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THE EPISTEMOLOGY OF TESTIMONY
Reductionism Vs Anti-reductionism

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PREFACE

This dissertation is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Milan, Milano, Italy. The research described herein was carried out under supervision of Professor Clotilde Calabi in Department of Philosophy, University of Milan, between July 2013 and May 2016.

I hereby declare that this work is to my knowledge original. Neither this, nor any substantially similar dissertation has been or is being submitted for any other degree, diploma or other qualification at any other university.

Gopi Nath Mondal

May 2016

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Abstract

This dissertation discusses one of the most fundamental issues of the epistemology of testimony, that is, how the hearer ascribes trustworthiness to the speaker's testimony. For this discussion, I focus on two theories, namely reductionism and anti-reductionism. My discussion is based on justified true belief (JTB) theory of knowledge. However, in the history of Western epistemology, controversy exists regarding the possibility of the JTB theory. Without entering the controversy I accept the definition of *Knowledge* it provides.

In *Chapter One* and *Two*, I formulate David Hume's concept of testimony and then argue that the Humean account of testimony is a type of local reductionism. Some epistemologists contend that Hume's concept of testimony is a type of global reductionism. However, I reject this view. In *Chapter Three*, I discuss Elizabeth Fricker's concept of local reductionism and further argue that there is no disagreement between Hume's concept of local reductionism and Fricker's concept of local reductionism.

In *Chapter Four* and *Five*, I analyse the anti-reductionist account of Tyler Burge and Jennifer Lackey. In particular, I analyse Burge's *apriori* defense of anti-reductionism, and Lackey's formulation of minimal anti-reductionism.

Finally, I argue that both reductionism and anti-reductionism emphasize one aspect of epistemology of testimony only. Reductionism tries to explain why the hearer should accept the speaker's testimony after verification and anti-reductionism explains why the hearer should accept speaker's testimony without any verification. Yet, both theories are incomplete and I contend that an alternative theory is needed for the epistemology of testimony. I present one alternative theory already present in the literature, namely Lackey's dualism. After criticizing Lackey's account, I defend a new theory, which I called *contextualism*.

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Introduction

“No one disputes that much, probably the greater part, of our knowledge is derived from what others say or reading what others have written.”

— Sir Peter Frederick Strawson (“Knowing From Words”, 1994, 23)

Testimony is a vital and ubiquitous source of knowledge. We rely on the reports of those around us. Here is a tentative characterization of this source. When the speaker desires to transmit his or her knowledge and makes, therefore, adequate verbal utterance(s) or written statement(s), the receiving subject(s) (if they are sufficiently competent to understand) of these utterances or written statements gain the same knowledge as possessed by the speaker. The knowledge gained by the receiving subject(s) through the speaker’s utterances or written statements is testimonial knowledge, and the speaker’s utterances or written statements are the sources of testimonial knowledge or testimony. In this context I define testimonial knowledge in the following manner:

A subject H acquires *Testimonial Knowledge* of p if and only if, given a sincere and competent subject S who knows that p by any source of knowledge, and is willing to transmit his or her knowledge that p through verbal or written language to H, H understands S’s language and justifiably believes that p after receiving S’s words.

Several aspects are associated with the knowledge transmitting process. The aspects which are associated with this process constitute the subject matter of the epistemology of testimony. In this dissertation, I mainly examine a fundamental accounts that how the hearer ascribed the speaker's trustworthiness, in the light of reductionism and anti-reductionism, especially in the light of views by David Hume, Elizabeth Fricker, Tyler Burge, and Jennifer Lackey. I discuss their views on reductionism and anti-reductionism in five consecutive chapters.

I begin, in *Chapter One*, by discussing Hume's concept of testimony. Although, it is true that Hume does not provide any well-structured theory of testimony, we can still construct a well-structured theory of testimony from his writings. To construct Hume's concept of testimony, I begin with a discussion of Hume's view on the objects of human reason because Hume's concept of testimony is dependent on this view. I argue that Hume's concept of testimony is not a type of *global reductionism*, on the basis of Hume's views on the objects of human reason. In this chapter, I show that Hume accepted that we can correctly know about matters of fact, which are not present before us and are beyond our senses and memory, on the basis of human testimony. However, at the same time, Hume argues that the trustworthiness of the speaker's testimony depends on observation and memories. I resolve the paradox between Hume's claim that we can know about the matters of fact, which are beyond our senses and memory, and his other claim that the trustworthiness of speaker's testimony is dependent on observation and memory. In this context, I discuss the type of testimony the hearer believes or refuses to believe when he/she is not in a position to verify the testimony through experience and memory, and the basis for believing that testimony. My argument in this chapter is that, according to Hume, the hearer depends on experience and memory to believe the speaker's testimony. When the hearer is not in a position to verify the

speaker's testimony through experience and memory, the hearer depends on circumstantial evidence, including gestures of the speaker, which he may perceive or recall through memory.¹ If the speaker's testimony contradicts the hearer's experience and memory, then the hearer generally refuses to believe that testimony. Therefore, according to Hume, the trustworthiness of the speaker's testimony, directly or indirectly, depends on experience and memory.

In *Chapter Two*, I begin by discussing the manner in which the hearer does ascribe the trustworthiness to the speaker's assertion. On this issue, epistemologists are divided into two camps, namely *reductionism* and *anti-reductionism*. Reductionism is further divided into two camps, namely *global reductionism* and *local reductionism*. In this chapter, I examine whether or not Hume's concept of testimony should be considered global reductionism. In this context, I discuss C. A. J. Coady and Paul Faulkner's interpretation of Hume's concept of testimony as a type of global reductionism; then, I discuss Michael Welbourne's interpretation of Hume's account of testimony. Welbourne argues that Hume did not provide any complete theory of testimony. He simply presented how human beings learn language. Finally, I argue that Hume's concept of testimony is a type of local reductionism. To elaborate my point, I discuss Hume's concept of

¹ "We entertain a suspicion concerning any matter of fact, when the witnesses contradict each other, when they are but few, or of a doubtful character; when they have an interest in what they affirm; when they deliver their testimony with hesitation, or on the contrary, with too violent asseverations. There may be other particulars of the same kind, which may diminish or destroy the force of any argument, derived from human testimony." (Hume 2000, 85)

human reason, and then I argue that since Hume accepted mathematical knowledge which can be transmitted through testimony, Hume's concept of testimony cannot be treated as global reductionism. Hence, it must be a type of local reductionism.

In *Chapter Three*, I discuss Elizabeth Fricker's concept of local reductionism and her arguments against anti-reductionism. In this context, I ask whether there is any conflict between Hume's concept of testimony and Fricker's concept of testimony. And my answer is that there are no conflict between Hume's concept of local reductionism and Fricker's concept of reductionism.

In *Chapter Four* and *Five*, I discuss anti-reductionism in the light of the views of Tyler Burge and Jennifer Lackey. According to anti-reductionism, the hearer is entitled to accept the speaker's assertion unless he/she has a reason not to do it. This is the central claim of anti-reductionism. Burge defends this claim by presenting the *Acceptance Principle*. Burge argues that a rational being generally tells the truth. Therefore, under normal circumstances, when a person presents something as true, the hearer is entitled to accept it as true, unless he/she has some strong reasons to doubt it. Lackey rejects Burge's formulation of anti-reductionism and presents what she calls a minimal expression of anti-reductionism.

Finally, I conclude by arguing that both reductionism and anti-reductionism are inadequate to explain human testimony. Therefore, we need an alternative theory of the epistemology of testimony. In this context, I discuss Lackey's dualism as an alternative theory of the epistemology of testimony. Dualism is the synthesis of both reductionism and anti-reductionism. However, I do not agree with Lackey's formulation of dualism and formulate a new theory of the epistemology of testimony, which I name

Contextualism. I believe my formulation is a minimal expression of the
Contextualism. One may enrich this formulation by adding more conditions.

Chapter 1

1.1 Testimony in the History of Western Philosophy

In the tradition of Western epistemology, philosophers focus on intuition, perception, and memory as belief sources and attempt to analyze their structure. However, at the same time, philosophers pay extremely less attention to testimony despite the fact that in our daily lives, we depend as much on testimony as we do on intuition, perception, and memory. Since childhood, we learn several things from testimony – for example, we learn how to speak, that is, proper pronunciation and the correct word usage from our parents, teachers, and other people.² Moreover, we learn about the type of relationships we should have with our family members and relatives, and the behaviour we should adopt with elderly persons, our teachers, and our

² “You learn the correct use the word “cat” because your parents say “cat” when you are noticing a cat. If they were not sufficient for this—if, when you are noticing a cat, they said sometimes “dog”, sometimes “cow”, sometimes “crocodile” – you could never learn to speak correctly. The fact that we do learn to speak correctly is a testimonial to the habitual veracity of parents.” (Russell 1966, 207)

“Think of all the things that you think you know right now – such as that the earth is round, or that the Nile flows through Egypt. Most of these beliefs will have been gained not by finding out the truth of the claim in question yourself, but by being told that this claim was true by others.” (Pritchard 2006, 90)

relatives. In addition to socio-cultural relationships, we learn about history (Brittan 1994, 273; Faulkner 1998, 1-2; Lackey 2006, 432; Lackey 2008, 1), geography, and ourselves (such as, our age, date of birth, and childhood events) through testimony. Thus, testimony is a crucial source of our knowledge. Therefore, philosophers are recently paying considerable attention to the epistemology of testimony, and its epistemic significance is being completely appreciated. In the past, Saint Thomas Aquinas, Dr. Tillotson, John Locke, David Hume, Thomas Reid, and Bertrand Russell have devoted their attention to this branch of epistemology (Fricker 1995, 393; Coady 1992).³ They were not interested in providing a well-structured

³ “I answer that, Christ's manner of life had to be in keeping with the end of His Incarnation, by reason of which He came into the world. Now He came into the world, first, that He might publish the truth. Thus He says Himself (Jn. 18:37): "For this was I born, and for this came I into the world, that I should give testimony to the truth." Hence it was fitting not that He should hide Himself by leading a solitary life, but that He should appear openly and preach in public. Wherefore (Lk. 4:42, 43) He says to those who wished to stay Him: "To other cities also I must preach the kingdom of God: for therefore am I sent." (Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, Part – Three, Question Fourty: OF CHRIST'S MANNER OF LIFE, Article One: Whether Christ should have associated with men, or led a solitary life?, pp. 2976 – 2977)

“The apostles were able to testify to the Resurrection even by sight, because from the testimony of their own eyes they saw Christ alive, whom they had known to be dead. But just as man comes from the hearing of faith to the beatific vision, so did men come to the sight of the risen Christ through the message already received from angels.” (Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*, Part – Three, Question Fifty Five: OF THE MANIFESTATION OF THE RESURRECTION, Article Two: Whether it was fitting that the disciples should see Him rise again?, p. 3089)

theory of testimony, but we can try to construct one based on their writing. In this chapter, I focus on Hume's theory of testimony.

1.2 Hume's Concept of Testimony

David Hume's views were rooted in the British empiricism of Locke and Berkeley. Hume claimed that all objects of human reason (knowledge) are divided into two types, namely, *relations of ideas* and *matters of fact*. According to Hume:

“All the objects of human reasoning or enquiry may naturally be divided into two kinds, to wit, *Relations of Ideas*, and *Matters of Fact*. Of the first kind are the sciences of Geometry, Algebra, and Arithmetic; and, in short, every affirmation, which is either intuitively or demonstratively certain.

Matters of fact, which are the second objects of human reason, are not ascertained in the same manner; nor is our evidence of their truth, however great, of a like nature with the foregoing. The contrary of every matter of fact is still possible; because it can never imply a contradiction, and is conceived by mind with the same facility and distinctness, as if ever so conformable to reality.” (Hume 1999, 108)

For Hume we have only two types of knowable objects, namely, relations of ideas and matters of fact. Relations of ideas are the subject matter of geometry, algebra, and arithmetic. Their propositions have two characteristics, they are either intuitively or demonstratively certain and they

do not assert the existence of any non-abstract entities. Since mathematical propositions do not depend on real existence, they are discoverable by the mere operation of thought.⁴ Matters of fact concern instead the empirical world, for example, a mountain, a river, or any other material object. Propositions concerning matters of fact are neither intuitively nor demonstratively certain as proposition concerning “relations of ideas,” are, because the denial of a proposition about a matter of fact does not imply any contradiction. We can easily think without any contradiction, for example, the proposition that *the sun will not rise the next morning*, although we have experienced daily that the sun rises. Therefore, these types of propositions or reasons are possibly true but not certain (Hume 1999, 108; Dicker 1998, 35 – 36).

According to Hume, sense experience is the only guide for knowledge concerning matters of fact. However, we may be able to go beyond the evidence of our senses and memories on the basis of the relation of cause and effect. For example, when an archeological survey team discovers an unnatural structure in a deserted place or under the ground, the team will conclude the existence of humans in that place. The team arrives at this conclusion on the basis of the relation of cause and effect. Similarly, according to Hume, we can gain knowledge from testimony. From testimony, we can infer the existence of the actual event(s) behind the testimony and determine whether the person who described the event(s) had directly observed it or had come to know from a person who has knowledge about the

⁴ “Proposition of this kind are discoverable by the mere operation of thought, without dependence on what is nay where existent in the universe.” (Hume 1999, 108)

event(s) directly or indirectly. Thus, a causal relationship exists between testimony and the actual event(s) it describes. Suppose, for example that an Egyptologist discovers an ancient inscription and on the basis of this inscription, he/she infers the occurrence of an event at past time. Now, the question is how does he/she know about an event that is beyond his/her senses and memories? The Egyptologist knows this on the basis of the relation of cause and effect. From the inscription, he/she infers an eye-witness of that event, analyzes the trustworthiness of the eye-witness on the basis of the available information, and derives a conclusion. Hence, on the basis of the relation of cause and effect, we can know about matters of fact that do not currently exist, and are beyond our senses and memory.⁵

According to Hume, testimony may be a source of knowledge although the trustworthiness of the speaker's testimony is derived from and

⁵ “But here it may be proper to remark, that though our conclusions from experience carry us beyond our memory and senses, and assure us of matters of fact which happened in the most distant places and most remote ages, yet some fact must always be present to the senses or memory, from which we may first proceed in drawing these conclusions. A man, who should find in a desert country the remains of pompous buildings, would conclude that the country had, in ancient times, been cultivated by civilized inhabitants; but did nothing of this nature occur to him, he could never form such an inference. We learn the events of former ages from history; but then we must peruse the volumes, in which this instruction is contained, and thence carry up our inferences from one testimony to another, till we arrive at the eyewitnesses and spectators of these distant events.” (Hume 2000, 38)

founded on experience and observation.⁶ We should not accept the testimony of a person or reports of an eye-witness blindly. Now, the question is, what actions should we perform when a report of an event from an eye-witness is received? Should we accept the reports immediately or verify them and then accept the reports? According to Hume, both alternatives are correct. Sometimes, we do accept the testimony of a person or reports of an eye-witness without any examination or verification. However, we may experience the opposite. Sometimes, we hesitate to accept the testimony of a person or reports of an eye-witness. For the trustworthiness of these types of testimony, we require further evidence or ground in addition to the reports of

⁶ “To apply these principles to a particular instance; we may observe that there is no species of reasoning more common, more useful, and even necessary to human life, than that which is derived from the testimony of men, and the reports of eye-witnesses and spectators. This species of reasoning, perhaps, one may deny to be founded on the relation of cause and effect. I shall not dispute about a word. It will be sufficient to observe that our assurance in any argument of this kind is derived from no other principle than our observation of the veracity of human testimony, and of the usual conformity of facts to the reports of witnesses. It being a general maxim, that no objects have any discoverable connexion together, and that all the inferences, which we can draw from one to another, are founded merely on our experience of their constant and regular conjunction; it is evident that we ought not to make an exception to this maxim in favour of human testimony, whose connexion with any event seems, in itself, as little necessary as any other. Were not the memory tenacious to a certain degree; had not men commonly an inclination to truth and a principle of probity; were they not sensible to shame, when detected in a falsehood: Were not these, I say, discovered by experience to be qualities, inherent in human nature, we should never repose the least confidence in human testimony.” (Hume 2000, 84 – 85)

an eye-witness. For example, when my mother says that dinner is ready to be served on the dining table, I accept her report because I know that she has no intention of misleading or deceiving me. By contrast, we are extremely skeptical about the reports from a stranger or someone we do not trust. In general, we verify their reports from other sources.

The question is why do we verify some reports but not others? Why are we not skeptical about our mother's reports but are about the stranger's reports? According to Hume, we accept our mother's reports without any doubt because our custom guides us to do so. We have experienced her trustworthiness. Thus, we can easily judge the credibility or trustworthiness of our mother's testimony on the basis of custom and memories of our experience and observation. In the case of our mother's reports about the dinner, we can infer their credibility or trustworthiness because we have consistently experienced it. Every night, she calls for dinner after making arrangements on the dining table. This custom or habit that originates on the basis of experience guides us to believe our mother's current reports.⁷

According to Hume, when we accept any report or testimony without raising any question or without any doubt, it is not because we are a priori entitled to do so, but we are accustomed to do so.⁸ Instead our custom or

⁷ "This principle is CUSTOM or HABIT. For wherever the repetition of any particular act or operation produces a propensity to renew the same act or operation, without being impelled by any reasoning or process of the understanding; we always say, that this propensity is the effect of custom." (Hume 2000, 37)

⁸ "The reason why we place any credit in witnesses and historians, is not derived from any *connexion*, which we perceive a priori, between testimony and reality, but

habit cannot play any role in determining the trustworthiness of a stranger's or a suspicious person's reports or testimonies. Therefore, we require additional ground or evidence to determine the trustworthiness of such reports or testimonies. We consider the circumstances, counterevidence, character, values of the witness, number of witnesses, gestures of the witness while he/she is reporting, etc. before accepting the testimony of a stranger or suspicious person. If we obtain sufficient grounds or assurance about the trustworthiness of the testimony, only then are we likely to believe the report, and the grounds or assurance in favor of the testimony is provided by experience and observation, and not by the *apriori* reasoning. According to Hume:

“ the evidence, derived from witnesses and human testimony, is founded on past experience, so it varies with the experience, and is regarded either as a proof or a probability, according as the conjunction between any particular kind of report and any kind of object has been found to be constant or variable. There are a number of circumstances to be taken into consideration in all judgments of this kind; and the ultimate standard, by which we determine all disputes, which may arise concerning them, is always derived from experience and observation. Where this experience is not entirely uniform on any side, it is attended with an unavoidable contrariety in our judgments, and with the same opposition and mutual destruction of argument as

because we are accustomed to find a conformity between them.” (Hume 2000, 85 – 86)

in every other kind of evidence. We frequently hesitate concerning the reports of others. We balance the opposite circumstances, which cause any doubt or uncertainty; and when we discover superiority on any side, we incline to it; but still with a diminution of assurance, in proportion to the force of its antagonist.

This contrariety of evidence, in the present case, may be derived from several different causes; from the opposition of contrary testimony; from the character or number of the witnesses; from the manner of their delivering their testimony; or from the union of all these circumstances. We entertain a suspicion concerning any matter of fact, when the witnesses contradict each other; when they are but few, or of a doubtful character; when they have an interest in what they affirm; when they deliver their testimony with hesitation, or on the contrary, with too violent asseverations. There are many other particulars of the same kind, which may diminish or destroy the force of any argument, derived from human testimony.” (Hume 2000, 85)

We may summarize Hume’s arguments as follows: we may occasionally believe a stranger’s or suspicious person’s testimony that p, when we are not in a position to verify his/her testimony that p and our past experience and custom guide us to believe that p. However, we should believe the stranger’s testimony that p only after considering various issues, such as:

- (a) Whether the speaker's testimony that p contradicts another's testimony;
- (b) The number of people who reported that p;
- (c) The first impression of the speaker's character;
- (d) Whether there is any scope for the fulfillment of the speaker's interest if the hearer believes the speaker's testimony that p;
- (e) Whether the speaker hesitated while presenting that p;
- (f) Whether the speaker presented that p in a humorous mood.

Let me consider the following case. Suppose that a person S travelling to a new city asks four persons, namely, P1, P2, P3, and P4, to recommend a good hotel. Suppose further that there are only three hotels, namely, O, Q, and R. When S asks P1 for a good hotel, P1 reports that hotel Q is comfortable with a reasonable price. However, when S asks the same to P2, P3, and P4, they decisively report that Q is a very bad hotel and R is the best one. In the present situation, S obviously should refuse to believe P1's testimony. However, if we formulate the above example differently, then we would obtain a different result. Suppose, while enquiring about the hotel, his/her first impression about P2, P3, and P4's character is unpleasant, they are hesitant while reporting, and most importantly, S discovers that each of them are associated with hotel R. In this situation according to Hume, S should refuse to believe P2, P3, and P4's testimony.

Therefore, we may conclude that, according to Hume, the trustworthiness of the speaker's testimony depends on experience. Our custom and habit, which are constituted on the basis of experience, guide us to determine the trustworthiness of a known and reliable person's testimony without any additional ground. By contrast, custom and habit are ineffective in determining the trustworthiness of an unknown and suspicious person's

testimony. Hence, we require additional ground(s) for it, which, according to Hume, provided by experience and observation.

However, the concern is if the event described by the speaker has occurred only once and the speaker is the only eye-witness or very few persons have witnessed it, then how can we verify the trustworthiness of the speaker's testimony? Second, if an eye-witness is not present in person, then how could we determine the trustworthiness of the speaker's statement?

Hume may answer this question as follows:

First, if an eye-witness is not present in front of the hearer but is well-known to the hearer, then the hearer can consider the speaker's character, intention, and the past experience about the speaker to determine the trustworthiness of the speaker's testimony. For example, if I receive a mail from my friend John about some events that occurred at his place, then I consider his character, his intention in writing to me, and my past experience about him to determine the trustworthiness of his description.

Second, when an eye-witness is present in front of the hearer and is well known to the hearer, then the hearer can consider the speaker's gesture when delivering the assertion along with the speaker's character, and past experience about the speaker to determine the trustworthiness of the speaker's testimony. For example, if my friend, John, informs me about some events while gossiping, then I consider his gesture, his hesitation, when delivering his testimony along with other conditions before accepting his testimony.

Third, when the eye-witness is an unknown person but is present in front of the hearer, then the hearer can consider the speaker's gesture, and

consequences of the acceptance and denial of his/her testimony to determine the trustworthiness of his/her description.

Fourth, when an eye-witness is an unknown person and is not present in front of the hearer, then the hearer can consider the actual possibility of the event(s) described by the speaker, such as whether the speaker's description contradicts our experience, along with other conditions, to accept the description. For example, if we receive a mail with some threatening content from an unknown person, we consider the mail seriously and file a complaint to the police. On the contrary when an assertion of an unknown person's contradicts our experience, we refuse to accept the description, although it may be true. For example, people living in warm regions never experience the freezing of water in cold climate; therefore, they might refuse to accept the description of the event that water freezes in cold climate because their experience does not support this description. Hence, they do not believe the description.⁹

⁹ "The Indian prince, who refused to believe the first relations concerning the effects of frost, reasoned justly; and it naturally required very strong testimony to engage his assent to facts, that arose from a state of nature, with which he was unacquainted, and which bore so little analogy to those events, of which he had had constant and uniform experience. Though they were not contrary to his experience, they were not conformable to it." (Hume 2000, 86)

1.3 Hume's Concept of Testimony About Miraculous Events

I shall now consider Hume's analysis of a case in which the speaker or eye-witness is not a known person or someone present in front of us, and the speaker's testimony contradicts our experience. Hume discusses this case in a section of his book *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, devoted to miraculous events. He discusses the trustworthiness of testimony concerning such events.

In this context he raises an objection against the Roman Catholic view of a *miraculous event* described in the Scripture. According to the Christian Scripture, the night when Lord Jesus was betrayed by one of his 12 original apostles (Judas Iscariot), he took bread, broke it, offered to his apostles, and said that it was his body and the cup of wine was his blood.¹⁰ According to the Catholic theology, the description of the Lord's Supper (the

¹⁰ "11:23 For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: 11:24 and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me."

"11:25 After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."

"11:26 For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." (The Holy Bible, Old and New Testament, King James Version, Duke Classics, 2012, 2567 – 2568)

transformation of bread and wine into the body and blood of Lord Jesus Christ, respectively) is not a metaphor but the description of a fact. The entire substance of the bread and wine transformed into Christ's body and blood, respectively. However, for a finite being, it is impossible to change the entire substance of bread and wine into flesh and blood, respectively, because the substantive components of the bread and wine are different from those of the flesh and blood, respectively. However, such a change is not difficult for a powerful infinite being. Hence, the description of this *miraculous event* is not a metaphor but the description of a fact.¹¹

Some philosophers disagreed with the Roman Catholic view and strongly objected it. According to them, the description of the miraculous event (the Lord's Supper) in the Bible contradicts our experience, and hence it is not acceptable. For example, Dr. John Tillotson (1630–1694) argues that our senses do not support the miraculous event that bread and wine transformed into Christ's body and blood, respectively. In daily life, nobody considers bread as a human body and wine as human blood, in any cultural, social, or religious, framework. We cannot deny our experience and accept instead a religious description that contradicts it.¹² According to Tillotson,

¹¹ "Form cannot be changed into form, nor matter into matter by the power of any finite agent. Such a change, however, can be made by the power of an infinite agent, which has control over all being, because the nature of being is common to both forms and to both matters; and whatever there is of being in the one, the author of being can change into whatever there is of being in the other, withdrawing that whereby it was distinguished from the other." (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, Part III, Question 75, Article 4)

¹² "what we see and handle and taste to be Bread is Bread, and not the Body of a man; and what We see and taste to be Wine is Wine , and not Bloud: And if this

this view not only contradicts our experience but is full of stupidity, cruelty, and barbarity.¹³ Therefore, the description of the miraculous event in the Bible should not be accepted.

evidence may not pass for sufficient without any farther proof, I do not see why any man, that hath confidence enough to do so, may not deny any thing to be what all the World sees it is, or affirm anything to be what all the World sees it is not ; and this without all possibility of being farther confuted. So that the business of Transubstantiation is not a controversie of Scripture against Scripture, or of Reason against Reason, but of downright Impudence against the plain meaning of Scripture, and all the Sense and Reason of Mankind. (Spellings are unchanged).” (Tillotson 1684, 2)

“I shall press the business a little farther, supposing the scripture to be a divine revelation, and that these words (this is my body) if they be in scripture, must necessarily be taken in the strict and literal sense; I ask now, what greater evidence any man has that these words (this is my body) are in the bible, than every man has that the bread is not changed in the sacrament? Nay no man has so much; for we have only the evidence of one sense that these words are in the bible, but that the bread is not changed we have the concurring testimony of several of our senses. In a word, if this be once admitted that the senses of all men are deceived in one of the most plain sensible matters that can be, there is no certain means left either to convey or prove a divine revelation to men; nor is there any way to confute the grossest impostures in the world: for if the clear evidence of all men's senses be not sufficient for this purpose, let any man, if he can, find a better and more convincing argument.” (Tillotson 1843, 264)

¹³ “The infinite scandal of this doctrine to the Christian Religion. And that upon these four accounts. 1. Of the stupidity of this doctrine. 2. The real barbarousness of this Sacrament and Rite of our Religion upon supposition of the truth of this

1.4 Arguments Against Miraculous Events

Following Tillotson, Hume also rejects the testimony of the real transformation of bread and wine into Christ's body and blood, respectively by providing two arguments. First, he points out that the description of the miraculous event is a violation of the laws of nature and universal experience. Second, he expresses his suspicion toward the apostles who claimed that they eye-witnessed to that miraculous event. I will discuss now both arguments one by one.

The first argument against the testimony concerning the miraculous event is as follows:

According to the Christian religious Scripture, the trustworthiness of the description of the miraculous event is founded on the testimony of apostles who eye-witnessed it. However, in daily life, our senses do not support the description of such miraculous events. In this context, Hume differentiates between two types of evidence: the evidence for truth provided by our senses and the evidence for truth provided by the Christian religion. According to him, these two types of evidence have qualitative differences. The evidence of the senses is stronger than that of the Christian religion. Moreover, if weak evidence contradicts strong evidence, then the strong evidence is accepted because the weak evidence cannot destroy the strong

doctrine. 3. Of the cruel and bloody consequences of it. 4. Of the danger of Idolatry; which they are certainly guilty of, if this doctrine be not true." (Tillotson: 1684, 33)

evidence.¹⁴ The description of the real occurrence of the miraculous event, that is, the real transformation of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood, respectively, directly contradicts our senses; therefore, the description of the miraculous event founded on the Christian Scripture should not be accepted, because it violates the laws of nature. In this context, Hume makes a distinction between natural and miraculous events. When an event occurs in the normal course of nature, then the event is considered natural. By contrast, when an event does not occur in the normal course of nature and is not observed in any age or country, then the event is considered miraculous. For example, death of a human being occurs in the normal course of nature. Thus, the death of a human being is a normal event. However, in the normal course of nature bread and wine never transform into body and blood, respectively, and nobody at any age or country has ever observed such a transformation. Hence, bread and wine transforming into Christ's body and blood, respectively is not a normal event; it is a miraculous event which, according to the Scripture, at the time of its occurrence, had some eye-witnesses. However, Hume refuses to acknowledge it, because for him the description of the real occurrence of this miraculous event is a violation of

¹⁴ "But a weaker evidence can never destroy a stronger; and therefore, were the doctrine of the real presence ever so clearly revealed in scripture, it were directly contrary to the rules of just reasoning to give our assent to it. It contradicts sense, though both the scripture and tradition, on which it is supposed to be built, carry not such evidence with them as sense; when they are considered merely as external evidences, and are not brought home to every one's breast, by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit." (Hume 2000, 83)

the laws of nature. Thus, we cannot accept a testimony about a miraculous event unless the falsehood of the testimony is more miraculous.¹⁵

The second argument against testimony concerning the miraculous event is as follows:

Human beings generally tend to accept some testimonies and reject others. How do we react when a stranger or even a well-known person describes an event that we have not experienced? We compare those events with events known to us, enquire whether they resemble our experience, and consider opposite evidence. After considering all these factors, if we find a high degree of possibility of the event, then we believe the description. However, if a stranger or even a well-known person describes any unusual event that is absurd, miraculous, and anomalous with respect to our experience, we reject the description immediately. A person, having deep faith in his/her religion may claim to observe something extraordinary or

¹⁵ “That no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind, that its falsehood would be more miraculous, than the fact, which it endeavours to establish; and even in that case there is a mutual destruction of arguments, and the superior only gives us an assurance suitable to that degree of force, which remains, after deducting the inferior.” When anyone tells me, that he saw a dead man restored to life, I immediately consider with myself, whether it be more probable, that this person should either deceive or be deceived, or that the fact, which he relates, should really have happened. I weigh the one miracle against the other; and according to the superiority, which I discover, I pronounce my decision, and always reject the greater miracle. If the falsehood of his testimony would be more miraculous, than the event which he relates; then, and not till then, can he pretend to command my belief or opinion.” (Hume 2000, 87)

miraculous to substantiate the greatness of the religion or promote its holiness and secret powers. For example, the apostles of the Christian religion claimed that they eye-witnessed the miraculous event in which bread and wine transformed into Lord Christ's body and blood, respectively.¹⁶ However, according to Hume, this type of description is not acceptable. Although we love this wonderful description, we should not consider it true, because people living in those ancient times were uncivilized, ignorant, and barbarous. Therefore, we should not accept their descriptions.¹⁷

Hume provides another strong reason that diminishes the trustworthiness of those who claimed that they eye-witnessed that miraculous event. According to Hume, to promote the secret power, holiness, or divinity of the religious system, proponents and disciples of the

¹⁶ "A religionist may be an enthusiast, and imagine he sees what has no reality: he may know his narrative to be false, and yet persevere in it, with the best intentions in the world, for the sake of promoting so holy a cause: or even where this delusion has not place, vanity, excited by so strong a temptation, operates on him more powerfully than on the rest of mankind in any other circumstances; and self-interest with equal force." (Hume 2000, 89)

¹⁷ ". . . . all supernatural and miraculous relations, that they are observed chiefly to abound among ignorant and barbarous nations; or if a civilized people has ever given admission to any of them, that people will be found to have received them from ignorant and barbarous ancestors, who transmitted them with that inviolable sanction and authority, which always attend received opinions." (Hume 2000, 90)

"The most ignorant and barbarous of these barbarians carry the report abroad. None of their countrymen have a large correspondence, or sufficient credit and authority to contradict and beat down the delusion." (Hume 2000, 91)

religious systems disseminated descriptions of miraculous events. Simultaneously, disciples of another particular religious system disseminated some other miraculous description in their religious system as true and real, and contradicted all others miraculous descriptions admitted in the rival religion. For example, disciples of the Christian religion rejected the descriptions of other religions, such as those of Muslims, Parsis, and Hindus, and vice versa. In the process of destroying a rival system, disciples of every religious system refuse to provide credit to miraculous events described in other religions. In this process, the credibility of a miraculous event in each religious system is rejected. Let us suppose that there are only five religions globally, such as R1, R2, R3, R4, and R5. Disciples of R1 refuse to admit or give any credit to a miraculous event described by the others' religions (R2, R3, R4, and R5) and reject the description. Similarly, disciples of the R2, R3, R4, and R5 would deny giving any credit to a miraculous event described in the R1 and reject the description. The miraculous event described in each religion is rejected by others religions. Hence, we are not justified in believing the description of the miraculous event.¹⁸ We can depict the acceptance and rejection of miraculous events by following table:

R1 accepts miraculous event M1	R2, R3, R4, and R5 reject M1
R2 accepts miraculous event M2	R1, R3, R4, and R5 reject M2
R3 accepts miraculous event M3	R1, R2, R4, and R5 reject M3
R4 accepts miraculous event M4	R1, R2, R3, and R5 reject M4

¹⁸ “In destroying a rival system, it likewise destroys the credit of those miracles, on which that system was established; so that all the prodigies of different religions are to be regarded as contrary facts, and the evidences of these prodigies, whether weak or strong, as opposite to each other.” (Hume 2000, 91)

R5 accepts miraculous event M5	R1, R2, R3, and R4 reject M5
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Here, each of the miraculous events accepted by each religion, that is, M1 to M5, is rejected by disciples of the other religions. Hence, these miraculous events should not be accepted. As a conclusion, according to Hume, even if the eye-witness or the speaker is well-known to us or is present before us, the trustworthiness of the testimony depends on our present experience or memories.

Chapter 2

2.1 A Reductionist Theory of Testimony

In the previous chapter, I discussed Hume's concept of testimony in detail. In the present chapter, I focus on some fundamental issues of the epistemology of testimony, such as how does the hearer ascribes trustworthiness to the speaker, whether the hearer has an appropriate reason to ascribe the trustworthiness to the speaker, how can we justify ourselves to trust in what is reported by others, and whether we should have any justification for forming our beliefs on the basis of the speaker's assertion. These questions are crucial for the epistemology of testimony. (Lackey 2008, 141; Kusch 2002, 29; Faulkner 1998, 2)

Before entering the discussion regarding the manner in which the hearer ascribes trustworthiness to the speaker, I would like to discuss what epistemologists mean by the word "trustworthiness". By the word "trustworthiness", they mean a type of virtue or property of the speaker. To ascribe trustworthiness to a speaker is to consider him/her as accountable, acceptable, or competent with respect to the content of his/her assertion. If a speaker lacks this virtue or property, then the hearer should not consider him/her as competent with respect to the content of his/her assertion. Therefore, trustworthiness is a virtue or property of the speaker which renders the speaker competent or acceptable to the hearer with respect to the content of speaker's assertion, and knowledge of this virtue or lack of this virtue allows the hearer to determine the competency or acceptability of the

speaker in respect to his/her assertion. We can formulate it in the following way (where V is trustworthiness):

If a hearer discovers that the speaker S has V in respect to the content of his/her assertion A, then the hearer considers the speaker as competent or acceptable in respect to the content of his/her assertion A.

If a hearer discover that the speaker S does not possess the V with respect to the content of his/her assertion A, then the hearer considers the speaker as incompetent or unacceptable with respect to the content of his/her assertion A.

In the epistemology of testimony, epistemologists have been using the word “trustworthiness”, “credibility”, or “reliability” to refer to this virtue or property of the speaker. In this dissertation, I will also use them to refer to the same virtue or property of the speaker. In the context of Fricker’s concept of reductionism, I will discuss the nature of trustworthiness in detail.

There is no single and simple way exists to resolve the fundamental problems of the epistemology of testimony, namely, how the hearer does ascribes trustworthiness to the speakers. Consequently, epistemologists are not unanimous on this issue. As a result, two different theories are available; namely, reductionism and anti-reductionism or non-reductionism theories of testimony.¹⁹

¹⁹ “Even if an expression of thought qualifies as testimony and the resulting belief formed is entirely testimonial-based for the hearer, however, there is further

2.2 Reductionism and Anti-reductionism

According to some epistemologists, we should believe testimony only if the testimony is founded on some empirical evidence (Kusch 2002, 30). If we are able to find any empirical evidence or ground for the acceptance of testimony (i.e., if our present experience or the memories of the past experience provide any ground to believe the testimony), only then can we reasonably believe the testimony. Therefore, according to this view, reason or justification of the testimony derives from the empirical evidence. In the history of the epistemology of testimony, this account is known as a “**reductive**” account of the epistemology of testimony.²⁰

question of how precisely such a belief successfully counts as justified belief or an instance of knowledge. Indeed, this is the question at the center of the epistemology of testimony, and the current philosophical literature contains two central options for answering it: *non-reductionism and reductionism*.” (Lackey and Sosa 2006, 4)

²⁰ “. there is no species of reasoning more common, more useful, and even necessary to human life, than that which is derived from the testimony of men, and the reports of eye-witnesses and spectators. This species of reasoning, perhaps, one may deny to be founded on the relation of cause and effect. I shall not dispute about a word. It will be sufficient to observe that our assurance in any argument of this kind is derived from no other principle than our observation of the veracity of human testimony, and of the usual conformity of facts to the reports of witnesses.” (Hume 2000, 84)

However, some epistemologists refuse to join this reductionist camp. According to them, testimony is a basic source of justification, in the same manner as sense experience, memory, and inference are. Thus, we are entitled to believe every testimony as a true statement, unless we have strong reason for not believing. If there are any relevant defeaters of the speaker's testimony, only then the hearer is entitled to refuse to accept the speaker's testimony. However, I must say, only the presence of a defeater on its own is not be sufficient reason to reject any testimony; because sometimes a defeater can be defeated by another defeater. For example, suppose my history teacher,²¹ while teaching us about the history of the ancient Egyptian civilization, stated that Tutankhamen's parents were Akhenaten and his (Akhenaten's) sister, who was also his wife. According to anti-reductionism, I must accept my teacher's testimony, unless I have a strong reason for not to believe my teacher's assertion. Furthermore, suppose that, after returning home, I read my history book and find that the authentic author of the book stated that, according to Egyptologists, Tutankhamen's parents were not identified. Now, given the present circumstances, what should I do? Should I accept or refuse my teacher's testimony considering that I have a relevant defeater of his testimony? According to anti-reductionism, I am not entitled to accept my teacher's testimony because I have a strong reason for not to believe his testimony. However, suppose that I further extend my enquiry and locate recent research findings that are based on DNA tests and discover that Tutankhamen's parents were Akhenaten (mummy KV55) and his sister and wife (mummy KV35YL). After knowing about these findings, I am entitled to believe my teacher's testimony because this new information about the Tutankhamen's parents defeated the defeater of my teacher's

²¹ He/she is well informed about the recent research on Tutankhamen's parents.

testimony that “Tutankhamen’s parents were Akhenaten and his (Akhenaten’s) sister and wife.” Therefore, according to the anti-reductionism, a defeater does not provide sufficient reason to reject a testimony. If the “defeater” is considered as “undefeated-defeater,” then and only then can we refuse to accept any speaker’s testimony. In the history of the epistemology of testimony, this account is known as an “**anti-reductive**” account.²²

Thus, according to the epistemology, the justification of testimony is a fundamental and controversial issue and epistemologists are not unanimous on this issue. There is much disagreement and many counter arguments on this matter. Hence, there is no strong and universally accepted theory to resolve this problem. Consequently, epistemologists consider this issue as a weak point of the epistemology of testimony, which is vulnerable to criticism, and call it vulnerability problem of the epistemology of testimony. Within this chapter and next chapter, I shall discuss how reductive theorists address this problem, especially on the light of David Hume and Elizabeth Fricker.

²² “The primary default position, the Acceptance Principle, is not an empirical principle. The general form of justification associated with the principle is: *A person is a priori entitled to accept a proposition that is presented as true and that is intelligible to him, unless there are stronger reasons not to do so, because it is prima facie preserved (received) from a rational source, or resource for reason; reliance on rational sources- or resources for reason-is, other things equal, necessary to the function of reason.* The justificational force of the entitlement described by this justification is not constituted or enhanced by sense experiences or perceptual belief.” (Burge 1993, 469)

2.3 Reductionism

Before initiating the discussion of Hume's and Fricker's reductive theory of testimony in detail, I would like to briefly introduce the reductive theory of testimony. In everyday life, we consider knowledge also beliefs that are not originated by the sense experience or memory, and not even inference which based on experience or memory. Sometimes knowledge originates from what is said or written by someone else. For example, as a common man, if I wanted to know the ancient history of Egypt, then neither my sense experience nor my memories of the past knowledge could help me. Even inference, which is dependent upon my sense experience and memories, could not help me in this regard. Therefore, if I want to know the ancient history of Egypt, I must read the books which are written on it by an Egyptologist or someone who got the description from an Egyptologist. As a non-expert about the history of Egypt, I would not know about the ancient history of Egypt through perceptions, memories, or any scientific analysis. Suppose that some scientists, who have great expertise on the ancient history of Egypt through some scientific method, can come to the conclusion that Akhenaten (mummy KV55) and his sister and wife (mummy KV35YL) were Tutankhamen's parents.²³ As a common person, I do not have such expertise on this subject; therefore, I do not have an option other than accepting what

²³ "Genetic fingerprinting allowed the construction of a five-generation pedigree of Tutankhamun's immediate lineage. The KV55 mummy and KV35YL were identified as the parents of Tutankhamun." (Hawass, Gad, Ismail, Khairat, Fathalla, Hasan, Ahmed, Elleithy, Ball, Gaballah, Wasef, Fateen, Amer, Gostner, Selim, Zink, Pusch: 2010, 638).

the scientists have stated about Tutankhamen's family. Hence, we must acknowledge the knowledge providing capacity of testimony.

However, epistemologists have unanimously accepted that sometimes testimony misleads us, as perception sometimes misleads us.²⁴ For example, if any religious priest, only on the basis of his faith and religious myth, without applying any scientific method, considers a particular pyramid as the oldest pyramid in the world ever discovered, then the testimony of the priest about the oldest pyramid is not credible. It may mislead us; therefore, we are unable to gain any knowledge from what the priest has stated. Hence, not every statement or report of another person should be considered as a knowledge provider. Thus, under these circumstances, obviously one question arises in our mind regarding what makes any testimony acceptable or justified, since, we cannot claim that we know something from the testimony, unless we have any justification in its favor. We can claim that we know that P, on the basis of the statement T, only if we are justified in doing so. Therefore, the fundamental question in the epistemology of testimony is what counts as justification of the testimonial belief?

Again, epistemologists are not unanimous on this issue. Some epistemologists (reductionists) have tried to explain the justification for believing a testimony on the basis of non-testimonial belief. According to reductionists, we accept a testimony not only because we do not have a defeater of the testimony as anti-reductionists (I will discuss this theory in *Chapter Four* and *Five*) claim, but also because we have sufficient positive

²⁴ "Sometimes, of course, the testimony we receive is false or misleading."
(Pritchard 2006, 90)

reasons or grounds for accepting the testimony. However, these grounds are not based on testimony because if we accept testimony as a justifiable basis of testimony, then the theory will be faced with the fallacy of circularity. Therefore, according to the reductionists, these reasons or grounds are provided by inductive inference, sense experience, and memories. Present sense experience and memories of past experience help us to distinguish between reliable and unreliable speakers on the basis of contexts, content of the testimony, and types of testimony. Thus, according to reductionism, we believe a certain testimony T because we have a strong and relevant positive reason R (not only the absence of a defeater, as anti-reductionists would claim) in favor of the testimony T, and the reason R was derived from joint exercise of the sense experience, memory, and inductive inference. Because we have the justification for believing sense experience, memory, and inference and testimony T is supported by the sense experience, memories, and inference then we are justified in believing that T. Therefore, the justification of testimony is transmitted from the non-testimonial source of knowledge.²⁵ In this way, reductionists reduce the justification of the testimony to the justification of sense experience, memory, and inductive inference (Lackey and Sosa 2006, 5).

However, critics may object that sometimes we believe someone's testimony without any empirical verification. For example, when my mother said that she made my special noodles dish for breakfast, I immediately believed her without any verification. To answer the critic's objection,

²⁵ “. . . . conformity to the non-testimonially-known reality is the reason for our trust in testimony, then our trust in testimony derives its justification from non-testimonial evidence.” (Shogenji 2006, 332)

reductionists argue that if we analyzed all the testimony, then we would find a basis for believing that testimony, which was derived from experience. When my mother says that she has prepared my favorite chicken dish for dinner, I immediately believe her without any doubt because I have strong evidence on the basis of past experience that she has never deceived me and also because she has no intention to deceive me in this regard. Hence, the hearer does not need any additional empirical evidence in favor of every instance of assertion. It is true that sometimes we believe a speaker's assertion without questioning the speaker's trustworthiness. However, if we deeply analyzed the reason behind my acceptance of my mother's assertion without any doubt, then we would find that the reason is nothing more than memories of my prior experience about her trustworthiness. I know that she has never deceived me, especially with respect to my food. This memory of my past experience guides me to accept my mother's assertion without any doubt. Therefore, according to reductionism, the justification of the testimonial belief is ultimately derived from empirical evidence.

2.4 Global and Local Reductionism

However, in the reductionist theory of testimony, the question is, what exactly is reduced in the reductionist's theory of testimony? Opinions are divided in this matter. According to some reductionists, “. . . . *justification of testimony as a source of belief reduces to the justification of the sense perception, memory, and inductive inference. In particular, global reductionists maintain that in order to justifiedly accept a speaker's report, a hearer must have non-testimonially based positive reason for believing that testimony is generally reliable.*” (Lackey 2008, 145; Lackey and Sosa 2006, 5)

This type of approach explains the justification of testimonial beliefs in a “wholesale manner”. According to this formulation of reductionism, “*a particular belief would then justified simply in the virtue of being an instance of more general type of knowledge, whose overall validity and reliability have already been established.*” (Gelfert 2014, 104) Therefore, according to this view, the epistemic status of one’s testimony-based belief can always be reduced to the epistemic status of one’s non-testimony-based belief. Pritchard formulates this view of reductionism as follows:

“For all of one’s TBBs (testimony-based beliefs), if one’s TBB is justified, then one is able to offer sufficient non-testimonial grounds in support of that TBB.” (Pritchard 2004, 328)

In the history of epistemology of testimony, this theory is known as *global reductionism*.

However, the problem is that if we accept *global reductionism*, then we are not able explain our intellectual development in the initial stage. The intellectual development of children depends to a large extent on their parents’ testimony, although, at that stage, they are not able to verify it. Unless we accept the fact that sometimes we accept testimony without any sufficient independent basis for doing so, we are unable to explain our intellectual development (Pritchard 2004, 331; 2006, 90). Elizabeth Fricker called this stage the “simple trust” stage. I will discuss it in the context of Fricker’s concept of reductionism (Fricker 2006, 225–226).

Moreover, sometimes, also in the non-developmental stage, we are forced to accept some testimony without any sufficient independent basis for doing so. If we refuse to believe any testimony without any empirical evidence, then we would not be able to survive in the world because our

every-day life depends to a large extent on testimonies in support of which we are unable to offer sufficient independent grounds. For example, suppose there is only one spaceship in the entire world and astronauts aboard the spaceship inform their head-quarters that the data-transmitting machine is not functioning properly, and hence they cannot send any picture or electronic data from the spaceship; suppose further that they observe abnormalities in the north pole that is likely to create a deadly storm in northern Europe, particularly, the coastal areas of the Netherlands. After receiving this information, what should the officers of the space station do? Should they believe it and take the necessary action to save the people of the coastal areas or ignore it, given that they cannot check the information? In my opinion, they should believe the astronauts' information and take the necessary precautions. Reductionists may respond that the officers of the space station had uniform and consistent prior experience about the astronauts' reliability or trustworthiness, and that their memories of those experiences help them to infer the reliability of the astronauts' present information. Therefore, in this case, they could accept the astronauts' testimony without requiring any additional empirical evidence.

Let me then slightly revise my counterexample and show that sometimes we are forced to accept information from others without verifying it and without any empirical grounds or basis for doing so. For example, suppose that there are only two spaceships in the entire world. One is from the Netherlands and the other is from an enemy country of the Netherlands. Furthermore, suppose that officers of the Netherlands space station are not able to make contact with their spaceship; at the same time, officers of the enemy space station inform officials of the Netherlands space station that they observed abnormalities in the North Pole that may create a deadly storm in northern Europe, especially the coastal areas of the Netherlands, within 12 hours. Now, the question is what should the officers of the Netherlands

space station do after receiving that information? In this case, the information comes from persons that they do not consider reliable because they are from an enemy country. The officers of the Netherlands space station do not have any prior experience with the reliability of these informers. Hence, they would not be able to infer their informers' reliability from the joint exercise of sense experience, memory, and inductive inference. Given the present circumstances, what should they do? Should they believe the information of the enemy space station and take the necessary action to save the peoples of the coastal areas or ignore it? In my opinion they should accept the information and take the necessary action to rescue the people of the coastal region, even though they are unable to empirically verify the informant's trustworthiness.

Not only that, sometimes we also accept reported information without verifying or examining any correlation or conjunction between the report and the information provided in the report. We do this even though the data presented in the report are available to us, which they were not in the previous case. For example, suppose that I am suffering from a stomach disease and my physician advises me to undergo an endoscopy and I agree to do so. Furthermore, suppose that in the endoscopy report, the pathologist states that I have a stomach ulcer. Now, in this given situation I have all the data using which the pathologist concludes that I have a stomach ulcer. However, as a layperson, I do not have the expertise necessary to evaluate the correlation between my medical report and the medical facts. Therefore, I have no other choice but to accept the pathologist's report regarding my health (the medical facts).

After identifying these types of problems, some reductionists have revised their account as follows: “ *we must necessarily rely on some conceptual, linguistic and other background knowledge* (Gelfert 2014, 110),”

on the basis of people's testimonies which are not supported by the sufficient independent evidence. For example, as children, we accept much testimony without any sufficient independent evidence or basis. But, in order to reduce the justification of testimonial beliefs to any non-testimonial source of evidence, we must proceed on a case-by-case basis. Reductionists who endorse this view are called "*local reductionists*." According to them,

“. . . . the justification of each particular report or instance of testimony reduces to the justification of instances of sense perception, memory, and inductive inference. Specifically, local reductionists claim that in order to justifiedly accept speaker's testimony, a hearer must have non-testimonially based positive reason for accepting the particular report in question." (Lackey 2008, 148; Lackey and Sosa 2006, 5)

Thus, according to local reductionism, in order to justifiably accept one's testimony, we must proceed on a case-by-case basis. We occasionally accept testimonies without any sufficient independent evidence or ground. We do so during the initial stage of our intellectual development and childhood. Generally, though, in order to justifiably accept a testimony, a hearer must have sufficient independent positive reason for accepting the testimony. Pritchard formulated *local reductionism* as follows:

"For all of one's TBBs (testimony-based beliefs) gained in the non-developmental stage, if one's TBB is justified, then one is able to offer sufficient independent grounds in support of that TBB." (Pritchard 2004, 332)

According to Pritchard, a subject S, who is at a non-developmental stage, can justifiably hold a testimony-based belief if he/she is able to offer sufficient independent ground in support of his/her belief. On the contrary, if

a subject S is in the initial stage of intellectual development and childhood, then he/she can accept testimony without any sufficient independent grounds in favor of the testimony-based belief. However, I believe that this formulation of local reductionism is not sufficient for all testimony-based beliefs of the non-development stage. This formulation can exclude the testimony-based beliefs which we gained in an initial stage of intellectual and during childhood, but it could not exclude some exceptional case where we accept a testimony-based belief without any sufficient independent grounds (e.g., in my examples of the an enemy space station, and of the pathology report). Therefore, to exclude the testimony-based beliefs of intellectual developmental stage and some exceptional cases, I think that Pritchard's version of local reductionism should be revised in the following way:

For all of one's TBBs (testimony-based beliefs) gained in non-exceptional cases and at a non-developmental stage, if one's TBB is justified, then one is able to offer sufficient independent grounds in support of that TBB.

After my brief discussion of *global* and *local reductionism*, one must conclude that the opinions of reductionists are divided on the issue of justifiably accepted testimony. However, both global and local reductionists agree that in order to justify in believing any testimony, following condition must be satisfied:

For every speaker S, and hearer H, H is justified in believing that p on the basis of S's testimony that p, only if, in addition to absence of undefeated defeaters, H has positive reason in favor of p and that positive reason is not based on any testimony.

Both global and local reductionists accept that condition, that is, the non-testimonial-based positive reason. However, the difference between global and local reductionism is as follows:

According to global reductionism, for every speaker S, and hearer H, H is justified in believing that p on the basis of S's testimony that p, when H must have some positive reasons in favor of S's testimony that p, in addition to the absence of undefeated defeaters. On the contrary, according to local reductionism, For every speaker S, and hearer H, who is at a non-developmental stage or is not an exceptional case, H is justified in believing that p on the basis of S's testimony that p, when H must have positive reason in favor of S's testimony that p, in addition to the absence of undefeated defeaters.

2.5 Hume's Reductionist Theory of Testimony

In the previous section, I discussed the reductionist theory of testimony. In the present section, I shall focus on Hume's version of it. According to Hume, when we receive any report or testimony, we should not accept it immediately; we try to find additional grounds or reasons for accepting it. If we are able to find out any additional grounds or reasons in favor of the report, only then we can justifiably accept what others report. For example, suppose that Mr. John is a manager of a multinational company and one of his colleagues informs him of the corruption within his office. What should Mr. John do? Should he accept the report without any investigation or should he accept it after investigation? I believe that Mr. John should accept the report after investigation. Hence, the trustworthiness

of any report depends on empirical evidence. We are not entitled to justifiably accept any testimony unless we have a positive reason in favor of the testimony, and this positive reason must be provided by experience, not by any *apriori* reasoning. Here is what Hume says:

“It will be sufficient to observe that our assurance in any argument of this kind is derived from no other principle than our observation of the veracity of human testimony, and of the usual conformity of facts to the reports of witnesses. It being a general maxim, that no objects have any discoverable connexion together, and that all the inferences, which we can draw from one to another, are founded merely on our experience of their constant and regular conjunction; it is evident that we ought not to make an exception to this maxim in favour of human testimony, whose connexion with any event seems, in itself, as little necessary as any other.”
(Hume 2000, 84)

“The reason why we place any credit in witnesses and historians, is not derived from any connexion, which we perceive a priori, between testimony and reality, but because we are accustomed to find a conformity between them.”
(Hume 2000, 85 – 86)

“To apply these principles to a particular instance; we may observe, that there is no species of reasoning more common, more useful, and even necessary to human life, than that which is derived from the testimony of men and the reports of eye-witnesses and spectators. . . . It will be sufficient to observe, that our assurance in any argument of this kind is

derived from no other principle than our observation of the veracity of human testimony, and of the usual conformity of facts to reports of witnesses.” (Hume 2000, 84)

According to Hume, the justification for testimonial beliefs is dependent on non-testimonial evidence.²⁶ Now, the question is what type of reductionism is it? Is it a global or a local reductionist theory? Scholars have different view on this issue. I present first Coady’s interpretation, according to which Hume endorses global reductionism and he criticizes Hume on this ground. Next, I present Faulkner’s version of Hume’s global reductionism. Finally, I discuss Welbourne’s interpretation. I conclude this section with my own reading of Hume’s account of testimony.

Coady finds evidence for his interpretation of Hume as a global reductionist on passages such as the following:

“ . . . the reason why we place any credit in witnesses and historians, is not derived from any connexion, which we perceive a priori, between testimony and the reality, but because we are accustomed to find a conformity between them.” (Hume 1999, 172)

²⁶ “Essentially his theory constitutes a reduction of testimony as a form of evidence or support to the status of a species (one might almost say, a mutation) of inductive inference. And, again, in so far as inductive inference is reduce by Hume to a species of observation and consequences attendant upon observation, then in a like fashion testimony meets the same fate.” (Coady 1992, 79; Coady 1973, 149)

“It being a general maxim, that no objects have any discoverable connexion together, and that all the inferences, which we can draw from one to another, are founded merely on our experience of their constant and regular conjunction; it is evident that we ought not to make an exception to this maxim in favour of human testimony, whose connexion with any event seems, in itself, as little necessary as any other. Were not the memory tenacious to a certain degree, had not men commonly an inclination to truth and a principle of probity; were they not sensible to shame, when detected in a falsehood: were not these, I say, discovered by *experience* to be qualities, inherent in human nature, we should never repose the least confidence in human testimony. A man delirious, or noted for falsehood and villany, has no manner of authority with us.” (Hume 2000, 85; Coady 1992, 97)

According to Coady, these passages show that since Hume states reliability depends upon observation and experience, he must be a global reductionist.²⁷ As global reductionists have claimed, “in order to justifiably accept a speaker’s report, a hearer must have non-testimonial-based positive reasons for believing that the *testimony is generally reliable* (Lackey 2006, 5).”

²⁷ “Hume’s argument is not fully explicit here but he seems to be claiming that since we sometimes discover by observation and experience that some testimony is *unreliable* (i.e. ‘A man delirious or noted for falsehood or villainy has no manner of authority with us’) then we must discover the general *reliability* of testimony by the same method.” (Coady 1992, 97)

However, Coady rejects global reductionism on two grounds:

First, he argues that “. . . observation can sometimes uncover false testimony does nothing towards showing that the general reliability of testimony depends upon observation in the way RT (Coady uses the abbreviation RT to refer Reductionist Thesis {Coady 1992, 80}) requires (Coady 1992, 97).” If we accept reductionism in the epistemology of testimony on the basis of the principle according to which we sometimes discover by observation and experience that some testimony is unreliable, then Hume must accept reductionism in the epistemology of memory because sometimes we discover that our memories are false as they do not adequately correspond with our present observation.²⁸ Therefore, if we accept the Humean principle of reductionism, then we need empirical evidence also in order to justify our memories. However, we do not justify our memories through observation; hence, the Humean principle of reductionism should be rejected.

Second, Coady contends that Hume’s account involves vicious circularity. To understand why, let me summarize Hume’s account one more time. According to Hume, every hearer H and speaker S, H is justified in believing that p on the basis of S’s testimony that p, when H is able to verify

²⁸ “Sometimes an individual discovers that his memories are false because they do not adequately consort with his present perceptual experience. He may think he recalls a large flowering gum tree in a certain familiar park at a certain spot but when he goes there to admire it, there is no sign of its ever having been there, though he soon comes across it in a nearby golf course which he recall frequenting. Here individual observation (plus or including a little inference) shows memory to be fallacious.” (Coady 1992, 98)

S's testimony that p through observation. However, when H is unable to verify it through observation or when S's trustworthiness is well established through past experience, then S's testimony that p should be based on the causal principle and laws of nature. Therefore, when a testimony presents a miraculous event, we should reject that testimony immediately because we are unable to verify such testimony through observation and because of its contradicted our uniform experience and laws of nature.

Coady remarks that uniform experience and the laws of nature, which are the basis of the testimony when the hearer does not verify or is unable to verify before believing that testimony, are dependent on testimonial beliefs. We can consider an observation or experience of an object as a uniform observation or experience only if it is observed irrespective of age or country. However, to know that the object is observed at any age or in any country, we must to depend on the testimony (i.e., the reports of past observation and the reports of other places) because it is impossible for a person to observe any event that occurred in a remote place and in the past. Therefore, according to Coady, for the trustworthiness of the testimony, Hume depends on uniform observation, and for the knowledge of uniform observation he depends on the testimony.

Coady's argument is as follows:

“Evidently, then, RT (Reductionist Thesis) as actually argued by Hume is involved in vicious circularity, since the experience upon which our reliance upon testimony as a form of evidence is supposed to rest is itself reliant upon testimony which cannot be reduced in the same way.”
(Coady 1992, 81)

According to Coady, this is true for not only the testimony of miraculous or past events, but also true for the present earthly events. For example, in the *Treatise of Human Nature* Hume says that:

“I receive a letter, which upon opening it I perceive by the hand-writing and subscription to have come from a friend, who says he is two hundred leagues distant. 'T is evident I can never account for this phenomenon, conformable to my experience in other instances, without spreading out in my mind the whole sea and continent between us, and supposing the effects and continued existence of posts and ferries, according to my memory and observation.” (Hume 1965, Book-I, Part-IV, Sec.-II, 196)

Elsewhere, Hume says:

“Here then I am naturally led to regard the world, as something real and durable, and as preserving its existence, even when it is no longer present to my perception.” (Hume 1965, Book-I, Part-IV, Sec.-II, 197)

According to Coady, when Hume uses the term ‘my’ observation, he is not entitled to do so because it is very difficult to personally observe the complete journey of even one letter. Therefore, his belief about the postal system depends on a complicated web of testimony and inference. Hence, according to Coady, for the trustworthiness of testimony, Hume depends on uniformity of observation. On the other hand, to know uniformity of observation, we are highly dependent on testimony. Therefore, Hume’s scheme of reductionism involves a vicious circularity. (Coady 1992, 80 – 81)

Paul Faulkner (1998) criticizes Coady's interpretation of Hume's account of testimony that the hearer derives the credibility of the speaker's testimony from the memories of past experience when he/she is not in a position to verify it (in the case of an unknown passer-by's testimony) or not eager to verify it (in the case of a well-known person's testimony).

However, according to Faulkner, Coady does not correctly interpret Hume. There are other ways of answering the question of how the hearer gains credibility of the speaker's testimony from his/her past observations. One may interpret Hume differently. According to Faulkner, when Hume states that the credibility of the testimony depends on observation even if the hearer is neither in a position nor eager to verify it, he does not mean that the hearer infers the credibility of the testimony from the memories of his/her past observations of the regular conjunction between the speaker's assertion and the facts reported by the speaker's assertion. Faulkner argues that one can correctly and differently interpret Hume's concept of testimony. However, the question is if Faulkner refuses to accept that the hearer infers the credibility of the speaker's testimony from his past observation, then how can he explain it? To answer this question, Faulkner argues that the hearer can directly gain the credibility of the speaker's testimony when he/she is neither able to empirically verify it nor eager to personally verify it.

However, how is the credibility of the speaker's testimony judged directly by the hearer? To answer this question, Faulkner discusses a passage from the *Treatise of Human Nature*,²⁹ wherein Hume says that testimonial

²⁹ "The words or discourses of others have an intimate connexion with certain ideas in their mind; and these ideas have also a connexion with the facts or objects,

beliefs are based on causal relationship. Testimony is an effect and the actual facts presented by the testimony are a cause. According to Hume, the causal relationship between two events is discovered by experience. Human nature forces one to accept a connection between these two events which one is observing regularly or uniformly. This constant and uniform conjunction (without any exception) between two events is called a “*causal relationship*”. On the basis of this causal relationship, one is able to derive existence of cause from the effect. Similarly, one is able to derive the existence of facts (which are presented by a certain type of testimony), when one receives a certain type of testimony (Faulkner 1998, 306-307). However, according to Hume, unlike other derivation depending on causal relationship, credibility or trustworthiness of the testimony is directly derived from the speaker’s testimony on the basis of causal reasoning, even though we are occasionally skeptical about the speaker’s testimony. For example, if the speaker is a doubtful individual or if the speaker delivers their assertion with

which they represent. This latter connexion is generally much over-rated, and commands our assent beyond what experience will justify; which can proceed from nothing beside the resemblance betwixt the ideas and the facts. Other effects only point out their causes in an oblique manner; but the testimony of men does it directly, and is to be considered as an image as well as an effect. No wonder, therefore, we are so rash in drawing our inferences from it, and are less guided by experience in our judgments concerning it, than in those upon any other subject.” (Hume 1965, 113; Faulkner 1998, 306)

hesitation, then one should be skeptical and hesitate to accept the testimony.

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However, here I would like to say that since Hume does not provide a well-structured scheme of testimony, there is much confusion about how the hearer judges the credibility of the speaker's testimony when he/she is neither able to empirically verify them, nor eager to personally verify them. Hume states that “. . . *our inference from cause to effect and effect to cause*” (Hume 1965, 113), and credibility or trustworthiness of the testimony depends on the causal principle; on the basis of this statement Coady interprets Hume's concept of testimony as that the hearer infers the credibility of the speaker's testimony on the basis of observation based general maxim when he/she is neither able to empirically verify it nor eager to personally verify it. Instead, Faulkner interprets Hume's concept of testimony differently on the basis of Hume's assertion that “*Other effects only point out their causes in an oblique manner; but the testimony of men does it directly*” (Hume 1965, 113). According to Hume, it is true that one can infer cause from effect or effect from cause, however, in the case of testimony, credibility or trustworthiness of the testimony is known directly. On the basis of this ground, Faulkner argues that the hearer knows credibility or trustworthiness of the testimony directly. However, Hume does

³⁰ “We entertain a suspicion concerning any matter of fact, when the witnesses contradict each other; when they are but few, or of a doubtful character; when they have an interest in what they affirm; when they deliver their testimony with hesitation, or on the contrary, with too violent asseverations. There are many other particulars of the same kind, which may diminish or destroy the force of any argument, derived from human testimony.” (Hume 2000, 85; Faulkner 1998, 307)

not provide any explanation for why he claims that the knowledge of credibility or trustworthiness (cause) is derived directly from testimony. This causes much confusion because Hume typically states that we generally infer cause from effect and effect from cause. However, both Coady and Faulkner agree that Hume endorses a form of global reductionism. Thus, even though Coady and Faulkner both agree that, Hume believes trustworthiness or credibility of the testimony ultimately depends on empirical evidence, they differ in explaining how the hearer knows the credibility of the speaker's testimony when he/she is not able to empirically verify it or not eager to personally verify it. Coady argues that Hume believes that the hearer infers the credibility of the speaker's testimony; however, Faulkner says that Hume believes that the hearer directly knows the credibility of the speaker's testimony.

In this context, I might say that even though Faulkner rejected Coady's interpretation of Humean testimony, he does not reject Coady's entire objection against Hume's concept of reductionism. Therefore, Coady's objection against the Humean account of reductionism remains unresolved.

Michael Welbourne (2002), however, does not accept Coady's and Faulkner's explanation that Hume is a reductionist. According to Welbourne, there is another way of reading Hume and explaining the Humean account of testimony, which corresponds with Hume's empiricist explanation of the belief-forming mechanism and is also more acceptable than other explanations of the testimony. According to Welbourne, when Hume argues that if two objects have any discoverable connection with each other (which he called a causal connection or relationship between cause and effect), and we derive one from the other on the basis of that connection, then the connection between them must have been discovered by our previous experience of their constant and regular association/connection. On this

ground one should reject any *a priori* connection between testimony and reality. According to Welbourne, when Hume argues that the reason for drawing one conclusion from another based on a causal connection is founded on experience, therefore, he rejects any *apriori* connection between them; he does not accept an exception to this maxim in favor of human testimony. Hence, the credibility of the speaker's testimony is based on empirical evidence (i.e., constant and regular association of the speaker's statements or reports with the reality). Therefore, when we assign credibility to a witness, it is not because we perceived an *apriori* connection between his/her report and reality, but because we are accustomed to finding a connection between his/her reports and reality (Hume 2000, 85–86 Welbourne 2002, 413-414).

On the basis of this argument, critics, such as Coady, argue that Hume's account of testimony is a global reductionism. However, Welbourne explains the Humean account of testimony differently (Welbourne 2002, 414-415). According to Welbourne, to understand the Humean account of testimony, one must realize the position of a child at the point when he/she is beginning to learn language and, within a few years, becomes an expert in the language. For example, any child born into a particular linguistic community where testimonial utterances are common for exchanging one's thoughts and beliefs with others in the same linguistic community often learns his/her language from his/her parents and family members. The parents and family members are very careful of their language in front of him/her. They utter "duck" when there is a duck or "car" when there is car and not otherwise. In this process, he/she notices a correlation between his/her parents' uncategorized utterance of words such as "duck" and ducks, or "car" and cars, and so on. According to Welbourne, in this manner, a child begins to learn the meaning of those words and, at the same time, comprehends the idea of using words to report external states of affair.

He/she begins to learn the vocabulary and simultaneously practices' using the vocabulary to express the fact. Therefore, according to Welbourne, when Hume claimed that we must experience a constant and regular association between testimony and reality in order to know something through testimony, then he might have meant this basic language learning process which is, at the same time, consistent with his empiricist stance; nevertheless, according to Welbourne, Hume does not offer much argument in its favor. However, there is no doubt that we are genetically programmed to learn a specific way of using the language for certain speech-acts of our community, which Hume does not refute. Rather, Hume believes human nature forces and programs human beings to act in a certain way, which is similar to doing something in the genetically programmed way. However, the truth is that Hume was entirely silent about the language-acquisition process of a child. Therefore, according to Welbourne, Hume does not develop a complete and comprehensive theory of testimony. Instead, he just reveals some signs of understanding the broad framework of a testimony theory. (Welbourne 2002, 416-417)

2.6 My Understanding of Hume

From the preceding discussion, we may conclude that epistemologists do not agree on the nature of the Humean account of testimony. Some epistemologists attempted to label Hume's concept of testimony as global reductionism; the others (such as Welbourne) refuted the claim. I, however, believe that those who believe that Hume's account of testimony is a global reductionism do not highlight an extremely vital issue related to Hume's scheme of testimony. In the present section, I explore and examine this

issue, which I believe will be more helpful to establish the account of testimony Hume attempted to develop through his writings.

Before initiating this discussion, I recapitulate the previously discussed Humean theory of *Ideas*. According to Hume, objects of human reason may be divided into two categories: *Relations of Ideas* and *Matters of Fact*. Reasoning concerning relations of ideas is about the science of geometry, algebra, and arithmetic. To be concise, every proposition concerning relations of ideas is either intuitively or demonstratively certain. According to Hume, these types of propositions are not based on experience. In contrast, unlike proposition concerning relations of ideas, proposition concerning matters of fact is not intuitively or demonstratively certain. These types of propositions are possible because their falsification could never imply any contradiction. They are concerned with the material world, such as a table, chair, book, river, and mountain.

Epistemologists, such as Coady, Faulkner, have focused only on proposition concerning matters of fact while discussing the Humean account of testimony; they have not paid attention to proposition concerning relations of ideas. I think that this is a major problem for understanding the Humean account of testimony. If these epistemologists had considered also propositions concerning relations of ideas, they would not have interpreted Hume as a global reductionist. Hume accepts experience-based proposition (i.e., reasoning concerning matters of fact), and is simultaneously interested in proposition concerning the relations of ideas.

2.7 Possibility of Testimony in Mathematics

Testimony concerning relations of ideas (as in pure mathematics) is a highly controversial issue. In focus on it in this section I argue that if we establish the possibility of testimony concerning mathematics, then we can claim that Hume was not in a position to accept global reductionism in his account of testimony; otherwise we would fail to establish our position.

According to some philosophers, (i.e., Williams 1972), a hearer is unable to acquire any mathematical knowledge through testimony. Williams claims that if someone believes a mathematically true proposition that P on the basis of good authority but cannot mathematically demonstrate it, then he/she does not know that P. For mathematical knowledge, a knower can know only intuitively or demonstratively, that is through *apriori* methods. Therefore, mathematical knowledge cannot be gained by testimony. However, the problem is if any expert of mathematics informs us of a mathematical fact, that P is true, then what should we acquire from the renowned mathematician's statement? Should we not acquire the mathematical knowledge that P is true? Williams was well aware of this type of objections and responded by distinguishing between the notions of "knowing that P" and "knowing that P is a truth of a given science," and claims that it is possible for a knower to know that "P is a truth of a given science," without knowing that P. Thus, in the given circumstances, according to Williams, a hearer can only know that P is a truth of mathematics without knowing that P. Williams argued that unless the hearer personally verifies the mathematical truth that P, he does not acquire the knowledge of P. In this sense, according to Williams, testimony has not the potentiality to provide mathematical knowledge (Williams 1972, 9).

Some epistemologists, for example, Coady, Geist, Löwe, and Kerkhove, have a different opinion concerning the possibility to acquire mathematical knowledge through testimony. According to Coady, when a mathematical expert informs us that P is true, on the basis of that assertion we not only know that P is a mathematical truth but also we know that P is true, because that P is true is a part of the knowledge that P is a truth of mathematics. Therefore, if someone knows that P is a truth of mathematics, he/she can easily conclude that P is true. After he/she concludes that P is true, he/she knows that P . According to Coady, “A knows that P is a truth of mathematics” entails “A knows that P is true,” and “A knows that P is true” entails “A knows that P .” Thus, we can rightly conclude that a knower knows that P when he knows that P is a truth of mathematics from a renowned mathematician’s statement. Thus, according to Coady, a hearer can acquire the mathematical knowledge from the statement(s) or writings of a renowned mathematician’s (Coady 1973, 252–254).

Against Williams, Geist, Löwe, and Kerkhove contend further that mathematicians occasionally accept and use the results of the published literature in their own research without personally verifying it or meticulously checking for the accuracy of the theorems on which their results depend (Geist, Löwe, and Kerkhove, 2010; Coady 1997, 260.). Moreover, mathematicians occasionally use mathematical results without any personal verification because they are not competent to verify them or the proofs involve expertise in multiple areas of mathematics. For example, suppose a mathematician has specialized in a particular branch of mathematics, such as convex geometry, but does not possess much expertise in others branches of mathematics. The different branches of mathematics include mathematical logic, constructive mathematics, arithmetic, algebra, geometry, topology, applied mathematics, probability, and statistics, among others, which also contain sub branches. For instance, sub-branches of

mathematical logic include model theory, set theory, and proof theory; sub-branches of algebra include order theory, and number theory. Therefore, we can consider the mathematician from the other branch as an *outsider* with respect to a particular theory of mathematics. Now, as an *outsider*, when he/she uses a result of other mathematical theories, he/she uses it without any verification and concern regarding the origin or method of that result because he/she is not competent to personally verify it. Mathematicians from different areas of specialization occasionally collaborate and obtain results on the basis of their individual results, which are not personally verified by each of them. They merely accept the other mathematicians' results as true just as they would accept their own results, which each of them personally verified.³¹

We should also consider the fact that currently, mathematical proofs are highly much dependent on the computer. Unless mathematicians accept the reliability of the computer, they cannot prove a mathematical notion. For example, our evidence of formal proofs in mathematics depends on the presupposition of the reliability of the computer. Therefore, similar to accepting a mathematician's dependence on the computer and other mathematicians' proofs, the laymen also accept what a renowned

³¹ “For instance, a real analyst who is told that a certain tangential claim is equivalent to a large-cardinal axiom in set theory will stop working to prove it—she has been told that these axioms are provably independent of ZFC, and does not need to work through this whole proof herself. Similarly, a topologist might reduce some claim to an algebraic one, and then just appeal to outside sources to convince herself that this algebraic claim is true. However, directly in the core parts of her own research, she will want to convince herself of everything and avoid trusting testimony.” (Easwaran 2009, 354)

mathematician may state about any mathematical truth (Coady 1997, 260; Easwaran 2009, 356).

The above considerations suggest that mathematics gives us at least categorically more secure knowledge than other sciences and, hence mathematics can be considered an “epistemic exception.” Yet the issue is still highly debated and, in the present context, I do not take a position on it. Suffice to say that if someone hears from a renowned mathematician that P is true, he/she does not require any empirical evidence in order to accept the mathematician’s statement. If verification is required, it will be demonstrative. Therefore, I believe that, in order to verify the trustworthiness of the testimony concerning mathematical truth, which Hume considered as reasoning concerning relations of ideas, does not depend on any empirical evidence. Hence, we are not entitled to label the Humean account of testimony as global reductionism.

Chapter 3

3.1 Fricker's Local Reductionism

In the previous chapter, I discussed in detail Hume's concept of testimony. Moreover, I briefly illustrated the distinguishing features of reductionism and anti-reductionism. I now extend my enquiry to Elizabeth Fricker's (1987; 1994; 1995; 2002; and 2006) concept of testimony, which is, undoubtedly, a type of reductionism, and stress differences (if any) between her account and Hume's account.

Fricker acknowledge that some knowledge concerning the external world and internal state of individuals depends on what other individuals in the same language group say. For example, an individual who has never visited the South Pole can acquire considerable knowledge regarding the South Pole from the writings of an expert, who has explored the region. Therefore, it is not difficult to have the knowledge of external world without knowing things directly; knowledge can be acquired through what is narrated by others or what is documented by experts. Similarly, we can know about an individual's internal state through that individual's oral or written statements. For example, a physician knows his/her patient's internal state, such as whether he/she has a headache, from what the patient tells him/her or from the medical investigation reports of a competent authority. For instance, a computed tomography (CT) scan or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) report indicates whether a patient has a brain tumour and whether that

tumour is causing the headaches experienced by the patient. Similarly, I can understand my childhood friend's mental state from his/her letter. Therefore, Knowledge disseminates through language-use.

3.2 Testimony and Individual's Knowledge

According to Fricker, when an individual becomes a competent language user, he/she is not confined to the range of his/her own perception, memories, and inferences to gain knowledge regarding the world. He/she can gain this knowledge through the oral or written testimonies of others belonging to his/her language community. However, how does an individual's knowledge disseminate through the language within the same language community? To answer this question, Fricker argues that in a particular language community, when an individual S believes that P, and wishes to communicate his/her belief that P, he/she makes an utterance, which constitutes his/her assertion of that P to his/her hearer H, who has an implicit command over his/her language. After knowing and understanding S's assertions, the hearer H shares the same belief as S. For example, when an individual S believes that there is a dog in the garden, says that "There is a dog in the garden", if H hears S's assertion, H may acquire a similar belief. Now, (under certain condition) if S's belief is knowledge, then H's belief may also count as knowledge. The same applies when an individual H reads a written testimony. (Fricker 1987, 57; 2006, 229).

It must be emphasized that the dissemination of knowledge through language is an extremely complex process. Both the speaker and hearer have significant roles in this process. In this context, I discuss significance of the

speaker and hearer in the epistemology of testimony in a very aphoristic way. Dissemination of the speaker's knowledge that P to the hearer through language depends on the fulfilment of the following conditions:

- I. The speaker knows that P.
- II. The speaker is in a normal physical and mental state.
- III. The speaker does not intend to deceive his/her hearer or reader.
- IV. The hearer is competent in the language used by the speaker to express his/her knowledge that P.
- V. The hearer perfectly understands the meaning intentions of the speaker and the context of utterance.

The first three conditions apply to the speaker, whereas the remaining two apply to the hearer. These conditions are crucial in the epistemology of testimony. In the absence of any of these conditions, the testimony cannot fulfill its purpose as a source of knowledge. For example, assume that Smith does not have any grounds to believe that John has a Ford. Furthermore, let us assume that John does not own a car at all. However, if Smith still asserts that John has a Ford to Peter, who is a common friend to both, then Peter will not gain any knowledge from Smith's assertions. Therefore, the hearer H can gain knowledge from the speaker S's assertion that P, only if it is based on the speaker's knowledge that P.

Similarly, let us assume that Smith is known to his friends and relatives as being mentally retarded or having a cognitive defect. Furthermore, assume that he saw Philip murdering Stephen the previous night. However, when Smith reports his eye-witness account to the police regarding the last night, they do not consider him a witness because he is mentally retarded and his assertion cannot be considered a source of

knowledge. Similarly, if a speaker has any physical problems, such as weak vision, hearing issues, and communication disorders, which affect the testimonial process directly or indirectly, his/her assertion cannot be considered a source of knowledge. Therefore, physical and mental health is a crucial condition for testimony.

The third condition is the speaker's moral character. If the speaker is dishonest and has deceptive intentions, his/her assertions cannot be treated as testimony, because hearers do not gain any knowledge from such assertion. Therefore, the speaker should be sincere regarding his/her assertions.

The fourth and fifth conditions are associated with the hearer. To gain knowledge from the speaker's assertion, the hearer should have adequate competence in the speaker's language. The phrases "adequate competence" instead of "competence" is used intentionally because if we emphasize on absolute competence, then it prevents young learners within a language community or new learners from other language communities from gaining any knowledge from a speaker's assertion due to the lack of complete competence in the speaker's language. Moreover, to gain knowledge from a speaker's assertion, a hearer requires only enough competence rather than complete competence in the speaker's language. Here, the word "enough" is crucial because it suggests that the hearer must have necessary and sufficient competence in the speaker's language to completely understand and gain any knowledge from what the speaker intends to convey.

According to the fifth condition, to gain knowledge from a speaker's assertion, a hearer must understand the speaker's intention because people are accustomed to using a particular word that refers to more than one object

in a particular language community. For example, the word “bank” is used to refer to the place where we keep our money, and the outskirts of the river or sea. If the speaker uses such a word in his/her assertion, then the hearer needs to know the meaning intentions and context in which that word is used.

3.3 Justificationist and Reliabilist Theories of Knowledge

Theories of knowledge are often divided into two main groups: internalist theories and externalist theories. For internalist theories of knowledge, a belief counts as knowledge only if the subject of the belief endorses some specific reasons that count as correct, for entertaining that belief. For externalist theories of knowledge, the main fact is the process causing the belief. If the process is reliable, that is, if it is generally conducive to truth, and the belief is true, then that belief counts as knowledge. Frickers rephrases the distinction between internalist theories and externalist theories in terms of a distinction between justificationist theories of knowledge and reliabilist theories of knowledge:

“I shall define a *justificationist* theory of knowledge as any theory which includes a *justification requirement* on beliefs, for them to be knowledge. A *reliabilist* theory is any theory which characterises knowledge in terms of some explication of the notion of ‘reliability’ of beliefs, e.g. as belief arrived at by a reliable method or mechanism. And I take a reliabilist theory to be one which does not include a justification requirement. With this proviso, the two

conceptions are indeed incompatible: that is to say, no theory of knowledge can be both a justificationist and a reliabilist theory, on these definitions.” (Fricker 1987, 59 – 60)

According to the justification theory, a subject has knowledge only if his/her beliefs are grounded on (correct) reasons that he/she endorses. The reliability theory states instead that if a belief originates from a reliable method or mechanism, then we can consider it as knowledge.³²

According to Fricker, justificationists disagree with the reliabilist view that the way a belief was caused is the determining factor of knowledge. She denies that if a belief originates in a reliable way only then we can consider the belief as knowledge. However, within the justificationist framework of knowledge, is there any link between knowledge and how a belief is caused? If a link exists, then what is the nature of this connection? One might argue that an individual’s justification of his/her belief does not depend on how he acquired this belief. Fricker disagrees with this perspective, since she believes that the way a belief is caused plays a crucial role in the justificationist epistemology.

³² Here, I would like to say that, I do not want to discuss Justificationism and Reliabilism in a detailed. Here, what I discussed about the Justificationism and Reliabilism, I discuss on the light of what Fricker presented them in her writings for the purpose to present her theory of testimony. To know the difference between Justificationism and Reliabilism in more detailed please see: F. P. Ramsey, Peter Unger, David Armstrong, Alvin Goldman, Robert Nozick , Duncan Pritchard, etc..

According to Fricker, if we deny any such link between the ways a belief is caused and justification of the belief, then some beliefs, which are not considered knowledge, will claim the status of knowledge. For example, let us assume that an individual acquires a true belief through an epistemologically unrespectable process, such as brainwashing, and subsequently acquires satisfactory evidence favoring such a belief. If we deny any role to the link between the way a belief was originated and the justification of the belief in the justificationist epistemology, then we have to consider such a belief as knowledge, because this belief is a true and is supported by adequate evidence. Therefore, Fricker suggests that the link between the way a belief was caused and the justification of the belief must be considered in the justificationist epistemology to avoid such unacceptable beliefs from being considered knowledge.

However, subsequently, the following question arises: if the way a belief originated plays a crucial role in the justificationist epistemology for considering a belief as knowledge, in other words, if the justification of a belief depends on the way it is caused, then how is this theory unique and different from the reliabilist theory? Fricker argues that when she claims that there is a link between the way a belief is caused and the justification of the belief, she does not imply that a certain belief is knowledge because it originated through a reliable process, as reliabilists claim. Rather, she claiming that, sometimes we consider a reliable process P as a justification for certain belief originated by P. The reliabilists do not present the way a belief was caused as a justification for that belief; they accept a belief as knowledge only because it is caused in a reliable way. Fricker argues instead that sometimes an individual mentions a causal link or particular process that caused his/her belief as the justification for his/her belief. For example,

consider an individual A, who claims that he/she knows that P. Now, if someone challenges A to defend his/her claims, then, generally, to defend his/her claims that he/she knows that P, he/she will explain how he/she acquired his/her belief that P, for example, he/she saw it, remembered it, or inferred it. Therefore, by citing or recapitulating the ways his/her belief was caused, he/she actually provides some justification in favor of his/her belief.³³ According to Fricker, this type of justification is considered as recapitulating justification or link-recapitulating justification. The individual recapitulates or cites the way in which he/she acquired the belief as a justification of that belief. We should note further that we never cite methods such as brainwashing and consumption (ingestion) of hallucinatory drugs, to defend our claims of knowledge because no justification is associated with such methods. Conversely, perception, memory, etc., are epistemologically respectable sources, which can be cited or recapitulated by an individual as a defense of his/her belief. Therefore, the way a belief was caused, can be considered as a favorable justification of the belief, and we may conclude that the justification of beliefs may be associated with the particular ways in which the beliefs are acquired (Fricker 1987, 65).

According to Fricker, it is true that, sometimes, a certain type of justification may be associated with a particular way in which the belief was caused. However, this condition alone is not sufficient for justification; an additional condition is required for recapitulating justification.

³³ “Justification of belief of this kind work by *citing or recapitulating the way in which the belief was cause.*” (Fricker 1987, 65)

Let us assume that a subject S believes that P is caused by an epistemic link W and he/she recapitulates W to defend or justify his/her belief that P. According to Fricker, W must be a reliable belief-forming process and a certain type of justification for the belief that P may be associated with W.³⁴ Suppose now that S is unaware that a certain type of justification is associated with W. Could S in a position to present W as a justification for his/her belief that P? The answer to this question is in the negative for the following reason. To present a certain reliable belief-forming process W as a justification for the belief acquired through W, the subject S must know that a certain type of justification is associated with W, in other words, S must know why he/she is presenting W as a justification of that P, and at the same time, S knows the premises (at least some of the premises) which justify his/her belief that P, as a consequence of the process of acquiring that P. Let me explain this through the following example: suppose John believes that there is honey for tea in the kitchen. Now, if someone asks him that why he believes it, he might say “I saw it.” Here, the belief that there is honey for tea in the kitchen is acquired through a reliable belief-forming process (perception) and John knows it; at the same time, John knows the premises (I saw it), that he presented as a justification for his belief. According to Fricker, here, the premise that “I saw it” is adequate for justifying John’s belief that there is honey for tea in the kitchen. This belief is justified by the process of seeing wherein he acquires the belief that he saw it and the very belief that he saw it.

³⁴ “. . . certain type of justification for beliefs may be associated with a particular way in which beliefs are acquired. . . .” (Fricker 1987, 65)

What about the beliefs acquired through testimony? Sometimes the subject cannot in a position to know, all of the adequate premises which he/she presented as justification of his belief, as a consequence of the belief-forming process. For example, suppose John believes that there is honey for tea in the kitchen on the basis of Smith's assertion. Now, if someone asks John why he believes that there is honey for tea in the kitchen, then he has to present a number of premises as a justification of his belief, such as, Smith asserted that there was honey for tea in the kitchen, Smith is a honest person, Smith kept the honey in the kitchen himself, Smith has no intention of deceiving others, Smith has adequate mental and physical conditions, because only one premise, such as, "I acquired this belief on the basis of Smith's assertion" (recapitulating the way John acquired the belief), is not adequate to justify John's belief. Here, John cannot know all the premises presented to justify his belief as a consequence of the belief-forming process. He knows only one premise as a consequence of the belief-forming process; that is, Smith asserts that there is honey for tea in the kitchen. Therefore, John needs some other ways to know all the premises that he presented as a justification of his belief that there is a honey for tea. However, it is not possible (at every instance of testimony) to know whether the speaker is truly honest. According to Fricker, it is not necessary for the hearer to know whether the speaker is generally honest; it is sufficient for the hearer to have an appropriate reason to think (believe) that the speaker is sincere and competent about his/her assertion.³⁵ Fricker believes that the additional information is associated with the speaker's sincerity.

³⁵ "Note however that the hearer need not know the speaker to be *generally* honest;

From the aforementioned discussion, Fricker concludes that there are two types of reliable belief-forming process (which Fricker labels as epistemic link). According to Fricker, when the operation of the belief-forming process places the subject in a position to know, as a consequence of the process, all the premises which are adequate to justify the belief acquired by the process, then the process is known as *primary epistemic link* or *primary belief-forming process*. As previously discussed, in the context of perception, as a consequence of his *seeing*, the subject can know all the premises that are adequate to justify the belief acquired by the process of seeing. Therefore, according to Fricker, perception is a *primary belief-forming process* or *primary epistemic link*.

By contrast, when the operation of the belief-forming process places the subject in a position to know, as a consequence of the process, some of the premises which are adequate for justifying the belief acquired by the process, then the process is known as *secondary belief-forming process* or *secondary epistemic link*. As previously discussed, in the context of testimony, as a consequence of the testimonial process, the subject knows only certain premises that are adequate to justify the belief acquired by testimony. Therefore, according to Fricker, testimony is a *secondary belief-forming process* or *secondary epistemic link* (Fricker 1987, 66–67).

From the aforementioned discussion, Fricker formulates her justificationist theory, wherein the subject can legitimately present the way

it is enough that he have some specific reason to (truly) think him to be sincere on the occasion in question.” (Fricker 1987, 73)

or process in which he/she acquired the belief as a justification of the belief acquired by that process, in the following way:

“We may count a way of acquisition of beliefs *W* as an *epistemic link*, on our favoured justificationist theory, if the following two conditions hold:

- I. There is a type *J_w* of Justification for beliefs *associated with W* in our defined sense.
- II. At least sometimes when a subject has acquired a belief *b* through *W* he will, at least in part as a consequence of this process, be in a position to know the premises of a justification of the type *J_w*, and thus to offer this justification in defence of *b*.” (Fricker 1987, 66)

Here, “*J*” represents justification, and “*w*” represents the way of acquiring the belief; hence, Fricker states that “*J_w*” refers to the process of justifying a belief by the way it was caused. A subject can legitimize the link between the way a belief is acquired and the justification of that belief, when the process or way in which the belief was acquired is accepted as a reliable epistemic source, and he/she knows the premises (at least some premises) which he/she presents as a justification for the belief as consequences of the process through which he/she acquired the belief.

3.4 Sincerity of the Speaker in the Epistemology of Testimony

In the context of Fricker’s formulation of recapitulating justification, we observed that when a subject acquires a belief on the basis of the

speaker's testimony, he/she needs some additional information about the speaker to justify his/her belief; such as whether the speaker is honest, speaker has no intention of deceiving the hearer, and so forth. According to Fricker, this additional information is associated with the speaker's sincerity. Yet, how does the hearer know that the speaker is sincere in respect of his/her assertion of that P? According to anti-reductionists, a speaker's sincerity and competence can be known without any additional evidence. This means that in any linguistic community, a speaker asserts that P only when he/she believes that P is true, and he/she is justified in believing that P. Therefore, a hearer has the right to consider that the speaker is sincere and competent, without any additional evidence, when the speaker asserts that P.

However, Fricker does not accept the convention of the perfectly sincere linguistic community, because one cannot completely exclude the practical possibility of the speaker's insincerity. Moreover, if we assume that a linguistic community comprises members who are truly sincere and competent regarding their language-use, and they assert P only when P is true, and he/she is justified in believing that P with no intention of deceiving others, we still cannot exclude the possibility of human errors, mental and physical defects, and moral decline of the speaker. Assume that an individual S has defective color vision, such as red-green color blindness (protanopia), and is unaware of his/her color blindness. In such circumstance, a hearer cannot gain any knowledge regarding these particular colors from S's assertion. If we now accept the anti-reductionist concept, which suggests that the hearer has every right to accept what the speaker says without any additional evidence, then we have to admit that the hearer can gain knowledge regarding the color from the speaker's (color blind) assertion.

Therefore, to avoid such practical possibilities of insincerity or incompetence, we must admit that additional evidence is required to assess the speaker's sincerity and competence at a particular occasion.³⁶

From the aforementioned discussion, we conclude that Fricker's concept of testimony, suggests that the speaker S and hearer H, when H believes that P based on a speaker's assertion that P, can defend his/her belief that P by saying that "S asserts that P." However, a mere citation of the ways his/her belief originated is not adequate to defend his/her belief that P; to defend his/her belief that P, an individual requires additional information concerning the speaker's sincerity, competence, and his/her mental and physical conditions. However, how can a hearer assess the speaker's sincerity and competence? Fricker answers that a hearer may have an existing dossier of information regarding the speaker, which provides the hearer with adequate reasons to believe in the speaker's assertion. However, this explanation does not apply in the case of a stranger. Fricker states that even if the speaker is not known to the hearer, the hearer can derive adequate information about the speaker from his/her (the speaker's) behavior (Fricker 1987, 78). In my analysis of Hume's reductionist account of testimony in the *Chapter One*, I discussed how a hearer determines whether a speaker is

³⁶ "Thus, I suggest, despite the conceptual constraints on interpretation it remains an empirical question whether particular speaker, on particular occasions, are either competent or sincere; one which a self-consciously rational belief-former will wish to have positive evidence about, before he believe what he is told." (Fricker 1987, 76)

sincere from his/her behavior or gestures.³⁷ Therefore, here, I do not discuss how a hearer derives the trustworthiness of a speaker from his/her behavior.

However, as previously discussed, some epistemologists do not agree with the reductionist view. According to them, a hearer has a presumptive and epistemic right to trust an arbitrary speaker's assertion that P. Fricker formulates this anti-reductionist view in the following way:

“PR (presumptive right) thesis: On any occasion of testimony, the hearer has the epistemic right to assume, without evidence, that the speaker is trustworthy, i.e. that what she say will be true, unless there are special circumstances which defeat this presumption. (Thus she has the epistemic right to believe the speaker's assertion, unless such defeating conditions obtain.)” (Fricker 1994, 125)

According to the PR thesis, besides special circumstances involving a strong defeater, a hearer has an epistemic right to accept the speaker's

³⁷ “. . . . from the manner of their delivering their testimony; when they deliver their testimony with hesitation, or on the contrary, There are many other particulars of the same kind, which may diminish or destroy the force of any argument, derived from human testimony.” (Hume 2000, 85)

“. when the speaker is unknown to him, cues in his behaviour (for example shiftiness, or its opposite), and other relevant background information may provide an adequate basis for justified true belief in his sincerity and competence.” (Fricker 1987, 78)

statement's trustworthiness, without any additional evidence. Fricker suggests that a testimony can be considered as a source of knowledge if the PR thesis is combined with a *negative claim (NC)* that the trustworthiness of a speaker is not assessable by a hearer. Fricker formulates an NC in the following way:

“Negative Claim: It is not, generally speaking, possible for a hearer to obtain independent confirmation that a given speaker is trustworthy – that what she says will be true.”
(Fricker 1994, 125)

According to Fricker, the PR thesis depends on an NC because PR thesis holds only if the NC is true. If we find any exceptions to the NC, such as a possibility for the hearer to obtain an independent confirmation of a speaker's trustworthiness, then we cannot claim that a hearer has PR to accept (believe) the speaker's assertion without any additional evidence. Unless we accept that the NC is true, the PR thesis cannot be upheld. Fricker's reductionism more consists in rejecting PR by rejecting NC. We shall see that she has also an independent argument for rejecting PR directly. In section 3.5 I elaborate Fricker's notion of trustworthiness; in section 3.6 I present her rejection of PR by rejecting NC and in section 3.7 her rejection of PR directly.

3.5 Nature of the Speaker's Trustworthiness

Before discussing how Fricker refutes the NC (the hearer cannot obtain independent confirmation of the speaker's trustworthiness), let me

discuss her views on the nature of trustworthiness. Fricker defined trustworthiness as a property or virtue of the speaker, the knowledge of which bridges the logical and epistemic gaps between the speaker's assertion and reality.³⁸ For example, when a speaker S asserts that P on an occasion O to a hearer H, if H's knowledge regarding S is sufficient for H to bridge the logical and epistemic gaps on the occasion O between S's assertion that P and P, then the hearer has the basis to justifiably believe that P. However, for every assertion, a hearer cannot know whether a speaker has a strong gap-bridging property. For instance, when an unknown speaker asserts that P to a hearer H, then H may not have a sufficiently strong ground for considering the speaker as a trustworthy person that can bridge the gap between his/her assertion of that P and P. To resolve this issue, Fricker argues in the following way:

“If H can know that S possesses this weakest gap-bridging property on an occasion O, this is enough to justify her in believing that S asserts on O; thus it is only this weakest gap-bridging property which must admit of non-circular confirmation, to provide a reductive solution to the problem of justifying testimony, as we have conceived it.” (Fricker 1994, 129)

³⁸ “. . . it must be a property of the speaker S knowledge of which suffices, for a hearer H on the occasion O, to bridge the logical and epistemic gap between ‘S assertion that P’ and ‘P’.” (Fricker 1994, 129)

Therefore, according to Fricker a weakest gap-bridging property is sufficient for a hearer to justify himself/herself to believe what is asserted by a speaker even if the hearer knows that the speaker possesses a weak gap bridging property.

However, one may ask when the hearer can consider that the speaker S possesses the property or virtue knowledge of which bridges the gap between S's assertions of that P and P? To answer this question, Fricker introduced a *trust condition*.³⁹ If a speaker fulfills the *trust condition*, only then we can consider the speaker as trustworthy. Fricker formulates the trust condition as follows:

“Trus1: If S were to assert that P on O, then it would be the case that P.” (Fricker 1994, 132)

This condition ensures that the speaker is sincere about his/her assertion. We may consider a speaker sincere about his/her assertion that P only if he/she asserts that P when P is true. If a speaker asserts that P on occasion O and P is false, then we do not consider the speaker as sincere. When a speaker is sincere about his/her assertions, then we can trust him/her whenever he/she asserts that P. Therefore, if we know that the speaker is

³⁹ “ To find such a notion: which just suffices, together with ‘S asserted that P on O’, to entail ‘P’; which constitutes a genuine property of S, hence, flukes and special cases apart, is epistemically independent of ‘P’; and which constitutes an explication of the intuitive notion of S’s being trustworthy on an occasion of testimony, is our aspiration.” (Fricker 1994, 132)

sincere about his/her assertion, then we can legitimately derive P from his/her assertion that P.

However, sincerity or *Trus1* condition is not sufficient to consider a speaker trustworthy, because this condition is not adequate to bridge the gap between the speaker's assertions that P and P. For example, assume that a speaker S has always been sincere. Therefore, when S asserts that P, and P is accepted by H because he/she trusts S. Furthermore, suppose that P is false. Then H does not gain any knowledge from S's assertions that P. Therefore, the sincerity or *Trus1* condition is not sufficient to bridge the gap between the testimony and reality (Fricker 1994, 145).

To avoid such errors Fricker introduced another *Trust condition* or *Trus2*. According to Fricker:

“Trus2: If S were to assert that P on O, then it would be the case that S's assertion is sincere, and that the belief she thereby expresses is true.” (Fricker 1994, 146)

According to *Trus2*, a hearer H is entitled to consider a speaker S trustworthy when the speaker's assertion that P is sincere on occasion O, and the assertion conveys the reality. Thus, if S's assertion that P is sincere, then P is true. If P is false, then the speaker's assertion cannot be considered sincere. In the formulation of *Trus2*, Fricker shifts the sincerity notion from the speaker to his/her assertion. In the *Trus1* condition, Fricker argues that the speaker is sincere. This allows the possibility of honest errors. Despite the speaker's sincerity, he/she can assert that P by mistake when P is false.

We cannot mark the speaker as insincere for this mistake. Therefore, we may conclude that a sincere speaker can erroneously assert that P on the occasion O, which does not represent the actual fact, without affecting his/her sincerity. In *Trus2* we have that an assertion is sincere only if it expresses the fact(s). There is no scope for an honest error. Therefore, Fricker resolved the possibility of error by shifting the sincerity notion from the speaker to his/her assertion.

The next question that follows is, “How can the hearer H know that the speaker S’s assertion that P on the occasion O is sincere?” This question can be answered if a hearer relies on certain features of the speaker’s assertion, such as the tone of voice and manner of presentation, to assess the sincerity of the speaker’s assertion. However, the tone of the voice or the manner of presenting the assertion is directly associated with the speaker’s behavior; therefore, if we determine the sincerity of the speaker’s assertion or utterance based on the aforementioned conditions, then the sincerity of the assertion will be the same as the sincerity of the speaker. Moreover, if the speaker can control his/her behavior while he/she is uttering something false or if the hearer is not efficient in understanding the speaker’s behavior, then the hearer may consider an assertion sincere when it is not.

After acknowledging these problems, Fricker formulates the speaker’s trustworthiness with respect to an utterance U in the following way:

“Trus(S, U): A speaker S is trustworthy in respect to an assertoric utterance by her U, which is made on an occasion O, and by which she assert that P, if and only if

- (i) *U is sincere, and*
- (ii) *S is competent with respect to 'P' on O, where this notion is define as follows:*

If S were sincerely assert that P on O, then it would be the case that P.” (Fricker 1994, 147)

In this formulation, Fricker combines the sincerity of the speaker and utterance which were previously discussed in the *Trus1 and Trus2*. We have now that if of the both a speaker and his/her assertion are sincere, then the speaker is trustworthy.

Finally, she remarks that her formulation of trustworthiness of the speaker is weaker than what the common people think about it. In daily life, we consider a speaker as trustworthy or reliable if the speaker is competent in most of his/her assertions. Therefore, according to commonsense, we can consider a speaker trustworthy if he/she is generally sincere about his/her assertion. However, Fricker suggests that a speaker S who is well-known for being untrustworthy (based on the commonsense) can satisfy *Trus(S, U)* and a hearer H can consider S as trustworthy. According to Fricker's formulation of trustworthiness with respect to a particular utterance U and on the basis of the knowledge regarding the speaker's trustworthiness, a hearer H gains sufficient ground(s) to believe what is asserted by speaker S. Therefore,

Trus(S, U) is the minimal gap-bridging property between a speaker's assertion that P and P.⁴⁰

3.6 Rejection of the Negative Claim

Nevertheless, on an occasion O, can a hearer know a speaker's trustworthiness, sincerity of his/her utterance, and his/her competence with respect to the content of his/her assertion that P? Fricker argues that a speaker's trustworthiness can be confirmed empirically. There are two alternative approaches regarding the knowledge of a speaker's trustworthiness. According to Fricker, on a particular occasion O, when a speaker S utters U and thereby asserts P to the hearer H, the H has or can gain independent evidence, which is sufficient to warrant H to consider S trustworthy in terms of U on O (Fricker 1994, 133). For instance, imagine a situation where two individuals, Jack and John, who know each other sufficiently and have been working in the same office for a long time. In addition, assume that both have a meeting to attend at the head office, with their boss next Monday. On Sunday evening, Jack calls John and informs that their boss called and informed him that tomorrow's meeting will be held in their office instead of the head office. Therefore, they do not have to go to

⁴⁰ “. a person S who is untrustworthy, in this generalized sense, can still be *trus(S, U)*, and known by a hearer H to be so, with respect to particular Utterance U; in which case, H has grounds to believe what is asserted by that utterance.” (Fricker 1994, 147–148)

the head office. In this situation, based on past experiences, John vaguely knows about Jack's honesty; Jack has no intention of deceiving others and possesses a good moral character. Therefore, John has sufficient evidence to justifiably believe that Jack informed him regarding the meeting. Therefore, it can be inferred that a hearer may possess sufficient evidence to consider a particular speaker S as trustworthy in terms of his/her utterance U on the occasion O.

From the preceding discussion, it is clear that sometimes a hearer can possess sufficient information regarding the speaker to consider him/her trustworthy; however, it is unclear, what happen if a hearer cannot gain independent sufficient information to consider the speaker trustworthy. Therefore, we extend our previous example. Assume that John recently joined a new office where his friend Jack has been working for a long time. Moreover, assume that he has a meeting with his boss in the head office next Monday. David, one of John's colleagues, informs him on Sunday evening that he received a call from their boss saying that he will be coming to their office tomorrow to meet them. Therefore, they do not have to go the head office. In this situation, John does not have sufficient knowledge regarding David that can help him in determining David's trustworthiness. However, if required, John can gain sufficient information regarding David from his friend Jack who has been working with David for a long time. Therefore, the claim (NC) that the hearer cannot obtain an independent confirmation regarding a given speaker's trustworthiness is not accepted, because sometimes a hearer has or can gain the additional knowledge which is sufficient for the hearer to consider the speaker trustworthy.

3.7 Rejection of the Presumptive Right Thesis

Furthermore, Fricker rejects the PR thesis directly without rejecting the NC, which is the basis of the PR thesis, in two ways. First, Fricker argues that the PR thesis may be defined in two ways: strong and weak. A strong PR thesis claims that the hearer legitimately accepts a speaker's assertion, without any evidence or assessment, like a new learner accepts a speaker's assertion without verification. A new learner accepting a speaker's assertion without any assessment or verification is considered as a "simple trust" mechanism. The strong PR thesis legitimizes the "simple trust" concept to yield knowledge. However, according to Fricker, when a new learner learns a language or gains other information, such as about social relationships, basic science, history, and geography, then he/she trusts what his/her parents, elderly people, or teachers tell or teach him/her, because new learners lack the conceptual capacity to judge their reliability or trustworthiness. Therefore, in this stage a hearer trusts the speaker's assertion without any doubt. This is why this stage is the "simple trust" stage.⁴¹

⁴¹ "By 'simple trust' I mean: trusting response to what others tell or teach us, by one who as yet lacks the conceptual resources to entertain doubt about the reliability of others' teaching. This the inevitable initial condition of the infant learning its first words through interaction with its carers. (However many writers on testimony exaggerate how long this initial condition persist—don't underestimate children—they get wise pretty soon! See Clement, Koenig, and Harris (2004).)" (Fricker 2006, 245)

Now, Fricker claims that the strong PR thesis overlooks the fact that an adult who masters his/her language can assess the speaker's trustworthiness, and hence be more critical and not accept every assertion of the speaker blindly as he/she was accustomed to in the early stages. Note further that as time passes, even a hearer indulging in simple trust does not accept the speaker's assertion blindly; he/she usually questions the speaker and his/her intentions. When a new learner gradually masters a particular language, his/her attitude toward speakers changes. Unlike previously, when he/she accepted the speaker's assertion blindly, he/she now might question the speaker's assertion; and refuse to accept the speaker's assertion without assessing the speaker's trustworthiness. According to Fricker, a major drawback of the strong PR thesis is that it only considers the "simple trust" stage and excludes the developed stage by concluding that the hearer need not assess the speaker's trustworthiness before accepting his/her assertion (Fricker 1995, 400–404).

However, apart from Fricker's argument, I would like to present an independent argument for rejecting PR thesis. I do not believe that when a child accepts a speaker's assertion without any assessment, he/she is accepting the assertion on the basis of PR thesis. A simple truster, such as a child, cannot know or judge his/her PR to accept the speaker's assertion, similar to how he/she cannot assess the speaker's trustworthiness. I would like to explain this with the help of an example. Assume that there are two subjects, namely S^1 and S^2 ; S^1 is a child and S^2 is an adult and both want to learn a new language. If we momentarily accept the anti-reductionist claims that there is a convention in a linguistic community that the speaker S asserts that P only when P is true, the hearer has a right to accept the speaker's assertion unless there is a strong reason for not accepting. From the

convention of the linguistic community, anti-reductionists formulate the founding argument of their theory of testimony, which is presumptive right PR (discussed previously). Occasionally, epistemologists formulate the fundamental argument of anti-reductionism as *Default Rule* (DR) or *Acceptance Principle* (AP). Essence of PR and DR or AP is equivalent. According to the DR thesis, “*If the speaker S assert that p to the hearer H, then, under normal condition, it is correct for H to accept (believe) S’s assertion, unless H has special reason to object.*” (Adler 2012, 12) Burge formulates *Acceptance Principle* in the following manner: “*A person is entitled to accept as true something that is presented as true and that is intelligible to him, unless there are strong reasons not to do so.*” (Burge 1993, 467) However, if we analyze the preceding argument, then we will find that it applies only to S² (mature or adult human being) and not to S¹ (the child); because, only an adult human being with adequate knowledge of a language and social conventions, can know the convention of a linguistic community which is the basis of the anti-reductionist theory of testimony. A child S¹ cannot know about the social and linguistic convention. Therefore, one cannot rightly claim that the simple trustee accepts the speaker’s assertion on the basis of presumptive right (PR); hence, all simple trustees cannot know or access the presumptive right thesis even within the anti-reductionist framework of epistemology of testimony. Hence, we cannot establish a strong PR thesis based on “simple trust.”

To counter Fricker’s concerns, anti-reductionists may formulate a weak PR thesis which states that an individual S, who is the master of the commonsense language (CSL), is conceptually equipped to play the role of a sincere speaker and hearer. In addition, he/she appreciates the need for assessment of the speaker’s trustworthiness, without assuming any

generalized epistemic rights regarding the speaker's trustworthiness. Furthermore, S possesses an epistemic right to presume the trustworthiness of an arbitrary speaker, without any favorable evidence. The hearer does not require independent evidence to accept what is told by the speaker every time. However, the hearer must judge the speaker's trustworthiness when he/she feels challenged. For example, assume that Stephen is a sincere speaker and hearer and appreciates the need for assessment of the speaker's trustworthiness. He may not verify the trustworthiness of a speaker's every assertion. For example, when talking to his friends and colleagues, he might accept their assertion without any verification. However, he is always open to verifying their trustworthiness if he feels challenged regarding their assertion. Therefore, his attitude toward the speaker's trustworthiness is different from the strong PR thesis. This is a local PR thesis because its claim is local (Fricker 1994, 141–142).

Sometimes, defeating conditions cancel the hearer's epistemic right to believe a speaker's assertion. For example, suppose a speaker asserts that P on the occasion O to a hearer H. If H obtains a defeating condition, which defeats the speaker's trustworthiness or the possibility of the speaker's assertion of that P, then H cannot believe that P. Fricker differentiated between strong and weak defeating conditions. A defeating condition occasionally cancels the hearer's right to presume that the speaker's assertion is true, without providing any definite evidence for its falsity. This condition is considered weak defeating condition (or presumption-defeating). Alternatively, when a defeating condition directly falsifies a speaker's assertion, it is considered a strong defeating condition (or proposition-defeating). According to Fricker, when a hearer is aware of the defeating condition (i.e., either weak or strong), he/she must not believe a speaker's

assertion without further verification (Fricker 1994, 142). For example, suppose David, Philips, Stephen, and John are common friends and are invited for a dinner on Saturday at 8.30 pm. Assume that John forgets the date and time of the dinner, he asks his friends and, surprisingly, each of their responses contradict that of the other: David says that the dinner is on Friday at 7.00 pm, Philips says that the dinner is on Saturday at 7.00 pm, and Stephen says that the dinner is on Saturday at 8.30 pm. In this situation, each of their responses is a defeating condition for that of the other. Therefore, John does not gain any knowledge from their responses without further verification. According to Fricker, this defeating condition is weak, because John does not have any definite evidence to falsify their assertion. In this situation, if John directly calls his friend who is hosting the dinner, and ascertains the actual date and time, then the host's assertion directly falsifies the assertions of David and Philips. Therefore, the host's assertion can be considered a strong defeating condition.

However, when an individual S is unaware of a defeating condition, what should he/she do? According to the PR thesis, an individual S has the PR to assume, without any evidence, that the speaker is trustworthy and accept his/her assertion. For example, if we modify our previous example where John forgets the date and time of a dinner and asks only David, who informs him that the dinner is on Friday at 7.00 pm. Because, there is no defeating condition, John has the PR to accept what is told by David, despite David's assertion being false. To avoid these issues, Fricker argued that an epistemologically responsible individual should always engage in some assessment of the speaker's trustworthiness. If a hearer H believes P, (when he/she does not have any defeating condition that defeats the speaker's assertion) on the basis of a speaker's assertion without assessing the

speaker's trustworthiness, then it must be considered epistemic gullibility (Fricker 1994, 142–143). Therefore, the PR thesis should not be accepted. A hearer must assess a speaker's trustworthiness, regardless of the presence of a defeating condition, before accepting his/her assertion.

However, Fricker does not claim that the hearer must assess the speaker's trustworthiness in a strong sense. Because, if we claim that a hearer always assesses the speaker's trustworthiness in a strong sense, then we cannot maintain our daily interaction. Fricker's argument can be clarified by an example. Assume that a person P is waiting on a railway platform (platform number 1) for a train T¹, wherein he/she has a reservation. Suddenly, he/she hears an announcement regarding a change in the arrival platform because of technical reasons and realizes that T¹ will arrive on platform number 3 instead of platform number 1. What should P do in this situation? Should he/she follow the strong assessment theory and assess the speaker's trustworthiness before accepting his/her assertion? According to Fricker, P cannot assess the speaker's trustworthiness in a strong sense in this situation, because if he/she tries to assess the speaker's trustworthiness in a strong sense, then he/she might miss the train. Therefore, in such a situation, P need not assess the speaker's trustworthiness in a strong sense.

However, the question is, when Fricker argues that a hearer need not assess the speaker's trustworthiness in a strong sense, then what does the argument mean? Does it mean that in this situation, the person P has the PR to accept the speaker's assertion unless there is a strong reason for rejection? To answer this question, Fricker states that P can accept the speaker's assertion without any assessment not because of a PR, but because the present situation demands his/her acceptance of the assertion. According to

Fricker, the hearer's attitude toward the speaker is always critical, even in the present situation. The hearer should not take the speaker's assertion for granted; he/she should evaluate the speaker's trustworthiness based on the available evidence. Therefore, the hearer's attitude toward a speaker may change on the basis of situation. Although the hearer should not generally accept the speaker's assertion on the basis of a PR, sometimes, a hearer can accept a speaker's assertion without assessing the speaker's trustworthiness. For example suppose a person P waiting for a train T¹ on platform number 1 is informed by his/her co-passenger at the last moment that the arrival platform has changed. In this situation, P accepts his/her co-passenger's assertion on the basis of very little evidence without a strong assessment of the co-passenger's trustworthiness, such as the gestures of his/her co-passenger, and acts accordingly. However, P's attitude toward his/her co-passenger is not in line with the PR thesis. P does not accept the co-passenger's assertion on the basis of a PR; rather he/she accepts the co-passenger's assertion on the basis of the demand of the situation. P's attitude will change in different situations. For example, suppose P is informed about such a change from his/her co-passenger and he/she has sufficient time to verify the co-passenger's assertion regarding the platform not being changed, then P must verify his/her co-passenger's trustworthiness from a different source, such as the railway enquiry office. Therefore, Fricker suggested that a hearer's attitude toward a speaker is evaluative. The hearer must always assess or evaluate the speaker's trustworthiness before accepting his/her assertion, regardless of the hearer's assessment or evaluation not being in a strong sense (Fricker 1994, 149–150).

In addition Fricker accepts a *default position norm* DPN. However, Fricker's DPN differs from the PR and default rule (DR) accepted by anti-

reductionists, I discuss the distinguishing features of the DR , PR and DPN theses.

According to the DR thesis, under normal circumstances, a hearer H is entitled to accept (believe) the speaker S's assertion, unless H has a valid reason for not accepting. Burge offers *apriori* defense of the DR thesis, which is known as the *acceptance principle* (AP). Burge formulates the *acceptance principle* in the following way:

“A person is entitled to accept as true something that is presented as true and that is intelligible to him, unless there are strong reasons not to do so.” (Burge 1993, 467)

According to this principle, when a speaker S asserts that P to a hearer H, S presents that P as the truth; therefore, H is entitled to accept that P as true, unless he/she has a strong reason for not accepting. Fricker formulated the same principle differently, which is known as the PR thesis (Fricker 1994, 125). The fundamentals of the PR, DR, and AP are the same. The PR thesis has been discussed previously, and therefore I do not discuss it in detail.

However, Fricker's DPN thesis differs from the PR or DR theses. According to the DPN thesis, we can differentiate the content of the speaker's assertion based on the “commonsense person theory.”⁴² First,

⁴² “...I suggest, the same is true regarding a speaker's competence, *with respect to a certain range of subject matters* – namely, all those for which commonsense

content on which people's assertion are nearly always right. Second, content on which people's assertion are often, even in some cases generally, wrong. According to the DPN thesis, when a speaker asserts regarding content on which people's assertion are nearly always right, then the hearer can consider a speaker as competent and sincere and can accept the speaker's assertion, unless he/she observes signs of duplicity. For example, if a stranger asks for directions to a young lady, then typically she will provide the right information. However, if the stranger asks a young lady for her address, name, or phone number, then the lady will probably provide the wrong information or refuse to provide information. Therefore, the DPN thesis suggests that a speaker can be considered to possess default competence based on the content(s) of his/her assertion, unless the assertion exhibits symptoms of duplicity. Albeit, the PR and DR theses do not clearly argue that the hearer must judge content of the speaker's testimony before accepting any testimony. Therefore, the DPN thesis is not same as the PR or DR theses (Fricker 1994, 151; 1995, 401).

person theory tells us that people are nearly always right about such thing.” (Fricker 1994, 151)

“I shall suggest below that our attitude to others' testimony should depend on its subject matter. The second is between deferent phases in the career of a recipient of testimony: the developmental and mature phases.” (Fricker 1995, 401)

3.8 Fricker's Default Position Norm (DPN)

From the aforementioned discussion, we may formulate Fricker's DPN in the following way:

DPN: In a specific occasion and content, a hearer H is entitled to accept a speaker S as competent and sincere, and accept his/her assertion, without assessing his/her trustworthiness, unless there are any signs of duplicity.

However, is Fricker's DPN different from the DR or PR theses, particularly the weak PR thesis which, recognizes the need for the assessment of speaker's trustworthiness and accepts some assertions without the assessment? To answer this question, Fricker explained that the basic difference between DR or PR and DPN involves the hearer's attitude toward the speaker. According to the DPN thesis, a hearer is always critical of toward the speaker's trustworthiness.⁴³ By contrast, the DR or PR theses allow the hearer to accept the speaker as trustworthy, unless there are special circumstances compelling the hearer to act differently. Nevertheless, a weak PR thesis recognizes the need for assessment of speaker's trustworthiness to accept a speaker's assertion when he/she feels challenged by questions. However, he/she can accept a speaker's assertion based on his/her PR

⁴³ "...the hearer should be discriminating in her attitude to the speaker, in that the hearer should be critically evaluating him (speaker) for trustworthiness throughout their exchange, in the light of the evidence, or cues, available to her." (Fricker 1994, 150)

without assessing the speaker's trustworthiness and even without having a critical attitude toward the speaker, when he/she does not feel challenged.⁴⁴ Therefore, the attitude toward the speaker is not the same in both the theories.

Moreover, DPN allows the hearer to accept the speaker's assertion as a default competence in limited circumstances and regarding limited content based on the commonsense person theory, whereas the DR or PR theses entitle the hearer to accept the speaker as competent or trustworthy without considering the content and circumstances of the assertion, unless he/she has valid reason for not accepting. Therefore, the DPN is not the same as the DR or PR theses (Fricker 1994, 154–155).

3.9 Fricker's Concept of Reductionism

The preceding discussion shows that Fricker's account of the epistemology of testimony is reductionist, because she denies the PR thesis and argues in favor of reductionism. This led me to ask which type of reductionism Fricker develops. Does she argue in favor of global reductionism or does she develop her concept of testimony as a local reductionism? This question can be answered in two ways. Let us recapitulate Fricker's argument. She broadly divides the development of a

⁴⁴ "My account requires a hearer always to take critical stance to the speaker, to assess her for trustworthiness; while a true PR thesis, as we have seen, does not." (Fricker 1994, 154)

hearer into different stages, namely the simple trust and the master or developed stages. She contends that when an individual learns his/her native or any other language, he/she accepts the speaker's assertion without assessing the speaker's trustworthiness, because he/she is not in a position to assess the speaker's trustworthiness at that stage. Therefore, it is impossible for a hearer to follow reductionism in the "simple trust" stage.

Second, even in the "master" or "developed" stage, the hearer sometimes cannot assess the speaker's trustworthiness, because the present circumstances do not allow or permit him/her to assess the speaker's trustworthiness before accepting. The circumstances compel the hearer to accept the speaker's assertion without assessing his/her trustworthiness. However, Fricker adds that the hearer sometimes accepts the speaker's assertion without assessing the speaker's trustworthiness when the circumstances do not compel the hearer to accept, based on the commonsense person theory. According to Fricker, as social beings, we know that, sometimes, the speaker is nearly always right in some respect. Therefore, the hearer has a default right to accept the speaker's assertion without assessing the speaker's trustworthiness.

We can thus conclude that for Fricker sometimes a hearer may accept a speaker's assertion without assessing the speaker's trustworthiness; however, she does not exclude the necessity of assessing a speaker's trustworthiness. According to her, a hearer's attitude toward the speaker should be critical, and he/she must assess the speaker's trustworthiness depending on each situation. Therefore, Fricker's concept of the epistemology of testimony can be considered as *local reductionism*.

3.10 Hume and Fricker

Is there an agreement or disagreement between Hume's and Fricker's concepts of reductionism? Both Fricker and Hume accept that sometimes in order to accept the speaker's assertion, the hearer needs to assess the speaker's assertion, and sometimes we accept the speaker's assertion without assessing the speaker's trustworthiness. Nevertheless, both of them explain their positions differently. Hume suggested that because of our customs or habits, the hearer accepts a speaker's assertion, without any assessment. Similarly, Fricker indicates that according to the commonsense person theory, the hearer accepts some of the speaker's assertions without any assessment. Therefore, it can be concluded that the intention of both Hume's and Fricker's explanations regarding the acceptance of the speaker's assertion without any assessment, is the same; both explain the instances of assertions, which we generally accept without assessing the speaker's trustworthiness, within the reductionist framework.

One might say that difference between them is that Fricker explains a stage of language learning process when people accept the speaker's assertion without assessing the speaker's trustworthiness, which she called the "simple trust" stage. Hume does not discuss any such stage. Should we conclude that Hume does not accept the "simple trust" stage? I do not think so. If we consider the interpretation of Hume's concept of testimony as provided by Welbourne (2002, 414–415), then it is similar to Fricker's concept. According to Welbourne, when Hume states that human testimony depends on the experience of a constant and regular association between testimony and reality, then the basic language learning process of a child or a new learner because when a young human child learns a language, he/she

learns it from his/her parents or other family members. If we consider the learning process of a child or a new learner, then we realize that children or new learners accept the assertion of their parents or others without assessing trustworthiness. For example, when a child's parents assert that "this is a book" and point toward a certain object, then the child accepts his/her parents assertion without assessing their trustworthiness. Therefore, during the initial learning process of a child or any new learner, Hume accepts the "simple trust" stage as explained by Fricker. However, Hume does not explicitly explain it. We have to deduce it from his writing as we extracted his concept of testimony.

Conclusion of the present chapter is that both Hume and Fricker endorse local reductionism, and there is no disagreement between them.

Chapter 4

4.1 Anti-reductionism

Previously I discussed the reductionist account of testimony, particularly Hume's and Fricker's reductionist concepts of testimony, in detail. In the next two chapters, I discuss, in detail, the anti-reductionist account of testimony, particularly highlighting the works of Tyler Burge, and Jennifer Lackey.

4.2 Burge's Anti-Reductionism

Before discussing Burge and Lackey's anti-reductionist theories of testimony in detail, let me recapitulate the main anti-reductionist claims. According to anti-reductionism, testimony is a basic source of knowledge, like perception, memory, and inference. The hearer is entitled to believe the speaker's assertion unless he/she has a strong or relevant reason not to believe it, or he/she has a defeater. However, what is the reason for believing the speaker's assertion when the hearer has no strong or relevant reason to reject it? To answer this question, Burge presents his *acceptance principle* of the epistemology of testimony in the following way:

“Acceptance Principle: A person is entitled to accept as true something that is presented as true and that is intelligible to

him, unless there are strong reasons not to do so.” (Burge 1993, 467)

According to Burge, sometimes we do not have reasons to reject what is told by others. For example, suppose my friend John tells me that he attended a conference organized by Harvard University last month and talked with Prof. Hilary Putnam about his recent work. In this situation, I do not have any reason or sign to reject John’s assertion, therefore, I accept it. However, if I had any information that contradicts John’s assertion, such as the information that Prof. Hilary Putnam was in the United Kingdom during the last month, I would not accept John’s assertion. Therefore, Burge concludes that the hearer accepts the speaker’s assertion unless he/she has a strong reason not to do so.

Burge points out that those who do not accept the *acceptance principle*, presuppose that a person is justified in believing any assertion that p only when he/she has a positive reason or justification in favor of the source from which he/she acquired the belief that p.⁴⁵ For example, John told me that tomorrow our university will be closed because of some unavoidable reasons. Now, those who reject the acceptance principle, claim that I am justified in believing John’s assertion if I am justified in believing that John believes that our university will be closed tomorrow, and he is justified in believing it. However, Burge does not accept this view. According to Burge, there is a difference between “justified in believing that p” and “justified in

⁴⁵ “It is usually said that to be justified in accepting information from someone else, one must be justified in believing that the source believes the information and is justified in believing it.” (Burge 1993, 468)

believing the source from which we acquired that p”. The first level of justification concerns p, whereas the second level of justification concerns the source of the belief that p. People, in general, assume that the justification of the source of the belief that p is the justification of p. When one has a justification for believing the source of the belief that p, only then he/she can rightly claim that he/she justified in believing that p (Burge 1993, 468). Therefore, Burge suggests that people in general think that the justification in believing that p is derived from the justification of the source of the belief that p. However, Burge does not accept this. According to Burge, one is entitled to be justified in believing that p on the basis of the speaker’s assertion, when he/she has no reasons to reject that p, without addressing the issues of whether or not the speaker believes that p and whether or not the speaker is justified in believing that p.⁴⁶

The next question is why a hearer accepts a speaker’s assertion without considering the speaker’s sincerity when he/she has no reason to reject the speaker’s assertion. To answer this question, Burge argues that although the speaker may have every reason to lie, human beings tend to tell the truth. Therefore, Burge expresses his deep faith in a *truth-telling norm* and suggests that human beings generally comply with the truth-telling norm.⁴⁷ Based on the truth-telling norm, Burge argues that the hearer is

⁴⁶ “A presupposition of the Acceptance Principle is that one is entitled not to bring one’s source’s sincerity or justification into question, in the absence of reason to the contrary. This too is an epistemic default position.” (Burge 1993, 468)

⁴⁷ “We can acquire empirical reasons *not* to accept what we are told: “he has every reason to lie.” But to be entitled, we do not have to have reasons that support the default position, if there is no reasonable ground for doubt. Truth telling is a norm

entitled to accept, without any empirical grounds, the assertion of the speaker unless he/she has a strong reason to reject it. Therefore, the *acceptance principle* provides *apriori* justification for the speaker's assertion. According to Burge, the general form of justification associated with this principle is as follows:

“The general form of justification associated with the principle is: A person is apriori entitled to accept a proposition that is presented as true and that is intelligible to him, unless there are strong reasons not to do so, because it is prima facie preserved (received) from a rational source, or resource of reason; reliance on rational sources or resources for reason – is, other thing equal, necessary to the function of reason.” (Burge 1993, 469)

The hearer is apriori entitled to accept the speaker's assertion when the speaker presents his/her assertion as true, and the hearer has no reason to reject it, because the speaker is a rational being, and every rational being tells the truth under normal circumstances. Therefore, Burge formulates the *acceptance principle* on the basis of the hypothesis that rational beings are subject to a truth-telling norm.⁴⁸ Under normal circumstances, the hearer is entitled to accept the speaker's assertion without any additional empirical

that can be reasonably presumed in the absence of reasons to attribute violations.” (Burge 1993, 468)

⁴⁸ “One has a general entitlement to rely on the rationality of rational being.” (Burge 1993, 469)

evidence, unless he/she has any strong reason which proves that the speaker is violating the rational truth-telling norm.

From the aforementioned discussion we may conclude that Burge considers the speaker's assertion as a rational source because it is presented by a rational being. He argues that "one has a general entitlement to rely on the rationality of a rational being" (Burge 1993, 469). However, one may question why Burge considers the speaker's assertion as a rational source. Is it merely because the speaker is a human being and knows language? Burge argues that we all consider ourselves as rational beings, and we instinctively presume that our source is rational. Burge suggests that, intelligibility is a sign of rationality. Therefore, we may consider a speaker's assertion as a rational source when the assertion is understandable or intelligible to us. Thus, rationality depends on understanding the speaker's language (Burge 1993, 471). Note further that for Burge "rational sources are sources that themselves are a capacity to reason or are rational being (Burge 1993, 470)." The speaker's assertion is a rational source, because the speaker's assertions itself is a reason which shows that we are *apriori* entitled to rely on the speaker's assertion.

However, we cannot exclude the possibility of the violation of the "truth-telling norm" because the speaker may have a reason (either good or bad) to lie. Yet, according to Burge, the "truth-telling norm" provides grounds for believing the assertion of the speaker.⁴⁹ Burge further argues

⁴⁹ "one can ask why one is entitled to rely on rational sources (or resources for reason), in view of the fact that they can be mistaken or misleading." (Burge 1993, 470)

that the speaker's assertion is a rational source, and a rational source should be counted as a *prima facie* source of the truth. When a speaker S asserts that p to a hearer H, then H is entitled to accept that p as true because p is *prima facie* rationally supported (Burge 1993, 470–471). Although, it is true that rational mistakes are possible, but unless there is reason to think that such mistakes have occurred, it is rational for the hearer to accept the speaker's assertion.⁵⁰

However, the *acceptance principle* does not guarantee the truth of the speaker's assertion,⁵¹ because the "truth-telling norm" does not ensure that the speaker always tells the truth. Although, despite the possibility that the speaker makes a false assertion, the hearer is *apriori* entitled to accept the speaker's assertion, unless he/she has some reason to reject it. Therefore, the hearer is likely to be *apriori prima facie* entitled to accept a false assertion.⁵² For example, suppose John and Peter work in the same office, and they are good friends. However, just for fun, John informs Peter on Saturday night that the office will be closed next Monday. According to the *acceptance principle*, Peter is entitled to accept John's assertion without empirical evidence if he does not have a strong reason to reject it. Suppose Peter does not have a reason to reject John's assertion, so, he becomes *apriori* entitled

⁵⁰ "Rational mistakes are possible. But if there is no reason to think that they are occurring, it is rational to accept the affirmed deliverances of a rational source." (Burge 1993, 471)

⁵¹ "The *apriori* entitlement described by the Acceptance Principle is, of course, no guarantee of truth." (Burge 1993, 476)

⁵² "We could be *apriori* entitled to false beliefs." (Burge 1993, 473)

to accept Peter's assertion, which is indeed false. Therefore, one may be apriori entitled to accept a false assertion on the basis of the *acceptance principle* (Burge 1993, 473, 476). However, in everyday life we may find that people are surprisingly irrational in certain cases, and have deeply irrational tendencies. Therefore, one cannot be apriori entitled to accept what is told by the other without considering whether the person is lying.

To address the issue of whether the assertion is true or false, Burge argues in two ways: First, he explains why "truth telling" is the norm for a rational being. According to Burge, to understand why "truth telling" is a norm, we have to understand the primary function of reason. The primary function of reason is to present the truth, independent of personal interest and benefit. Although, sometimes lying becomes rational and intelligible for a person when it fulfills his/her purpose and secures his/her interest, lying occasionally is not consistent with the function of reason. It conflicts with the "transpersonal function of presenting the truth, independently of special personal interest (Burge 1993, 475)" which is characteristic of reason. Therefore, lying is not natural for a rational being.⁵³

Second, when someone argues that people are irrational in some respect, they are focusing on the actual function of reason. Reason does not function only to serve the interest of an individual. The primary function of reason is to promote the truth without considering the personal interests of an individual. Another key consideration is that our practice of

⁵³ "(Compare: lying for the fun of it is a form of craziness.)" (Burge 1993, 474)

communication depends on the truth-preservative norm.⁵⁴ Therefore, when a rational speaker presents intelligible contents as true, the hearer can rationally presume that the speaker's intention of successful communication has been fulfilled; therefore, the speaker is presenting the truth. Therefore, when any rational being presents intelligible content to someone as true, the person requires a particular reason to think that there has been a deviation from the rational truth-presentation norms. Thus, the person is apriori entitled to accept the contents as true unless he/she has a strong reason to counter it (Burge 1993, 475–476).

Burge overcomes the problem of the possibility of lying by saying that rational people generally do not lie and that “lying for the fun of it is a form of craziness (Burge 1993, 474)”. Yet he cannot exclude the possibility that the speaker has false beliefs, expresses them to a hearer through an assertion, and the hearer does not have any reason to reject the speaker's assertion. In this case, according to the *acceptance principle*, the hearer is apriori entitled to accept the speaker's false assertion. For example, suppose John formed the belief that there is a dog in the garden on seeing a cat and reports his belief to Peter. In the present situation, Peter has no reason to counter John's assertion. Therefore, according to the *acceptance principle*, Peter is apriori entitled to accept John's assertion. However, John's assertion is false. Therefore, according to the *acceptance principle*, the hearer may be apriori entitled to accept a false assertion.

⁵⁴ “Lying is sometimes rational in the sense that it is in the liar's best interests. But lying occasions a disunity among functions of reason. it conflicts with one's reason's transpersonal function of presenting the truth, independently of special personal interests.” (Burge 1993, 475)

The next question concerns whether Burge denied any role of empirical elements in the entitlement process when he argued in favor of apriori entitlement of the speaker's assertion on the basis of the *acceptance principle*. To answer this question, Burge argues that, although the *acceptance principle* is not an empirical principle, its application, inevitably, depends on empirical elements.⁵⁵ The hearer always depends on perception to know what is told by the others. For example, if a person wants to know the sentence uttered by another, he/she must hear it, whereas if he/she wants to know a written statement, he/she must read it. Therefore, to know anything told by another, one has to depend on perception.⁵⁶ However, at the same time, Burge argues that although perception assists in the minimal understanding of the language, it does not assist in determining the justification or entitlement of the language. We do not perceive the content of the speaker's assertion, we understand it. We perceive the words in the speaker's assertion (Burge 1993, 476, 478).

One might argue that when we perceive the words in the speaker's assertion, we can infer the content of the speaker's assertion, which entitles us to accept the speaker's assertion. Therefore, entitlement to accept the speaker's assertion is derived from the perception of the words and understanding them, and it is not apriori entitlement.

⁵⁵ "In interlocution, we are also causally dependent on perception. Our entitlements are thus dependent on perception. But in my view, perception contributes nothing to the epistemic force of the fundamental "default" entitlement." (Burge 1993, 478)

⁵⁶ "Perception is necessary to minimal understanding; and minimal understanding is essential to belief and justification." (Burge 1993, 476)

However, Burge argues that we hear the speaker's words and understand their meaning from which we can gain the "putative truth." In some sense we causally depend on perception; therefore, our entitlements somehow depend on perception. However, "perception contributes nothing to the epistemic force of the fundamental 'default' entitlement." (Burge 1993, 478) We may infer the subject matter and content by perceiving the words occurring in the speaker's assertion but association among the words is beyond our perception. Our primary entitlement of the speaker's assertion is derived from this prima facie understanding of the speaker's assertion, not from perception.⁵⁷ To obtain a prima facie understanding of the speaker's assertion, we are necessarily dependent on perception, but the entitlement of the speaker's assertion does not depend on perception. Therefore, the entitlement of the speaker's assertion is apriori entitlement (Burge 1993, 479, 482,483).⁵⁸

From the aforementioned discussion, we may summarize Burge's concept of testimony as follows:

The hearer is apriori entitled to accept the speaker's assertion unless he/she has a strong reason to counter it because the hearer considers the speaker as a rational being and his/her assertion as the source of reason, on the basis of the intelligibility of the speaker's assertion. As per the rational

⁵⁷ ". the fundamental entitlement to accept something as presentation-as-true derives from understanding The justificational force of the derivation does not depend on any supplementation from perception." (Burge 1993, 483)

⁵⁸ "The justificational force of the entitlement to rely on the connection is correspondingly conceptual, not perceptual." (Burge 1993, 482)

norm, a rational being should assert something which he/she actually believes to be true, that is, the content of his/her knowledge must be preserved in his/her presentation. Burge calls it the “truth telling norm”. Therefore, when the speaker asserts something to the hearer, he/she should present what he/she believes to be true, and depending on the speaker’s assertion, the hearer is entitled to accept it unless he/she has a strong reason to reject it. Finally, entitlement is apriori, and not empirical. Although, we are depend on perception for a minimal understanding of the speaker’s assertion. From the perception of the words of the speaker’s assertion, we understand their meaning and from this understanding, we derive the entitlement to accept the speaker’s assertion. In the hypothesis that the understanding of the association between words and their content is purely internal, the entitlement to accept the speaker’s assertion does not depend on any empirical supplements; thus, this entitlement is purely apriori.

At this point we can also understand in what sense Burge’s theory of testimony is anti-reductionist. Again, he argues that the hearer is entitled to accept the speaker’s assertion without any empirical grounds, unless he/she has a strong reason to reject it. This is clearly an anti-reductionist position.

Chapter 5

5.1 Lackey's Concept of Anti-Reductionism

I stressed that for Burge the absence of a strong reason to reject the speaker's assertion, or the absence of a defeater is the fundamental ground or justification to accept any speaker's assertion. Lackey does not agree with this point – she argues that the absence of a defeater is not sufficient for the hearer to accept the speaker's assertion. She contends that Burge's version of anti-reductionism does not guarantee testimonial knowledge. According to Lackey, in addition to the absence of a defeater or reason to reject the speaker's assertion, we need at least three additional conditions to make anti-reductionism plausible to us. Here, I present Lackey's formulation of anti-reductionism.

Lackey initially formulates anti-reductionism with respect of testimonial knowledge (TKN) in the following way:

“(TKN): For every speaker A and hearer B, B knows that p on the basis of A's testimony that p if and only if: (1) B believes that p on the basis of the content of A's testimony that p, (2) p is true, and (3) B has no defeaters for A's testimony that p.” (Lackey 2003, 707)

Therefore, a knower K can gain testimonial knowledge that p from the testimony of another person S if and only if K believes that p on the basis of S's testimony (which is true in nature), so K's belief that p is true and K has no defeaters for S's testimony that p. According to Lackey, the primary focus of this formulation of anti-reductionism with respect to testimonial knowledge lies on the "defeater condition". When the knower has any defeaters against a testimony, the knower is not in a position to know anything from that testimony. However, if the knower does not have any defeaters against a testimony, the knower is in a position to know something from that testimony.

5.2 Classification of Defeaters

The next question concerns the nature of defeaters.⁵⁹ According to Lackey there are defeaters of three kinds. The first is *doxastic defeater* and she introduces it as follows. When a subject S believes a proposition p as true and S's belief that p indicates that his/her belief that q (acquired on the basis of testimony of others) is either false or unreliable then S's belief that p is considered a defeater of q. However, it may be possible that S's belief that p is false. For example, suppose John believes that Peter is in London. However, one of Peter's friends tells John that Peter is in Paris and John believes Peter's friend's assertion. Now, John's new belief that Peter is in Paris defeated his belief that Peter is in London. Sometimes, John's old

⁵⁹ Previously in *Chapter Two* I discussed about Defeaters in a general way.

belief prevents his acquisition of a new belief. Moreover, the assertion of Peter's friend may be false. Therefore, regardless of the truth-value of John's belief that Peter is in Paris, it prevents John's belief that Peter is in London. Defeaters, in this sense, function by the virtue of being believed. This is why Lackey calls them *doxastic defeaters* (Lackey 2003, 707).⁶⁰

The second type of defeater is *normative defeater*. When a subject S is justified in believing that p and his /her belief that p prevents him/her from believing that q on the basis of the testimony of others, S's belief that p is a defeater of q. Here, S prevents himself/herself from believing that q, because S is justified in believing that p and this belief prevents him/her from doing so. Defeaters in this sense do not function by the virtue of being believed, they function by virtue of their being justified belief (Lackey 1999, 475; 2003, 707).

The third type of defeaters is *factual defeaters*. When a true proposition p is added to the subject S's belief system and prevents him/her from believing that q, then the proposition p is a *factual defeater*. Defeaters in this sense function by virtue of the truth (Lackey 1999, 475).

Given the three types of defeaters, TKN says that the presence of any of them prevents the subject from gaining any knowledge from the speaker's

⁶⁰ “.....defeater is a proposition D that is believed by S to be true, yet indicates that S's belief that p is either false or unreliable formed or sustained. Defeaters in this sense function by virtue of being *believed*, regardless of their truth-value.” (Lackey 1999, 474; 2003, 707)

testimony. These defeaters may either be defeated or undefeated defeater (the defeated defeater and undefeated defeater were discussed in *Chapter Two*). Therefore, the third condition of TKN should be reformulated as follows: “(3*) B has no undefeated defeaters for A’s testimony that p”.⁶¹ The reason is that only undefeated defeaters can prevent the subject from justifiably believing what is told by the others.

One acknowledged the possibility of three types of defeaters, Lackey remarks that neither the original TKN formulation of anti-reductionism nor the TKN with (3*) define testimonial knowledge. Therefore, Lackey suggests that in addition to the TKN formulation, we have to include three more conditions, without which, the TKN formulation of anti-reductionism does not fulfill its purpose.

Before discussing the additional conditions for the anti-reductionists formulation of TKN, we should keep in mind that despite the fact that we are in the *post-Gettier* era of epistemology, Lackey follows the JTB (justified true belief) formulation of knowledge for this discussion. The schematic formulation of the definition of knowledge according to the JTB thesis is as follows:

⁶¹ “It is the presence of undefeated defeaters, not defeaters, that is incompatible with testimonial knowledge. Condition (3) in (TKN) should, therefore, be read accordingly.” (Lackey 2003708)

“K. S knows that p iff (i) p; (ii) S believes that p; (iii) S is justified in believing that p.” (Lackey 1999, 473; Gettier 1963, 121)

Thus, a subject S can legitimately argue that he knows that p on the basis of the testimony of others that p, if and only if p is true, and S believes that p and S is justified in believing that p by the testimony of others.

According to Lackey, the present TKN formulation of anti-reductionism does reproduce the structure of K and more conditions are required, namely (1) a necessary condition for the speaker, (2) a necessary condition for the hearer, and (3) a necessary condition for the environment. I shall now analyze the three conditions.

5.3 A Necessary Condition for the Speaker

According to Lackey, when a speaker S believes that p, p is true, but S's belief that p does not appropriately connect with the fact, if S asserts that p to a hearer H, H is not able to gain any knowledge from S's assertion that p. Yet, H fulfills TKN conditions. Lackey presents the following *Case #1*.

“*Case #1*: Margaret is an extremely incompetent epistemic agent, continually forming perceptual beliefs without wearing her required prescription eyeglasses, testimonial beliefs on the basis of reading the *National Enquirer*, introspective beliefs when she is intoxicated, and so on. One day, Margaret again fails to wear her corrective lenses and

forms the belief that there is a great horned owl in a tree 50 feet away. Her belief happens to be true. Later that day, Margaret meets someone on the street named Eleanor, reports her owl sighting to her, and Eleanor comes to believe that there was a great horned owl in neighborhood tree on the basis of Margaret's testimony. Moreover, since it is possible for great horned owl to be in this neighborhood and Eleanor knows nothing about Margaret's epistemic habits, there are undefeated defeaters for the report in question, that is, Eleanor neither believes nor has evidence available to her such that she should believe that Margaret's report is false or unreliable." (Lackey 2003, 708)

Here, Margaret's belief that there is a great horned owl in the neighborhood tree is true but her belief is not a justified true belief, because she did not wear her corrective lenses when she formed this belief. Therefore, her belief is accidentally connected with the presence of the owl and she is not justified in believing it (similar arguments are presented in other work by Lackey. [Lackey 1999, 477; 2006, 434]). When she reports her belief to another person, Eleanor, without mentioning the fact that she (Margaret) did not wear her corrective lenses when she formed her belief, Eleanor believes that there is a great horned owl in the neighborhood tree on the basis of the content of Margaret's testimony. Her belief is true and she has no undefeated defeaters against Margaret's testimony, therefore, according to the TKN formulation of anti-reductionism, Eleanor knows that there is a great horned owl in the neighborhood tree. However, since we are in the post Gettier era, we know that in the present circumstances Eleanor does not know that there is a great horned owl in the neighborhood tree,

although all three conditions of TKN are satisfied, because, Margaret's testimony, from which she formed her belief, failed to appropriately connect with the relevant fact. In the post-Gettier era, when a person A claims that he/she knows that p, A's belief that p should be appropriately, and not accidentally or unreliably, connected with the fact that p.

Thus, Lackey suggests that we have to modify the second condition of TKN, as follows:

“(2*) For every speaker A and hearer B, if B comes to know that p on the basis of A's testifying that p, then A must know that p.” (Lackey 2003, 709)

The presupposition of testimonial knowledge of p is that the testifier must know that p. Unless the testifier fulfills this condition, the hearer is not in a position to know anything from his/her testimony. Knowledge requires some non-accidental or reliable connection between the knower's belief and the known fact. Therefore, when a speaker S asserts that p on the basis of his/her knowledge, and not on the basis of mere belief, there must be some non-accidental or reliable connections between his/her belief that p and the fact that p. Now, if the speaker S asserts that p on the basis his/her knowledge, that is, S's epistemic status corresponds with S's report, the hearer H knows that p on the basis of S's testimony that p.

However, according to Lackey, condition (2*) is too strong for testimonial knowledge. Suppose a subject, by mistake, believes that his/her faculty of senses is not functioning properly. In the present circumstances, he/she considers his/her empirical beliefs false. However, his/her beliefs are non-accidentally connected with the facts, irrespective of his/her belief. Yet,

his/her empirical beliefs are not knowledge. Now, if he/she reports what he/she believes to another person, who does not have any information about the speaker's belief, that his/her faculty of sense was not working properly (which is actually false), and he/she has no independent reason to think that the speaker is incompetent or insincere with respect to his/her report, what would happen to the hearer? Would he/she gain any knowledge from the speaker's testimony? Lackey contends that the hearer will gain knowledge from the speaker's assertion. Lackey presents this argument in *Case #2* (Lackey 2003, 710; 2006, 435) as follows:

“*Case #2*: Florence is incorrectly told by an otherwise highly competent optometrist that her vision is nearly completely unreliable, and, though she accepts his diagnosis, she continues to rely on her faculty of vision to form perceptual beliefs. Upon leaving her doctor's office, Florence sees a car accident, forms the corresponding belief, and later reports her belief to Alice without mentioning the optometrist's report. Since Alice is unaware of Florence's recent diagnosis and has no independent reason to think that Florence is either incompetent or insincere with respect to this information, she readily accepts her testimony about car accident.” (Lackey 2003, 710)

Here, Florence does not accept what she perceived outside the doctor's office. She has a defeater for her visual beliefs, namely the competent optometrist's diagnosis. However, the defeater for her visual beliefs was not conveyed (transmitted) through her testimony and she did not mention it while she reported what she perceived outside the doctor's office.

Therefore, Alice is entitled to accept Florence's testimony, and she (Alice) has no defeaters against it, despite the fact that Florence did not fulfill condition (2*).

The counterexample suggests that we should reformulate (2*) condition as follows:

(2**) For every speaker A and hearer B, B comes to know that p on the basis of A's testifying that p, only if A's testimony that p is appropriately connected with the fact.

On the basis of (2**), Lackey formulates anti-reductionism as follows:

“(TKN*): For every speaker A and hearer B, B knows that p on the basis of A's testimony that p if and only if: (1) B believes that p on the basis of the content of A's testimony that p, (2**) A's testimony that p is appropriately connected with the fact that p, and (3) B has no undefeated defeaters for A's testimony that p.” (Lackey 2003, 710)

Here, by adding condition (2**), which stresses the role of an appropriate connection between the speaker's testimony that p and the fact that p, Lackey ensures the truth condition of knowledge (originally presented by condition (2) in the TKN formulation of anti-reductionism).⁶²

⁶² Lackey presents this form of argument in different way. According to her:

5.4 A Necessary Condition for the Hearer

The TKN* formulation of anti-reductionism satisfies all the conditions of K. Yet, TKN* is not an adequate account of the anti-reductionist concept of testimony, because it does not mention any condition concerning the hearer. Consider the case in which the hearer is extremely good natured and rarely doubts the sincerity of the speaker, even when he/she has sufficient evidence for doubt. Such a hearer is not sufficiently sincere to find undefeated defeaters for the speaker's testimony. In this circumstance, the hearer may accept a testimony that he/she might have rejected if he/she were more sincere with regard to the speaker's testimony. Lackey discusses this possibility in her *Case #3* (Lackey 2003, 711; 2006, 436), in which there is an extremely innocent and good natured hearer, who is incapable of thinking that someone is insincere, dishonest, and wants to deceive others. In fact this person always thinks highly of other people. Therefore, when he receives any testimony from others he accepts it immediately, even if he has massive evidence that the speaker is an unreliable epistemic agent (e.g. the speaker does not know what he/she is presenting, and he/she is not a reliable testifier).

“SVT: For every speaker, A, and hearer, B, B's belief that p is known (justified, warranted) on the basis of A's testimony that p only if (1) A's statement that p is reliable or otherwise truth-conducive, (2) B comes to believe that p on the basis of the content of A's statement that p, and (3) B has no undefeated defeaters for believing that p.” (Lackey 2006, 438)

According to Lackey, such a hearer does not know anything from the speaker's testimony despite the fact that he/she satisfies all the conditions of TKN*, because the manner in which the hearer satisfies condition (3) of TKN* is inadequate for testimonial knowledge. To explain this, Lackey differentiates between *substantive* and *trivial* satisfaction of the no-defeater condition of TKN*. In the aforementioned example, the hearer is incapable of being sensitive and critical to the presence of defeaters. His behavior is not the behavior of a sincere epistemic agent; rather he behaves like he/she was programmed to accept any testimony from any speaker. Therefore, if he accepts any testimony under the condition that he has no undefeated defeaters for the speaker's testimony, he overlooks massive counterevidence and presents himself as the programmed hearer who is eager to accept the speaker's testimony under any circumstance. Therefore, the hearer *trivially* satisfies the no-defeater condition of TKN*. On the contrary, if the hearer has the capacity to be sensitive and critical toward the speaker's testimony and considers every counterevidence, we can say that the hearer *substantively* satisfies the no-defeater condition. According to Lackey, in order to know something from the speaker's testimony the hearer has to satisfy the no-defeater condition *substantively*, not *trivially*.

Yet, even the *substantive* satisfaction of the no-defeater condition of TKN* is not enough. Consider someone who is over sensitive or inappropriately sensitive to defeaters, as described in the following *Case #4* (Lackey 2003, 712). Here we have someone who has some evidence that a few of his neighbors have lied to him in the past, from which he concludes that everyone in his neighborhood is constantly trying to deceive him. However, he is also certain that the neighbors know that he is suspicious of them. Therefore, he concludes that his neighbors intend to deceive him, and

they know that he does not believe them, so, everyone will report what they believe under the assumption that he will believe the opposite. In the present circumstances, suppose one of his neighbors N, whom he has no good epistemic reason to distrust, tells him that p, then after receiving the neighbor's testimony that p, he concludes that "N wants to deceive me, but N knows that I am suspicious of him, so he reported to me that p, believing that I will disbelieve what he says. But I know his strategy and will not let him succeed in his plan. Therefore, I will believe his assertion that p." In the present circumstance, his neighbor's testimony is, in fact, true. He does not believe that his neighbor's testimony is false or unreliable, and he does not have any evidence to believe so. We have to accept that the person knows that p, because he satisfies TKN* and is being sensitive to defeaters. However, this person is not able to know that p on the basis of his neighbor's testimony that p. Though he satisfies conditions (1 and 2**) and substantively also satisfies condition (3) of TKN*, he is inappropriately sensitive to defeaters. Contrary to *Case #3*, the person in *Case #4* substantively satisfies condition (3) of TKN*, but he does it irrationally and inappropriately. Therefore, he is not able to gain testimonial knowledge on the basis of his neighbor's testimony.

Lackey's conclusion is that in order to gain testimonial knowledge on the basis of the speaker's testimony, the hearer should be a properly functioning or reliable recipient of that testimony, and he/she should be appropriately sensitive to defeaters. On the basis of this condition, Lackey reformulates anti-reductionism in the following way:

“(TKN**): For every speaker A and hearer B, B knows that p on the basis of A's testimony that p if and only if: (1) B

believes that p on the basis of the content of A's testimony that p, (2**) A's testimony that p is appropriately connected with the fact that p, (3) B has no undefeated defeaters for A's testimony that p, and (4) B is reliable or properly functioning recipient of testimony." (Lackey 2003, 714)

In this formulation of anti-reductionism, Lackey overcomes the insincerity or insensitivity of the hearer to defeaters to gain testimonial knowledge. However, this is not yet the end.

5.5 A Necessary condition for the Environment

Lackey contends that we need additional conditions over and above (2**) and (4) to establish the acceptability of anti-reductionism. When anti-reductionists claim that testimony is a source of knowledge in so far as to argue that the speaker or testifier reliably presents a testimony that is connected with facts and the hearer is sensitive to defeater or is a properly functioning recipient, they have actually missed a crucial aspect of epistemology of testimony, that is, *the necessary condition for the environment*. Lackey discusses this in *Case # 5* (Lackey 2003, 714 – 715).

Suppose that person S asks something to a person H, who is the only exceptional person with respect to the epistemic nature of his community, consists of people who are generally unreliable for an "outsider," and S receives a true and reliable answer from H. Suppose furthermore, that S is sensitive to defeaters and he/she has no evidence against H's testimony. Can S claim that he knows something from H's testimony?

If we analyze the circumstances, we find that the circumstances satisfy the TKN** formulation of anti-reductionism. First, whatever S believes is on the basis of the content of H's testimony. Therefore, S satisfies condition (1) of TKN**. Second, H's testimony represents the fact. Therefore, H's testimony is appropriately connected with the fact and satisfies condition (2) of TKN**. Third, S has no evidence against H's testimony that proves that it is false or unreliable. Therefore, S satisfies condition (3) of TKN**. Finally, S is sensitive to defeaters, therefore S is a reliable or properly functioning recipient of the testimony as condition (4) of TKN** claimed.

However, according to Lackey, despite the fact that the aforesaid circumstances satisfy conditions (1) to (4) of TKN**, S does not know anything from H's testimony, because the satisfaction of conditions (1) to (4) of (TKN**) depends on S's good fortune. If he asked anyone other than H, he would certainly receive false information. According to Lackey, we can analyze this *luck case* in two ways. First, one may argue that what S believes on the basis of H's testimony is merely an "*accident that it is true rather than false*" and thereby a Gettier-type case. Second, one may claim that what S believes on the basis of H's testimony is merely an "*accident that it is justified rather than unjustified*" and thereby, it differs from a standard Gettier-type case. In the latter case, accidentality is located at the level of justification rather than at the level of truth. Lackey suggests that whatever analysis we accept, it is true that S acquires a justified true belief in this environment by the virtue of good fortune. Thus another condition is required. Lackey reformulates anti-reductionism in the following way:

“(TKN***): For every speaker A and hearer B, B knows that p on the basis of A’s testimony that p if and only if: (1) B believes that p on the basis of the content of A’s testimony that p, (2**) A’s testimony that p is appropriately connected with the fact that p, (3) B has no undefeated defeaters for A’s testimony that p, (4) B is a reliable or properly functioning recipient of testimony, and (5) the environment in which B receives A’s testimony that p is suitable for the reception of reliable testimony.” (Lackey 2003, 716)

Eventually, according to Lackey, this formulation (TKN***) of anti-reductionism expresses the minimal requirement for the anti-reductionist account of testimonial knowledge. Further condition(s) may be required to make this formulation more acceptable.

5.6 Argument Against Lackey’s Formulation of Testimony

Lackey’s initial formulation of anti-reductionism, namely TKN, and her final formulation of anti-reductionism, namely TKN***, are based on the assumption that the speaker generally speaks the truth, which we can call *truth presenting principle* or *content preservation principle*. In the initial formulation of TKN, Lackey argues that when any speaker A asserts that p to a hearer B, B can gain knowledge on the basis of A’s testimony only if that p is true. This condition is one of the three conditions of TKN. Then, she argues that there might be a case where the speaker A asserts that p to the hearer B and A’s belief that p is true but fails to appropriately connect it with the truth (Lackey 2003, 709). To overcome this undesirable situation,

Lackey further modified condition (2), which is the truth condition to condition (2*). Lackey formulates (2*) in the following way:

“(2*): For every speaker A and hearer B, if B comes to know that p on the basis of A’s testifying that p, then A must know that p.” (Lackey 2003, 709)

By condition (2*) Lackey tries to ensure the truth condition. According to the post-Gettier formulation of the JTB theory of knowledge, when A knows that p, then A’s belief that p must be appropriately connected with the fact, not by luck.⁶³

Furthermore, Lackey argues that when a speaker A believes that p on the basis of visual perception but fails to know that p, because of wrong information of A’s physician (who is a highly competent optometrist) despite the fact that A’s belief that p is properly connected with the fact, and it is reported to the hearer B, according to (2*), B cannot know that p on the basis of A’s testimony that p, because condition (2*) is not satisfied here. To overcome this problem, Lackey reformulates (2*) as (2**). In (2**), Lackey argues that the hearer B is able to know that p on the basis of A’s testimony that p if A’s testimony that p appropriately connects with the fact that p.

⁶³ “Since it is post-Gettier knowledge that is at issue, it is widely accepted that, in order for a speaker A to know that p, there needs to be at least some non-accidental or reliable connection between A’s belief that p and the fact that p.” (Lackey 2003, 7090)

The question concerns how H knows that A's belief that p is appropriately connected with the fact(s) when (as Lackey argues) the hearer H's knowledge that p on the basis of A's testimony that p, depends on the appropriate connection between A's belief that p and the fact that p. Here, I would like to recapitulate Lackey's argument presented in *Case #1*, where the hearer fails to gain knowledge from speaker's assertion, because A's belief that p is not appropriately connected with the fact, though A's belief that p is true. Now, one may argue, on behalf of Lackey that for gaining knowledge from speaker's assertion, there is no need to know whether there is any appropriate connection between speaker's beliefs that p and the fact that p. It is sufficient that an appropriate connection exists between speaker's beliefs that p and the fact that p. This claim is very crucial for the epistemology of testimony. Let me explain this issue using two consecutive cases:

Case #1: Suppose that John believes that there is a dog in the garden and his belief appropriately connected with the fact. Now, John asserts his belief to Peter. According to aforementioned claim, Peter can gain knowledge (if other conditions of the testimony are satisfied) from John's assertion, because John's belief is appropriately connected with fact. Note that, Peter does not verify whether or not John's belief is appropriately connected with the fact.

Case #2: Suppose John believes that there is a dog in the garden, but he does not know that his belief that there is a dog in the garden is not appropriately connected with the

fact. Suppose that he obtained his belief after seeing a cat. Now, according to the aforementioned view, if John asserts what he believes to Peter, Peter is not able to gain any knowledge from John's assertion, even though the other conditions of the testimony are satisfied, because John's belief that there is a dog in the garden is not appropriately connected with the fact.

Now, my question is what makes the difference between *Case #1* and *Case #2*? On what basis does Peter gain knowledge in the first case but not in the second case? One may argue that the difference depends on whether John's belief is appropriately connected with the fact or not. John's belief is appropriately connected with the fact in the first case but not second case. Therefore, Peter can obtain knowledge only in the first case.

In the second case, John's belief that there is a dog in the garden is not appropriately connected with the fact. My question is, "How does this prevent Peter from obtaining knowledge from John's assertion when no one knows that John's belief is not appropriately connected with the fact?" John's assertion does not carry any sign or information that his belief is not appropriately connected with the fact. Then, how does it prevent Peter from obtaining knowledge on the basis of John's assertion when other conditions are satisfied? Is there any additional information, in the second case, which prevents Peter from obtaining knowledge? Is there any mechanism through which Peter can know that the John's belief that there is a dog in the garden is appropriately connected with the fact? Lackey is silent in this regard. I answer this question by considering other anti-reductionists and examining whether their arguments are acceptable or not.

To answer the aforementioned questions, one may present Burge's argument (Burge 1999, 474–474) of "truth-telling" norm. According to this norm, the function of reason is to present and promote the truth. Therefore, when A knows that p and his/her belief that p is properly connected with the fact that p, he/she should present that p to the hearer H. Therefore, when speaker A asserts that p to the hearer B, B can legitimately infer that A is presenting his/her knowledge independent of special personal interests.

However, this answer give rise to other questions, such as "How do we know the "truth-telling norm" is being followed?" We can answer this question in two ways. First, one may argue that we know this by observation. In everyday life, we observe that human beings, in general, speak the truth. Therefore, on the basis of this observation, we may formulate the "truth-telling norm" or that the "function of reason is presenting and promoting the truth." Second, one may argue that we know that the "truth-telling norm" or "truth presenting or promoting function of reason" is independent of sense experience or observation; therefore, this is the true function of reason.

However, I think that this "truth telling" norm is not sufficient and I shall now defend my claim on two grounds. Consider first the following case shows:

Case #3: John is extremely incompetent in forming perceptual beliefs, because he has a sight problem, of which he is unaware. Now, John believes that there is a dog in the garden after seeing a cat. Furthermore, John asserts what he believes to Peter. Peter has no sign to distrust John and the other conditions of the testimony also satisfied. John asserts

what he actually believes as true; therefore, the “truth-telling” condition is also satisfied.

Here, Peter does not obtain knowledge from John’s assertion despite the fact that truth telling norm of testimonial knowledge has been satisfied.

The second reason for my claim that the truth telling norm is not sufficient is the following:

Case #4: John holds a justified true believes that there is a dog in the garden and deliberately asserts that there is a cat in the garden to Peter. However, there is no cat in the garden.

Now, in the present situation, does Peter obtain any knowledge from John’s assertion if the other conditions of the testimony have been satisfied? According to anti-reductionism, Peter is not able to obtain knowledge from John’s assertion, because John does not satisfy “truth-telling” norm. However, how does Peter know that John is not following “truth telling” norm? There is no mechanism in the anti-reductionist account of testimony to know whether or not the speaker is, indeed, following the “truth-telling” norm. The hearer has to depend on the faith that the speaker generally speaks the truth. Therefore, in the anti-reductionist account of testimony, the hearer can never be certain about the truth of his/her belief, which is one of the conditions of knowledge (according to JTB theory), obtained from the speaker’s assertion. On the contrary, if anti-reductionists argue that the hearer does not need to be certain about the truth value of the belief obtained on the basis of speaker’s assertion, they have to explain how the hearer

obtains knowledge without any certainty about truth in the framework of the JTB theory of knowledge.⁶⁴

Therefore, I believe that, anti-reductionism fails in dealing with the testimony provided by someone whose belief that p is not appropriately connected with the fact. The anti-reductionist is unable to answer to this question: how does the hearer ensure that the speaker's assertion is appropriately connected with the fact? Since, sometimes we accept what is told by the others without any verification and act accordingly, despite the possibility of error, the anti-reductionist formulation of testimony does not ensure the truth condition of knowledge.

⁶⁴ Anti-reductionist may reject the JTB theory of knowledge. But I have not seen any argument of that type.

Conclusion

In general, we think that scientific and perceptual knowledge is more fundamental than other types of knowledge. However, it is true that sometimes we hesitate while obtaining some information through sense experience or scientific experiment. In the latter case, for example, when a scientist obtains any unexpected result from an experiment, he is likely to hesitate before accepting the result. He may be uncertain about the result in spite of knowing that he followed the correct method in his experiment. I think he hesitates because the result is unexpected to him. Therefore, for his own satisfaction, he will repeat experiment, and if he obtains the same result, only then will he, doubtlessly, accept it. Similarly, if one sees an unexpected object or hears an unexpected sound, he/she hesitates to accept them. Similarly, with respect to testimony, sometimes we accept what is told by others; however, sometimes we hesitate to accept it, depending on the nature of the information. More generally, I think that whether one accepts or hesitates to accept any information obtained by any source of knowledge is not only depend on from which source he/she obtains such information. Sometimes, it depends on the situation and on the nature of information. Thus, the source is not sufficient for a subject to accept any information without any hesitation. We have to consider the circumstances and the nature of information.

I discussed both reductionism and anti-reductionism. I think that both have limits, which I shall describe in the final chapter. My criticism is based on two claims, a psychological claim and an epistemological claim. I shall then present an alternative account of testimony which tries to overcome the opposition between reductionist and anti-reductionist account of testimony. One version of this account is defended by Lackey. I shall revise Lackey's proposal and present my own account.

Psychological claim:

It is not true that every man immoral and has a strong intention to deceive others. At the same time, it is not true that every man is sufficiently good as to never deceive other or that there is no possibility of deceiving others. Therefore, when a speaker says something to a hearer, there is a possibility that the speaker might deceive the hearer intentionally. Therefore, the hearer must be careful when he/she is going to accept speaker's assertion.

Epistemological claim:

First, sometimes we obtain false beliefs through sense experience, inference or through any others sources of knowledge. Hence, it is possible that a person does not know something properly or that he/she believes something which is actually false.

Second, it is possible that the hearer does not understand what the speaker intends to say. If the hearer does not understand the information speaker intends to convey. For example, S may tell his/her friend H that he/she is near the bank (by "bank" S means the riverside) and H understands "bank" as the place where we keep our money. Now, in the present situation,

H does not gain any knowledge from S's assertion and S's assertion does not serve its purpose.

In the process of testimony, there are many chances of error. Therefore, my conclusion is that unlike both global reductionism and anti-reductionism, verification or additional grounds for testimony are required, depending on the situation, subject matter of the testimony, effect of the testimony. After considering all those circumstances, sometimes we accept a testimony without searching for any additional grounds. Likewise, sometimes we do not accept some testimony without additional grounds even in the absence of strong reason or the complete absence of reason to not accept the testimony. Hence, we cannot accept as a general rule that the hearer must accept the speaker's assertion after empirically verifying the trustworthiness of the speaker's testimony (as the reductionists claim), or that the hearer must accept the speaker's assertion unless he/she has any reason to doubt the trustworthiness of the speaker's testimony (as anti-reductionists claim). The first claim (the hearer should always verify the trustworthiness of the speaker's testimony before accepting it) is too general claim and is not practicable in everyday life. Therefore, epistemologists often argue in favor of local reductionism. With respect to the second claim (the hearer must accept the speaker's assertion unless he/she has a reason to doubt it) we may legitimately ask what happens when the hearer has a reason to doubt the speaker's assertion. Anti-reductionists do not focus on this aspect. If the anti-reductionists answer to this question is that the hearer must verify the speaker's assertion, then there will be no difference between them and reductionists. If the anti-reductionists do not give this answer, then they have to provide another one. I have not found any.

I believe that both local reductionists and anti-reductionists try to explain the same facts of our everyday life, namely, that sometimes we

accept the speaker's assertion without verification, and sometimes we accept it only after verification. Local reductionists claim that in everyday life, we accept the speaker's assertion when our customs or past experiences guide us, when we are in a simple trust stage, or when the situation is exceptional. However, when we have reason for doubt in each of these cases (barring the exceptional case) or in cases other than those mentioned, we verify the trustworthiness of the speaker's assertion before accepting it. Contrariwise, according to anti-reductionism, when he/she has no reason to doubt the trustworthiness of the speaker's assertion, he/she is entitled to accept it.

I believe that both local reductionism and anti-reductionism ultimately make the same point. The differences depend on their different standpoints. They explain the same facts in two different manners, because they are looking at the same facts from different points of view. Local reductionists explain why we do not accept the assertions of some speaker (or in some context) without any verification and anti-reductionists explain why we do accept the assertions of some speaker without any verification. However, they are, in fact, supplementing each other.

Jennifer Lackey attempts to balance these two views and presents a new theory of testimony known as *dualism*. She combines reductionism and anti-reductionism in the following manner:

“For every speaker, A, and hearer, B, B knows (believes with justification/warrant) that p on the basis of A's testimony only if:

(D₁) B believes that p on the basis of the content of A's testimony,

(D₂) A's testimony is reliable or otherwise truth-conducive,

(D₃) B is a reliable or properly functioning recipient of testimony,

(D₄) The environment in which B receives A's testimony is suitable for the reception of reliable testimony,

(D₅) B has no undefeated (psychological or normative) defeaters for A's testimony, and

(D₆) B has appropriate positive reason for accepting A's testimony.”

(Lackey 2008, 177–178)

Lackey, provides necessary conditions for testimony.⁶⁵ However, I believe that these conditions face a serious problem, namely that we are forced to accept the speaker's assertion even if some of those conditions are not satisfied. For example, suppose that a speaker S asserts that p to a hearer H, and H is not in a position to verify S's assertion nor has any positive reason in favor of S's assertion (in *Chapter Two* I gave the example of the officers of the space station who accept the assertion of officers belonging to the enemy country) but accepts that p. Now, if Lackey's formulation is correct, then H does not gain any knowledge from S's assertion because H has no appropriate positive reason in favor of S's testimony (condition D₆).

Lackey is well aware of this type of objection. More precisely, she remarks that there are two objections against D₆, namely the “*scarcity of*

⁶⁵ “...dualism specifies only necessary conditions, there may be other conditions that need to be added for a complete epistemology of testimony.” (Lackey 2008, 178)

information objection (SIO)” and “*circularity objection* (CO)”. In my context only SIO is relevant and I will discuss it only. Lackey formulates SIO as follows:

“Ordinary epistemic agents simply do not have enough information to acquire positive reasons strong enough to justify accepting most of the testimony intuitively justified or warranted (Lackey 2008, 180).”

She remarks that this objection is irrelevant to her formulation of dualism because she is presenting “*weaker conditions than that required by reductionists*” (Lackey 2008, 181). By D_6 she simply attempts to “*ensure that the hearer’s acceptance of the testimony is rationally acceptable*” (Lackey 2008, 181).

Next, Lackey attempts to justify the role of the positive reasons for acceptance of testimony in absence of insufficient information about the speaker. According to Lackey, when the hearer does not have any information about the speaker, then he/she can gain a positive reason for accepting speaker’s testimony on the basis of observation of the speaker’s behavior, context, type of report, and so forth, as I had explain in **Chapter One** in the context of how the hearer ascribes the trustworthiness of the unknown speaker’s testimony (Hume 2000, 85; Lackey 2008, 182–183).

However, I believe that Lackey’s defense of dualism is not convincing. If we accept a positive reason (as condition D_6), in any form, as a necessary condition of the testimony, then it could lead to global reductionism and will not be able to explain those cases in which the hearer is not in a position to gain any reason (even in a weaker sense), such as the simple trust stage and exceptional cases (where the hearer has insufficient

knowledge to judge the trustworthiness of the speaker or the undefeated defeater is absent). There are also some other problems. Let us concede to Lackey that D_6 is a necessary condition for testimony. It follows that D_2 and D_5 become redundant for the following reason:

First, suppose that a speaker S asserts that p to a hearer H . Now, if H has any positive reason in favor of S 's assertion that p , then H can gain the knowledge that S 's testimony is truth-conducive (D_2). Therefore, there is no need to add D_2 in the formulation of dualism in addition to D_6 .

Second, when the hearer has reason to accept the speaker's assertion, no question arises regarding the absence of an undefeated defeater (D_5) because the absence of undefeated defeater is relevant when the hearer does not have any positive reason to accept speaker's assertion. Anti-reductionists accept "undefeated defeater" condition to accept speaker's testimony when the hearer does not has any positive reason in favor of speaker's testimony. Therefore, when the hearer has sufficient positive reasons to accept speaker's testimony, the "undefeated defeater" condition is not required. Therefore, condition D_5 , which is the "undefeated defeater" condition, is redundant when the hearer has a positive reason in favor of the speaker's testimony.

Now, one may ask the following question: if there is an undefeated defeater which contradict the positive reason, what should the hearer do? For example, suppose that John tells me that next Friday is Peter's birthday. Now, in the present circumstances, I have some positive reason to accept John's testimony, e.g. John is well known to me and he never deceives me; I have no sign which indicates that he is lying. Therefore, according to aforementioned claim that D_5 is redundant when there is a positive reason in

favor of speaker's testimony, I am entitled to accept John's testimony. However, if I have any undefeated defeater against John's testimony, such as I saw Peter's birth certificates which says that Peter's birthday is not next Friday, then should I accept John's assertion in spite of that fact that I have some positive reasons to accept John's testimony? The answer should be negative. Therefore, we cannot say that D_5 is redundant when the speaker has a positive reason in favor of speaker's testimony (D_6).

My answer is that when I have an undefeated defeater to doubt John's testimony then I am not entitled to accept it because undefeated defeater and positive reason cannot co-exist. When I have an undefeated defeater against John's testimony, then I do not have any positive reason to accept his testimony. On the other hand, when I have a positive reason to accept John's testimony, it follows that I do not have any reason (undefeated defeater or simple defeater) to doubt John's testimony. Therefore, when the hearer has a positive reason to accept speaker's testimony (D_6), then condition D_5 is redundant.

For the aforementioned reason, I do not accept Lackey's dualism and would like to formulate an account of testimony where D_5 and D_6 are not necessary for every testimony. My account would be able to explain the exceptional cases and the cases of the simple trust stage. I name this account "*Contextualism*". According to it:

For every speaker S and hearer H, H knows (believes with justification) that p on the basis of S's testimony only if following conditions are satisfied:

(C1) H believes that p on the basis of the content of S's testimony, and

(C2) H is a reliable or properly functioning recipient of testimony, and

(C3) the environment in which H receives S's testimony is suitable for the reception of reliable testimony, and

(C4.1) H's memory past experience guides him/her to accept that p,

or

(C4.2) H's situation is exceptional in that it compels him/her to accept S's testimony (simple trust stage or developmental stage),

or

(C4.3) H has no undefeated defeater for S's testimony and testimony is truth-conducive,

or

(C4.4) H has empirically verified S's testimony.

Let me now explain the significance of my conditions. The first three conditions are necessary for testimony. So, the hearer would not be able to gain any knowledge from the speaker's testimony when any of those conditions is not satisfied. The other condition is a disjunctive condition. The disjunction is necessary and which disjunct holds depends on context, that is, they are required on the contextual basis. For example, suppose that John tells me that there is an apple in the dining table. Now, in the present circumstances, if I satisfy the first three conditions and memories of my past experience guide me, then I am legitimate to accept John's testimony. However, sometimes our memories of that past experiences are not able to guide us, and we are not able to verify speaker's testimony personally (in *Chapter Two* I gave the example of the officers of the space station who accept the

testimony of officers belonging to the enemy country, that means there is reason to doubt speaker's testimony), then we accept speaker's testimony without any additional ground, since this is an exceptional situation. Sometimes, in the normal situation, we accept speaker's testimony in the absence of a positive reason, when the hearer has no undefeated defeater against speaker's testimony. However, sometimes we accept speaker's testimony only after verification. Therefore, I believe that conditions C4.1 to C4.4 are not necessary for the testimony at the same context. They are necessary for testimony in the contextual basis. Sometimes, C4.1 is necessary, when rest of the conditions (C4.2 to C4.4) are not necessary, and vice versa.

Now, the question is what is new in my formulation that was absent in Lackey's formulation? I did not add the absence of undefeated defeater condition (C4.3) and positive reason condition {I consider (C4.1) and (C4.4) as a positive reason condition. (C4.1) is based in past experience and (C4.4) is based on present experience} at the same time. Unlike Lackey, in my formulation the speaker needs either of the conditions. Furthermore, in the condition (C4.3), I combined the truth-conducive condition with the undefeated defeater condition because the hearer needs these two conditions in together when he/she has no positive reason for speaker's testimony. Condition (C4.2) represents those cases where the hearer is not in a position to verify the trustworthiness of the speaker's testimony and judge whether or not there is any undefeated defeater present for the speaker's testimony. I believe, conditions added in the aforementioned formulation of *Contextualism* are the minimal conditions. Other conditions may be added to make the *Contextualist* formulation of the epistemology of testimony more acceptable.

A correct epistemology of testimony should stress the role of the circumstances. When the circumstances demand that the hearer accept the speaker's testimony on the basis of positive reason, then the hearer should do so. By contrast, when the circumstances demand that the hearer should accept speaker's testimony without any positive reason, then the hearer should accept the speaker's testimony without any positive reason. This is why I name this theory as *Contextualism*.

However, my formulation of testimony is not free from objections. In *Chapter Five*, I argued that the hearer does not satisfy truth condition of knowledge when he/she accept speaker's testimony without any verification. Therefore, same charge is applicable in my formulation of testimony, when the hearer accepts speaker's testimony without any verification. For example, suppose that John tells me that there is an apple in the dining table, despite the fact that he holds a justified true belief that there is no apple in the dining table. Now, in the present circumstances, if I accept John's testimony on the basis of some positive reasons, such as, he is a good person, he never deceive me, there is no sign for doubting him, then I will fail to gain a true belief from John's testimony. Therefore, we may conclude that there are many chances of error if we accept speaker's testimony without any verification; hence, we are not able to satisfy truth condition of the knowledge.

To solve this problem, I differentiate *testimonial beliefs* from *testimonial knowledge*. When a speaker S assert that P to a hearer H, then sometimes H believes that P. However, sometimes H refuse to believes that P. For example, suppose that John tells me that there is a picture of unicorn in the bad room, after hearing John's assertion I may believe what he tells me. However, if he tells me that there is a unicorn in the bad room, then, immediately, I refuse to believe what he tells. Therefore, we may conclude

that sometimes we believe what other persons are told us. However, it is not clear that my belief that there is a picture of a unicorn is true or false. It is possible that there is no picture of unicorn in the bad room. Therefore, we may conclude that regardless of truth value of the speaker's assertion, occasionally, we believe speaker's assertion. When, we believe speaker's assertion without verifying the truth value of the assertion, the belief is considered as mere testimonial belief not a testimonial knowledge. By contrast, when we are certain about the truth value of the testimonial belief only then we can consider that belief as testimonial knowledge. In aforementioned example, when I believe that there is a picture of unicorn in the bad room on the basis of John's assertion without knowing the truth value of John's assertion, the belief is a mere testimonial belief, instead of testimonial knowledge. When we become certain about the truth value of speaker's assertion only then we obtain testimonial knowledge.

Therefore, in my opinion, whenever we receive a testimony that p we may believe that p on the basis of memories of past experience, circumstantial evidence, or present situation may compel us to accept the testimony and act accordingly. However, unless we become certain about the truth value of that p, we cannot say that we know that p. We may formulate the conditions for mere testimonial belief as follows:

For every speaker S and hearer H, H obtains mere belief that p on the basis of S's assertion that p only if:

1. H believes that p on the basis of S's assertion that p.
2. H is reliable or properly functioning recipient of testimony.
3. The environment in which H receives S's testimony is suitable for the reception of reliable testimony.

4. H is not certain about the truth value of S's assertion that p.

5.1 Memories of H's past experience guide him or her to accept S's assertion that p.

Or

5.2 Situation wherein H receives S's assertion is exception in that it compels him/her to accept S's assertion that p.

Or

5.3 H has no undefeated defeater (psychological or normative) for S's testimony that p.

Or

5.4 S's testimony is truth-conducive.

In the aforementioned formulation the hearer acquires only mere belief that p because he/she is a reliable and properly functioned recipient and he/she believes that p on the basis of S's assertion in a suitable environment, he/she is not certain about the truth value of that p, present situation compels him/her to believe that p or he/she believes on the basis of circumstantial evidence, although, these circumstantial evidence do not ensure that p is true. Here, H fulfills only two conditions of JTB formulation of knowledge, that is, (a) belief condition and (b) justificatory condition. However, occasionally H satisfies only (a) belief condition, when he/she on other option to believe S's assertion (as I discussed in the context of astronaut's testimony in *Chapter Two*).

By contrast we may formulate the conditions for testimonial knowledge as follows:

For every speaker S and hearer H, H knows that p on the basis of S's assertion that p only if:

1. H believes that p on the basis of S's assertion that p, and
2. H is reliable or properly functioning recipient of testimony, and
3. The environment in which H receives S's testimony is suitable for the reception of reliable testimony, and
4. H is certain about the truth value of S's assertion that p and has sufficient ground for believes that p on the basis of S's assertion that p.

In the aforementioned formulation the hearer H know that p on the basis of S's assertion that p because H is reliable and properly functioned recipient and he/she believes that p on the basis of S's assertion in a suitable environment, he/she is not certain about the truth value of that p, he/she has a justification for believing that p. Here H fulfills all of three conditions such as (a) belief condition, (b) truth condition, and (c) justificatory condition of JTB formulation of knowledge.

Therefore, in my opinion, it is a fact that we acquire testimonial beliefs from the speaker's testimony. Some beliefs, among those testimonial beliefs, can be considered as testimonial knowledge depending on satisfaction of all the conditions of JTB formulation of knowledge; others are mere beliefs. However, I believe that my formulation is a minimal expression of *contextualism*. One may enrich this formulation by adding more conditions.

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