairly rigorous. It requires the knower to have an intellectually virtuous motivation in the disposition to desire truth, and this disposition must give rise to conscious and voluntary acts in the process leading up to the acquisition of true belief... and the knower must successfully reach the truth through the operation of this motivation and those acts. Such a definition has an advantage on the high end of knowledge...» L. ZAGZEBSKI, *Virtues of the Mind*, p. 273.

283. Cfr. *ibid.*, p. 114.

284. See Part II, Section 2.3.1.

«... moral virtues can very well aid somebody in the exercise of gathering knowledge (being conscientious, paying attention in class, etc.), but the knowing act itself pertains to the cognitive order and not to the volitional order of the will or emotions with which it might be in association and by which it may be influenced»²⁸⁵.

We can clearly appreciate the importance of prudence in knowledge. A prudent person knows how much evidence is needed in order to support his beliefs, he knows how to conduct his investigations so as to attain his objectives, he knows in a given situation whether it is better to be open-minded to the ideas of others or to persevere in one's beliefs, etc.²⁸⁶. Of course, prudence requires experience. Aristotle tells us that prudence is not found in young people²⁸⁷. Finally, we have seen earlier that it is not possible to be prudent without being morally virtuous hence it follows that moral virtues do help in one's acquisition of complex knowledge. Indeed, «we cannot be intelligent without being good»²⁸⁸.

To end our discussion, we note in passing that the effort of acquiring complex knowledge will eventually lead *S* into acquiring *wisdom*, which can be considered as the perfection of human knowledge since it enables *S* to orient himself towards his ultimate end²⁸⁹. Aquinas writes:

«[W]isdom, which considers the highest causes... it rightly judges all things and sets them in order, because there can be no perfect and universal judgment that is not based on the first causes»²⁹⁰.

In acquiring wisdom, which has to do with speculative truths such as those dealing with God's nature, we are enabled to know that we depend on God and consequently, that our ultimate end is God. Hence, it seeks knowledge of ultimate significance²⁹¹. As such, Aquinas considers *wisdom* to be of the highest place²⁹².

285. E. MOROS and R. UMBERS, «Distinguishing Virtues from Faculties in Virtue Epistemology», p. 71.

286. Zagzebski provides a detailed explication as regards her proposal on the function of phronesis. Cfr. L. ZAGZEBSKI, *Virtues of the Mind*, pp. 219-231.

287. Cfr. ARISTOTLE, *Nicomachean Ethics*, VI, 8, 1142a 21.

288. *Ibid.*, VI, 12, 1144a 36.

289. «La sabiduría es la perfección del conocimiento humano, pues hace que el hombre pueda vivir como tal, es decir, orientándose hacia la trascendencia y evitando lo que le aparte de su fin último». R. CORAZÓN, *Filosofía del conocimiento*, p. 107.

290. *S. Th.*, I-II, q. 57, a. 2.

291. Cfr. R. CORAZÓN, *Filosofía del conocimiento*, p. 107. See also W. J. WOOD, *Epistemology*, pp. 66-70.

292. «...that science depends on understanding as on a virtue of higher degree: and both of these depend on wisdom as obtaining the highest place, and containing beneath itself both understanding, and science, by judging both of the conclusions of science, and of the principles on which they are based». *S. Th.*, I-II, q. 57, a. 2.

2.3.3. *Knowledge, a New Perspective*

The important insight we can draw from Sosa's account of knowledge is his distinction of animal knowledge and reflective knowledge. We agree that we must recognize the differences in epistemic quality that exist between the knowledge acquired by small children and mature adult persons. To recognize such distinction entails that we must be able to provide an account of knowledge that will both accommodate the low-end and the high-end of the scale which knowledge admits. Thus, we suggest *unreflective knowledge* and *reflective knowledge*. The description we provided for both sorts of knowledge fits nicely with our distinction of cognitive faculties and intellectual virtues. Unreflective knowledge is that of beliefs acquired through the exercise of cognitive faculties and reflective knowledge is that of beliefs acquired through the exercise of intellectual virtues. As we can see, our account of knowledge satisfies the positive insights of foundationalism, coherentism and reliabilism. We satisfy the foundationalist's view since our knowledge derived its foundation from our cognitive faculties. We meet the coherentist's condition since by reasoning well, our minds are not a clutter of mere facts, Sosa would say. Lastly, we keep the reliabilist's insight since our cognitive faculties do connect us with the world reliably. Within reflective knowledge, we distinguish simple knowledge and complex knowledge. We were able to integrate Sosa's epistemic perspective in our simple knowledge and we were able to integrate Zagzebski's virtues in our complex knowledge. No doubt Zagzebskian virtues do play an important role in acquiring complex knowledge and eventually, in acquiring wisdom. Indeed, it is a sort of knowledge which we all aspire to have.

It is worth noting that *unreflective knowledge* is said to be high on certainty as a result of the conformity between reality and what is grasped by our sensory faculties about the reality. Our sensory faculties do not play tricks on us. They provide us information accordingly based on their proper object. Nonetheless, since sensory faculties do not «know» such conformity, *unreflective knowledge* is low on cognitive value. Zagzebski comments:

«Compared to the high-grade beliefs in the sciences, philosophy, or the arts, the best perceptual beliefs are generally regarded as high on the scale of certainty, even if low on the scale of cognitive value»²⁹³.

Accordingly, *reflective knowledge* will be high on cognitive value mainly because it underlines the active role of the epistemic agent. That

293. L. ZAGZEBSKI, *Virtues of the Mind*, p. 279.

not only does the agent *know* the conformity between the knowing faculties and the sensible thing, but it also emphasizes the personal effort of the epistemic agent in his epistemic inquiry most especially if we are considering *complex knowledge*. As stated, the agent has to employ his intellectual virtues and if complemented with Zagzebskian virtues, he will be in a better position to acquire knowledge of the highest degree. Hence, Sosa does have a point in saying that «we humans, especially those of us who are philosophical or at least reflective, aspire to higher knowledge»²⁹⁴. We could say that our aspiration to a higher knowledge is in accord with our goal to happiness²⁹⁵. To echo the words of Aristotle, we are beings who will always *desire to know* since what lies beyond knowledge is *eudaimonia*²⁹⁶.

3. CONCLUSIONS

The definition of knowledge as *JTB* dates back from Plato's *Theaetetus*, according to which knowledge was considered as *true belief with an account*. This means that a true belief must be supported by reasons in order to qualify as knowledge. Thus, what has become to be the common understanding of justification was to provide argumentative reasons in favor of a belief to justify it. Sosa criticizes this way of looking at justification because of vicious circularity. He believes that the justification of beliefs is possible without argumentative reasons. Sosa suggests the doctrine of *supervenience*, a thesis that maintains that evaluative properties must supervene on non-evaluative properties. A belief then is justified in virtue of its non-evaluative properties such as perception, or memory, or from any reliable cognitive faculty. Sosa proposes an account of justification based on cognitive faculties and epistemic perspectivism. Hence, an apt belief derives from the exercise of one's cognitive faculties while a justified belief derives from the epistemic perspective of the subject.

Aptness explains the positive epistemic status of perceptual beliefs. It provides us with a way to explain how beliefs acquired by small children and animals can have the positive epistemic status they deserve. Sosa's

294. E. SOSA, «Perspectives in Virtue Epistemology», p. 108.

295. «The classical idea was that *eudaimonia* involves the fulfillment of human nature, and knowledge is at least part of such a fulfillment, perhaps, the most important part». L. ZAGZEBSKI, *Virtues of the Mind*, p. 198. Cfr. ARISTOTLE, *Nicomachean Ethics*, X, 7, 1177a 7-21.

296. «Según Aristóteles, la felicidad está en el conocimiento. Ser feliz es conocer, pues la felicidad es la posesión del fin». L. POLO, *Curso de teoría del conocimiento*, I, EUNSA, Pamplona 32006, pp. 214-215.

justification, in turn, explains those beliefs acquired by mature adult persons *via* epistemic perspectivism. However, we think that justification should not only differ from aptness in terms of epistemic perspectivism. The distinction between aptness and justification necessitates the distinction between cognitive faculties and intellectual virtues. If we consider the difference between a child's beliefs from an adult's beliefs, we think that the need for distinguishing faculties from virtues justifies itself.

A child does not possess intellectual virtues. The beliefs she acquires can only be explained *via* cognitive faculties, which are naturally endowed powers. On the other hand, an adult's beliefs are acquired through the exercise of her intellectual virtues. The reliability of her cognitive faculties is just a consequence of its virtuous use. Again, we remain convinced that providing a distinction between faculties and virtues will provide a better account of justification, which unfortunately is lacking in Sosa's *Virtue Perspectivism*. We conclude that our distinction of cognitive faculties and intellectual virtues must be incorporated in our distinction of aptness and justification. The use of cognitive faculties will provide *aptness* and the use of our intellectual virtues will provide *justification*.

We grant Sosa for his distinction of animal knowledge and reflective knowledge. Knowledge does admit different degrees in epistemic quality among the epistemic agents. To acknowledge such differences, we admitted that our account of knowledge must accommodate both the low-end and the high-end state of knowledge. In accord with Sosa, we referred to these two sorts of knowledge as *unreflective* and *reflective knowledge*. Note that our distinction of knowledge reflects the passivity and the activity of the epistemic agent in the acquisition of knowledge and it calls attention to the important role of the reasoning faculty in knowledge. Furthermore, it helps us to identify the parallelism between our unreflective and reflective knowledge to that of *sensible* and *intellectual knowledge*, understood in the classical sense. Such parallelism helps to underline the continuity between our two sorts of knowledge –*unreflective* and *reflective*–. The distinction of knowledge does not admit separation, but continuity in the knowing subject. In short, within the gamut of the different degrees of knowledge, all pertain to what we consider as *human knowledge*.

The descriptions we provided for both sort of knowledge fit nicely with our distinction of cognitive faculties and intellectual virtues. Unreflective knowledge is true belief out of cognitive faculties and reflective knowledge is true belief out of intellectual virtues. Within the field of reflective knowledge, we also distinguished simple knowledge and complex knowledge to account for the difference in epistemic status that the cognitive agent may have within the arena of reflection. Hence, we were able to

integrate both the positive insights of Sosa and Zagzebski's account in our proposed theory. We argued that it is essential that we admit an anthropological conception of knowledge; hence, we are forced to consider other factors, which may also influence the knower in his acquisition of reflective knowledge, such as education, religion, family, community, etc. We think that our proposed account provides a more complete explication of human knowledge.

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