

# Empirical Research and Normative Theory

Transdisciplinary perspectives on the integration of two methodical traditions  
between is and ought

Collective Volume and Workshop (September 28 to 29, 2017, University of Oldenburg)

For a while philosophy and empirical research used to go hand in hand. But around the time of the emancipation of individual disciplines of science they entered a stage of a formidable and by no means unambiguous relationship. This holds true in particular for questions of practical philosophy: In the last decades different scientific disciplines began to show intensified interest in empirical endeavors on a descriptive understanding of morals – psychology for example investigates how emotions and intuitions influence our theory construction of morals, behavioral economics examine the effect of morals on rational decision making, anthropology deals with the reconstruction of historic origins of our moral traits, primate research looks for the foundation stones of our morals in our nearest relatives, and social sciences investigate preferences on questions of distributive justice. The list goes on. Nonetheless, up to this point there is nearly no integration of classical normative theory on the one hand and this widening empirical research on the other hand.

This methodological and contentual separation, though established, does not have to be desirable. Moreover, a conjunction of the insights and methods of both approaches can seem fruitful, as might be implied by the recent success story of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research. Contrary to the verdict of a strict segregation of is and ought there are various attempts of an integration of both theoretical approaches. This calls for a discourse on the definition of the relation of empirical research and normative theory. Several propositions have been made in recent times on how to define this convoluted relation.

The workshop aims to discuss possible definitions from an inter- or transdisciplinary point of view. If you want to present a speech in English or German from about 30 to 45 minutes, please send a proposal of about 500 to 1.000 words by June 15, 2017, to [alexander.max.bauer@uni-oldenburg.de](mailto:alexander.max.bauer@uni-oldenburg.de) together with a short curriculum vitae. We will inform you of our decision by the end of June.

For a transdisciplinary collective volume on the topic, we accept – independent from your attendance to the workshop – papers and essays from a historic or systematic perspective on the topic as well as exemplary applications, not limited to a philosophical point of view. Therefore, please send a draft (preferably in English, German is also accepted) of your paper – containing additionally an abstract of about 500 words – by July 1, 2017, to [alexander.max.bauer@uni-oldenburg.de](mailto:alexander.max.bauer@uni-oldenburg.de), we will inform you of our decision by the end of August.

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