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THE NORMATIVE SIGNIFICANCE OF REMEMBERING AS SUCH

Memories are of central importance to human beings. Remembering a particular proposition, attitude or episode, it seems safe to say, is important so far as we have specific normative reasons to remember *them*. By contrast, my talk will focus on the distinctive significance of remembering *as such,* irrespective of its object, as it occasionally surfaces in assessments of instances of forgetting as failures of memory, memory glitches and the like.

Talk of failure implies that the subject afflicted by a memory glitch is, in some sense, not as she ought to be, and my talk will explore how to conceptualize the normativity at issue. Defending Broome (2013, ch. 10) against Ferrero (2014) and Williamson (2000), I will argue that memory glitches are failures of *diachronic rationality.* I will go on to explore to what extent a

prominent strand in recent theorizing about diachronic rationality (Bratman 1987, 2010, 2012, Ferrero 2012, 2014, Broome 2013) can shed light on memory.

The mentioned authors have mostly been concerned with the stability of attitudes (especially intention) over time. An agent's propositional, non-occurrent *memory* involves, in addition to a persisting attitude, a *recollective belief that* the subject has been having this attitude for some time, and the causation of the recollective belief by the stored attitude (cf. Sutton 2016, Bernecker 2008). The main theoretical options in the field of diachronic rationality can be brought to bear on the present issue despite these differences. Doing so yields the following construals of the normativity of remembering as such. (Let time t_1 strictly precede t_2.)

(1)   *Diachronic reasons:* The fact that at t_1 N has attitude A that p gives N a normative reason to (at least non-occurrently) remember this attitude at t_2.

(2)   *Diachronic requirements of rationality:* Rationality requires that ((at t_1 N has attitude A that p) $\supset$ (at t_2 N remembers this attitude)).

(3)   *Disposition-favoring reasons:* Agents are disposed to remember their attitudes, and the fact that this disposition helps them do (and believe) what they have sufficient normative reason to do (and believe) gives them a normative reason to be so disposed.

My talk will delve into these matters by highlighting recalcitrant problems with (1) and (2). Thus, (1) gives rise to a peculiar form of normative *bootstrapping* (cf. Bratman 1987). (1) would also entail the unalterability of reasons to remember (the problem of *superseded reasons,* Gillessen 2015). Both problems are avoided by an elaboration of (2) in the spirit of Broome (2013); but the resulting proposal would still be found implausible when applied to cases of long-forgotten attitudes. I shall argue, however, that glitches of *short-term memory* are indeed failures of diachronic rationality in Broome's sense.

Next, a quite fundamental objection concerning the normative import of (2) will be addressed. 'Myth theory' about rationality (Kolodny 2005, 2007, 2008, Raz 2005) has suggested that there is *no* reason to be rational as such. Thus, a memory requirement of subjective rationality might require us to remember contents that, unbeknownst to us, we actually have conclusive

reason to forget. When this occurs, we have no reason at all to be as diachronic rationality requires. As a consequence, I will suggest that requirements of rationality cannot fully capture the normative dimension of memory.

What we do have beyond particular reasons to remember is a reason to be *disposed* to remember. In the end it seems as though (3) accounts best for memory's normativity, as far as it goes. The final part of the talk will therefore elaborate on the rationale for having dispositions to remember and illuminate their (proximally) diachronic structure.

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