EPISTEMICALLY UNJUST DISAGREEMENTS:

A Study in Non-Ideal Epistemology

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Koç University

Graduate School of Social Sciences and Humanities

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To my family

ABSTRACT

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The literature on the epistemology of disagreement aims to answer the question of how disagreeing agents should respond to an epistemic disagreement. Towards this aim, epistemologists of disagreement standardly focus on idealized cases in which the epistemically irrelevant factors are overlooked, such as race, skin color, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, etc. of the disagreeing agents to find the epistemically appropriate response, the response governed by the appropriate rational norms. This thesis aims to draw attention to the fact that standard approaches to the epistemology of disagreement fail to acknowledge the inextricably social character of disagreement. Epistemology of disagreement as a sub-branch of social epistemology is a discipline in which the intersubjective relationships are at the core of the knowledge validation processes. This means that non-ideal dimensions of social relationships have an effect on our epistemic considerations. To be able to show this, this thesis focuses on the misevaluations that are made by the disagreeing agents regarding each other's and their own epistemic abilities as a result of some identity prejudices and/or social norms and traditions. It will be argued that agents' underestimation or overestimation of theirs and each other's epistemic abilities as a result of prejudices creates a status injustice, which causes social, practical, moral, political as well as epistemic harms. In order to prevent status injustice and to respond to a disagreement appropriately, this thesis suggests that either moral norms together with rational norms, or an irreducibly intersubjective conception of rationality, should be adopted.

Keywords: Epistemic disagreement, epistemic injustice, epistemic status, moral norms, rational norms, status injustice

ÖZETÇE

EPİSTEMİK BAĞLAMDA ADALETSİZ ANLAŞMAZLIKLAR:

İdeal Olmayan Epistemoloji Üzerine Bir Çalışma

Eylül Zeynep Başkaya

Felsefe, Yüksek Lisans

13 Eylül 2021

Anlaşmazlığın epistemolojisine ilişkin literatür, fikir ayrılığına düşen öznelerin epistemik bir anlaşmazlığa nasıl yanıt vermesi gerektiği sorusunu yanıtlamayı amaçlar. Bu amaca yönelik olarak anlaşmazlık epistemologları, epistemik olarak uygun yanıtı, uygun rasyonel normlarla yönetilen yanıtı, bulmak için, standart olarak, fikir ayrılığına düşen öznelerin ırkı, ten rengi, etnik kökeni, yaşı, cinsiyeti, cinsel yönelimi, vb. gibi epistemik açıdan alakasız olan faktörlerin görmezden gelindiği ideal durumlara odaklanırlar. Bu tez, anlaşmazlık epistemolojisine yönelik standart yaklaşımların anlaşmazlığın ayrılamaz bir şekilde sosyal olan karakterini kabul etmekte başarısız olduğu gerçeğine dikkat çekmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Sosyal epistemolojinin bir alt dalı olarak anlaşmazlık epistemolojisi, özneler arası ilişkilerin bilgi doğrulama süreçlerinin merkezinde yer aldığı bir disiplindir. Bu, sosyal ilişkilerin ideal olmayan boyutlarının epistemik değerlendirmelerimiz üzerinde bir etkisi olduğu anlamına gelir. Bunu gösterebilmek için bu tez, fikir ayrılığına düşen öznelerin bazı kimlik önyargıları ve/veya toplumsal norm ve gelenekler nedeniyle kendilerinin ve birbirlerinin epistemik yeteneklerine ilişkin yaptıkları yanlış değerlendirmelere odaklanmaktadır. Önyargılar sonucunda, öznelerin kendilerinin ve birbirlerinin epistemik yeteneklerini küçümsemelerinin veya abartmalarının bir statü adaletsizliği yarattığı, bunun sosyal, pratik, ahlaki, politik olduğu kadar epistemik dokuncalara da neden olduğu tartışılacaktır. Statü adaletsizliğini önlemek ve bir anlaşmazlığa uygun şekilde cevap verebilmek için bu tez, ya ahlaki normların rasyonel normlarla birlikte kullanılması gerektiğini ya da indirgenemez şekilde özneler arası bir rasyonellik anlayışının benimsenmesi gerektiğini öne sürmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ahlaki normlar, epistemik adaletsizlik, epistemik anlaşmazlık, epistemik statü, rasyonel normlar, statü adaletsizliği

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Chapter 0:
INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines the main question of the epistemology of disagreement, namely, *how epistemic agents should respond to disagreement with other epistemic agents.* The question concerns the change or revision of the doxastic attitudes or change in the confidence levels of the disagreeing agents. To be able to answer this question, epistemologists focus on the various elements of disagreement, such as the available evidence, current or specific conditions that might affect the agents or the evidence, epistemic abilities of the agents, epistemic statuses of the agents, background beliefs, track records, or how often these agents were right in their beliefs, and so on.

In most cases, the most significant factor is the *epistemic statuses* of the disputants. The epistemic status of an agent who is a party to a disagreement over a proposition p refers to that agent's status as a knower of p relative to the other parties to the disagreement. Four different epistemic statuses are introduced by the epistemologists of disagreement: *superior, inferior, peer,* and *unknown.*[1] The epistemically appropriate response to an epistemic disagreement depends crucially on the epistemic statuses of the disagreeing agents since they seem to give the disagreeing agents information about their likelihood of being right. In this way, epistemic statuses of the disagreeing agents mainly determine how the agents' beliefs and judgments should be affected by a disagreement.

The aim of this thesis is to analyze the non-ideal aspect of epistemic status assessments that have not been adequately considered in the epistemological discussions of disagreement. I will claim that this non-ideal aspect is caused by the effects of negative identity prejudices, some social norms and traditions, and socio-political relationships on the disagreeing agents' assessments of each other epistemic status. I will argue that these factors can cause errors in the epistemic status assessments that can lead disagreeing agents to misevaluate each other's epistemic abilities and, eventually, to respond to the disagreement inappropriately. Therefore, the non-ideal scenarios that can come up as a result of intersubjective relationships should be taken into account in the search for an

[1] Bryan Frances, and Jonathan Matheson, "Disagreement," in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Stanford University, February 23, 2018), sec. 4, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/disagreement/.

epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement. Furthermore, I will suggest that the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response should regulate not only the ideal scenarios but also the non-ideal ones. Therefore, keeping this in mind, the question of which norms are governing the epistemically appropriate response should be examined carefully.

For this aim, in the first chapter, I will examine how philosophers explain the everyday phenomenon of disagreement. I will investigate the main elements and the main ways of approach to an epistemic disagreement, as well as the most used cases in the literature. Epistemologists of disagreement generally discuss cases in which two or more epistemic agents disagree and build theories of disagreement based on our intuitive responses to these cases. This "case method" is key to philosophical treatments of disagreement, for by benefitting from these intuitions, epistemologists analyze the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement.

Based on this literature review, I will claim that two assumptions can be observed in the works of the epistemology of disagreement literature, the *idealization assumption,* and the *reason-centrism assumption*. Firstly, it is assumed that the epistemically appropriate response to an epistemic disagreement can be reached through examining what I will call "idealized" scenarios. Briefly, it is assumed that when there is a disagreement, two or more people with upstanding moral characters have a rational and respectful conversation with each other in the light of the required evidence. Furthermore, it is also assumed that they will display rational doxastic attitudes by assessing each other's epistemic statuses correctly without getting influenced by negative identity prejudices, social norms and traditions, socio-political relationships, and so on. This is why any kind of individual details regarding the identities of the disputants are not taken into consideration.

I will argue that even though the epistemically irrelevant features of the identities of the disagreeing agents—including their race, ethnicity, religion, skin color, sex, and gender, sexual orientation, age, physical disabilities, etc.—are not the qualities that can determine whether their beliefs are true, these features can nevertheless affect the assessments of epistemic statuses made by these agents. This means that the disagreeing agents can overestimate or underestimate each other's epistemic abilities based on prior identity prejudices, traditions, social norms, socio-political relationships, and so on. If

this is the case, the result of wrongly assessed epistemic statuses can lead disagreeing agents to adopt the wrong doxastic attitudes, which eventually leads to an inappropriate response to the disagreement. Hence, the idealization assumption makes us blind to real-life issues that might come about because of the identity differences of disagreeing agents.

Secondly, I will claim that the reason-centrism assumption can be observed in the literature. Although this assumption seems to be distinct from the first one, they are actually related. My claim will be that since it is assumed that the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement can be found by analyzing idealized cases, it is also assumed that the epistemically appropriate response is only governed by rational norms. In other words, when the non-ideal features of real-life disagreements are not taken into consideration, it can be thought that the rational norms that guide our belief-forming processes are sufficient for our efforts to find the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement. However, I will propose that epistemically appropriate response is not only governed by rational norms but also by *moral* norms. To be able to show that this claim is also in line with our intuitions, I will introduce a case and four non-ideal versions of it so that we can consider some non-ideal features of real-life disagreements. I will claim that our intuitions call for the help of moral norms in these cases. Lastly, I will point out the fact that our intuitive conclusion is actually in coherence with the claims of a number of other philosophers who see an intimate connection between ethics and epistemology.

The aim of the second chapter is to make a philosophical analysis of our intuitions regarding the non-ideal responses to an epistemic disagreement. For this aim, I will suggest that the process of epistemic status assessments should be examined closely, as opposed to starting to analyze the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement after these assessments are already made. To be able to do this, I will examine the main components of epistemic status assessments and possible errors that might be observed in these components. I will argue that overestimation or underestimation of the epistemic abilities of disagreeing agents seems to be the main source of error.

In order to analyze the errors that might occur via disagreeing agents' overestimation or underestimation of each other's or their own epistemic abilities, I will draw from

Miranda Fricker's theory of Epistemic Injustice.[2] I will examine her analysis of the role of negative identity prejudices in our assessments of credibility. Furthermore, I will investigate when these assessments include error and what kinds of harm can be observed as a result of epistemic injustice. After examining Fricker's theory, I will draw an analogy between the credibility assessments and the epistemic status assessments. I will argue that wrongly evaluated epistemic statuses create *status injustice*, which can be defined under the umbrella term epistemic injustice—in addition to Fricker's testimonial and hermeneutical injustice. Moreover, I will examine the possibilities of mismatch in the assessments of epistemic statuses and the harms that might occur as a result of status injustice.

Lastly, in the third chapter, I will go back to my suggestion that the epistemologically appropriate response to an epistemic disagreement is governed by both rational and moral norms to investigate whether after making the philosophical analysis of status injustice, my claim is still valid. For this aim, I will review how philosophers define rational and moral norms in order to have a better understanding of their scopes.

My focus will be on the question of which norms are violated in cases of status injustice. Since it is not obvious that whether the violated norms by status injustice are required for governing the epistemically appropriate response, I will also consider the possibility that rational norms are the only norms that govern the epistemically appropriate response. Then, I will give one theoretical, one practical/ameliorative reason why ethical considerations are required for epistemically appropriate response.

I will claim that our epistemic validation processes require cooperation most of the time. Although we can still acquire some information by our senses or by some basic reasoning, most of our knowledge is intersubjective—we learn from schools, teachers, books, the internet, friends, our parents, scientists, doctors, philosophers, and so on. This is why any theoretical analysis regarding the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement without taking the intersubjective dimension of our epistemic processes into account will not provide us with a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of disagreement. Furthermore, the demanding feature of moral norms makes us hyper-aware

[2] Miranda Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice: Power and the Ethics of Knowing* (Oxford University Press, 2007).

of some negative stereotypes, (implicit) biases, and of course prejudices that we are affected by in our judgments. Hence, moral norms have a positive pragmatic impact on our practical considerations regarding the elimination of prejudices from our assessments of epistemic status.

Based on the theoretical and practical/ameliorative reasons mentioned above, I will argue that we need a model that includes some elements from rationality and ethics. When looking for a model that can combine rational and moral norms, I will benefit from intellectual virtues, whose aim is to reach truth and good intellectual character. I will propose two possibilities regarding the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response that seems comprehensive enough to cover non-ideal cases of real-life situations–i.e., negative identity prejudices and status injustice that might occur because of these. Firstly, I will suggest that intellectual humility is a key virtue in our efforts to find the epistemically appropriate response. I will examine the virtue of intellectual humility benefiting from Fricker's analysis of hybrid virtues of testimonial justice and hermeneutical justice.[3]As a second possible way of creating a rational and moral model, I will refer to the intersubjective comprehension of rationality. According to this conception, some moral norms can be derived from the basic requirements of rationality.

In the end, I will let the reader decide which one of these possibilities is more convincing if any of them are. If not, my thesis is open to other ways of approaching the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response as long as it takes the non-ideal factors that can be seen in real-life disagreements into consideration. This means that it should not be assumed that epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement should be reached through analyzing the ideal scenarios—the idealization assumption should be abandoned. Furthermore, the process of making the epistemic status assessments should be given enough weight. This is because the errors that can be seen in these assessments as a result of negative identity prejudices, social norms and traditions, and/or socio-political relationships can create a status injustice. The existence of status injustice prevents the given response's being epistemically appropriate. Hence, any alternative approach that can be given as opposed to mine—that either moral norms or intersubjective

[3] My reasons why I call intellectual humility as a hybrid virtue, is not exactly parallel with Fricker's reasons for calling testimonial and hermeneutical justice a hybrid virtue. This point will be clearer in the third section.

understanding of rationality should be adopted for reaching the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement—must include the relevant norms, whatever they might be, that can properly regulate ideal scenarios as well as the non-ideal ones.

Chapter 1:
THE NORMS GOVERNING THE EPISTEMICALLY APPROPRIATE RESPONSE TO DISAGREEMENT

This chapter is dedicated to a review of the recent literature on the epistemology of disagreement. The aim of this review is to show that the suggested ways of tackling the problems that the disagreement literature is occupied with are inadequate to satisfy some of our intuitive expectations regarding the *non-ideal* features of real-life disagreements. For instance, ideally, the physical, socio-economic, political, and religious differences of people, or their personal choices and identities are not thought as a relevant part of epistemological considerations as these features cannot be the determinative features of the truth of individuals' beliefs. However, as a result of negative identity prejudices, a member of a marginalized group might not be seen as a credible source of knowledge or as a person who has the required capacity to know. In situations like this, regardless of the approaches and positions that are taken by many epistemologists to be able to handle the main issues of the disagreement literature, the current tools, and the points of view of the literature seem to be inadequate to properly account for some unwanted situations of everyday life. The implication of this, I will suggest, is that there is a fundamental problem that we can sense *intuitively* but cannot find a solution to or even spell out by using the current resources of the epistemological literature on disagreement.

This chapter consists of three sections. In the first section, I will introduce the terms and most-used cases in the literature in order to make sense of the core discussions and the main question of the disagreement literature, namely, *how should epistemic agents respond to disagreement with other epistemic agents.* I will examine the current approaches to an epistemic disagreement and the required norms and conditions of an *epistemically appropriate* response suggested by the literature. Based on this examination, I will claim that two assumptions can be observed in the literature, as I call them, *the idealization assumption* and *the reason-centrism assumption*. Briefly, it is assumed that the epistemically appropriate response can be reached through analyzing the idealized cases in which none of the differences regarding the identities of the individuals are taken into consideration. Furthermore, it is assumed that these idealized cases of disagreement should be governed by the *norms of reason* that lead us to the *rational response* to a disagreement. Then, whether the epistemically appropriate

response can be exhausted by the rational response, and appealing only the norms of reason will be questioned. In the second section, I will introduce a new case and some non-ideal versions of this case – that is to say that the responses that are given to the case in different versions are not considered by the literature because they are unwanted or not ideal – and show that something goes unnoticed by the current tools of the epistemology of disagreement. I will claim that focusing only on the rational response prevents theorists from recognizing the inadequacy of certain responses to disagreement in non-ideal circumstances. I will suggest that the question of how epistemic agents should respond to the disagreement with other epistemic agents implies the epistemically appropriate response which includes *moral norms* in addition to rational norms. Finally, I will point out some philosophers who saw a connection between ethics and epistemology to suggest that this connection can also be seen in the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement.

1.1 How Should Epistemic Agents Respond to Disagreement with Other Epistemic Agents?

1.1.1 Forming Disagreement: Basic terms and concepts

I stated above that the main question in the epistemological literature on disagreement is how epistemic agents should respond to the disagreement with other epistemic agents. This question concerns our *doxastic attitude* in the face of disagreement. There are at least three possible doxastic attitudes concerning the truth of a claim i.e., believing that the claim is true, believing that the claim is false, and suspending judgment.[4] When a person recognizes that she is having an epistemic disagreement, the disagreement might also affect her confidence level concerning the proposition she disagrees about, and this might end up with a doxastic revision or a doxastic change. In other words, when an epistemic subject recognizes that her belief is challenged by another epistemic agent, she might revise her belief and reasoning regarding that belief, or she might even change her belief. Thus, the main question of the literature of epistemology of disagreement concerns how, if at all, an epistemic agent should revise her doxastic attitude, and/or which doxastic attitude an epistemic agent should adopt in response to a disagreement.

[4] Bryan, Matheson, "Disagreement" sec. 1.

The disagreement literature separates merely verbal disagreements from genuine disagreements.[5] Unlike merely verbal disagreements, in genuine disagreements, the source of the disagreement is not caused by a misunderstanding or by being unable to understand what is being said. In other words, sometimes disagreements might be caused by conceptual differences or language-related difficulties; and these kinds of disagreements are not considered genuine. This can be seen in the words of Nathan King:

> [In genuine disagreements,] [t]he subjects must take incompatible doxastic attitudes toward the same proposition. At a minimum, this means that there is no subtle ambiguity that keeps the subjects from entering into argumentative contact with each other. [6]

To be able to rationally decide the proper doxastic attitude after the recognition of a genuine disagreement, epistemologists focus on the various elements of disagreement, such as the epistemic abilities of the agents, available evidence, reasoning methods that are used by the disagreeing agents, the current or specific conditions or the background beliefs that might affect the agents, and so on. Different factors can be used in different disagreements. For instance, if we find out that the evidence that is used by our disputant concerning the proposition that we are disagreeing about does not support the proposition clearly, or if there is an obvious mistake or misunderstanding, the disagreement might end quickly without searching for any other factors. However, if there are no obvious factors to decide whose belief is true, then we must look to the epistemic abilities and qualities of the disagreeing agents.

In genuine disagreements, generally, the most significant factor is the *epistemic status* of the disputants if the disagreement cannot be solved by appealing to the available evidence. The epistemic status of an agent who is a party to a disagreement over a proposition p refers to that agent's status as a knower of p relative to the other parties to the disagreement.[7] In other words, epistemic status gives us information regarding the credibility and the reliability of our disputant compared to our own epistemic abilities. Our appropriate response to a disagreement seems to rely heavily on the epistemic status of the disputants, and the literature on the epistemology of disagreement accordingly

[5] Nathan L King, "Disagreement: What's the Problem? Or a Good Peer is Hard to Find," in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 85, no. 2 (2012): 253. The same distinction is made by Bryan Frances as the *genuine disagreements* and *the illusory disagreements* in: Bryan Frances, *Disagreement* (Polity Press, 2014), 18–23.

[6] King, "Disagreement: What's the Problem," 253.

[7] As I defined it on Chapter 0, p.1.

gives great importance to the epistemic status of the disagreeing agents when deciding the appropriate response.

Four different epistemic statuses are introduced by the literature: *superior, inferior, peer,* and *unknown*.[8] However, disagreements between peers have attracted greater attention compared to the other forms of disagreement. The main reason for this is that the suggested ways of responding to the disagreement between inferiors and superiors are intuitive and generally accepted among philosophers: if I am disagreeing with a superior, I should change or at least revise my belief, while if I am having a disagreement with an inferior, probably I will not change my belief; and in both cases, this seems obviously like the rational thing to do. If an agent cannot determine the epistemic status of her disputant(s) compared to herself the rational response is less obvious: It is suggested that one should consider her disputant as her peer.[9] What is philosophically interesting is how disputants should respond in cases of disagreement among recognized peers because it is not obvious what should be the proper doxastic attitude in the face of a disagreement with an agent whose epistemic abilities are the same as one's own.

1.1.2 Peer Disagreements and Two Competing Views

Disagreements with peers are challenging because one accepts one's disputant as equally reliable and equally fallible as oneself. Moreover, according to the peerhood conditions generally accepted in the literature, peers must have access to the same evidence, and they must have equal inferential competence.[10] Hence, it is hard to decide the proper doxastic attitude in the face of a peer disagreement. This brings us to the two main positions that are taken by epistemologists in the face of a peer disagreement, namely, *steadfast views* and *conciliatory views.*[11] The defenders of steadfast views argue that the realization of a

[8] Bryan, Matheson, "Disagreement" sec. 4.

[9] Bryan, Matheson, "Disagreement" sec. 4; Bryan Frances, "Discovering Disagreeing Epistemic Peers and Superiors," in *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 20, no. 1 (2012): 1–21.

[10] I use the generally accepted conditions of peerhood. However, some epistemologists think that peerhood conditions should be tighter than these. Nathan King thinks that finding a peer is harder than it is thought. Therefore, he suggests revising these conditions, see King, "Disagreement: What's the Problem," 249–272. Some other philosophers argue that in real life most of the time we cannot even evaluate whether every condition is met by the competing parties. Hence, we generally say two people are peers when they are more or less equals in their intellectual capacities and have access to the same evidence. Graham Oppy, "Disagreement," in *International Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 68, no. 1–3 (2010): 193–196.

[11] Steadfast views and conciliatory views, here, are different from The Steadfast View and The Conciliatory View. The plural usage points to a group of views rather than the specific views. Naming the

peer disagreement does not necessarily call for doxastic revision.[12] This means that even though a person is having a peer disagreement, she does not need to change or even revise her belief just because she learned that there is a disagreeing peer. One intuitive consideration in support of steadfast views is the *self-trust argument*, according to which our first-person perspective has ineliminable aspects such as *egocentric bias*, which entitles us to believe and trust ourselves more than the others even if there is symmetry between us and our peers.[13] We form our beliefs on the basis of our reasoning and our evidence; hence, it is rational for us not to change them because of someone else's reasoning and evidence.[14]

Conciliatory views, on the other hand, require one to make a conciliatory doxastic revision in the face of a recognized peer disagreement.[15] If one's disputant is epistemically as well equipped as oneself, has the same evidence, has the same epistemic skills and reasoning abilities, but reaches a different and contradictory conclusion, this fact itself is enough for one to revise one's belief in a compromissary way, a response in which the agent accepts the possibility of mistake and adopts an open-minded approach regarding the disputant's belief. Many proponents of the conciliatory view appeal to an *Independence Principle*, according to which ". . . In evaluating competing explanations of disagreement about P, my evaluation should be independent of the reasoning that supports my current assessment of P."[16] Thus, if there is symmetry in all the epistemically

two main positions in the literature in this way is made by Matheson. See, Jonathan Matheson, "Disagreement and Epistemic Peers," in *Oxford Handbooks Online*, February 3, 2015, sec.3, sec. 4, https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199935314.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199935314-e-13.

[12] Matheson, "Disagreement and Epistemic Peers" sec.3 para. 1. Here are some articles in defense of steadfast views: Thomas Kelly, "The Epistemic Significance of Disagreement," in *Oxford Studies in Epistemology* 1, eds. J. Hawthorne and T. Gendler, 1, (2005): 167–196; Ralph Wedgwood, "The Moral Evil Demons," in *Disagreement* (2010): 216-246; Richard Foley, *Intellectual Trust in Oneself and Others* (Cambridge University Press, 2001).

[13] Matheson, "Disagreement and Epistemic Peers" sec.3 para. 1; Foley, *Intellectual Trust in Oneself and Others*, 79; David Enoch, "Not Just a Truthometer: Taking Oneself Seriously (but not too Seriously) in Cases of Peer Disagreement," in *Mind* 119, no. 476 (2010): 962, 986–990.

[14] Enoch, David. "Not Just a Truthometer: Taking Oneself Seriously", 962, 986–990; Matheson, "Disagreement and Epistemic Peers" sec. 3.2.

[15] Matheson, "Disagreement and Epistemic Peers" sec. 4 para. 1. Here are some articles in defense of conciliatory views: Richard Feldman, "Evidentialism, Higher-order Evidence, and Disagreement," in *Episteme* 6, no. 3 (2009): 294-312; David Christensen, "Epistemology of Disagreement: The Good News," in *The Philosophical Review* 116, no. 2 (2007): 187–217; Richard Feldman, "Reasonable Religious Disagreements," in *Social Epistemology Essential Readings*, eds. Alvin I. Goldman and Dennise Whitcomb (Oxford University Press, 2011), 137–82; Adam Elga, "How to Disagree About How to Disagree," in *Disagreement*, ed. Richard Feldman and Ted A. Warfield (Oxford University Press, 2010), 175-186.

[16] The Independence Principle is introduced by David Christensen, see Christensen, "Epistemology of Disagreement: The Good News.", 201.

relevant qualities of peers, a peer cannot use the disagreement itself as a reason for disregarding her peer's belief or a reason for insisting on her own belief. What is called for is rather conciliatory doxastic revision, which might end up in suspension of judgment, splitting the difference, or a change in the confidence levels of the disputing parties with or without an accompanying doxastic attitude change.

There are recognized advantages and disadvantages to both the steadfast and conciliatory views.[17] One of the interesting features of the debate between steadfast and conciliatory theorists is the fact that our intuitions shift between conciliatory and steadfast responses to disagreement depending on the case at hand. Let me introduce two different cases that are most talked about in the literature when the topic of discussion is peer disagreements. Before introducing the cases, I would like to note that the discussions regarding these cases mostly revolve around The Equal Weight View, which is sorted as one of the conciliatory views. According to The Equal Weight View, peers should be given equal weight, meaning that they should suspend judgment or split the difference in the case of a disagreement.[18] With this in mind, let us have a look at the following cases introduced by Christensen:

> *The Restaurant Check Case:* Suppose that five of us go out to dinner. It's time to pay the check, so the question we're interested in is how much we each owe. We can all see the bill total clearly, we all agree to give a 20 percent tip, and we further agree to split the whole cost evenly, not worrying over who asked for imported water, or skipped desert, or drank more of the wine. I do the math in my head and become highly confident that our shares are $43 each. Meanwhile, my friend does the math in her head and becomes highly confident that our shares are $45 each. [19]

In this case, my friend and I have the same evidence, which is the check. Moreover, both of us are equally good at making basic calculations in our minds and there are no other reasons to believe that one of us currently lacks any of the requisite arithmetic

[17] Matheson explains the weak points of these views, see Matheson, "Disagreement and Epistemic Peers". Shortly, steadfast views allow an epistemic agent to hold on to her beliefs and it does not lead her to skepticism. However, in the face of a peer disagreement it is hard to legitimize why the mistake is made by an agent's disputant but not by the agent herself. Also, it includes a possibility of error. On the other hand, conciliatory views allow one to give equal importance to one's peer and make a conciliatory revision. However, there is a possibility that it might lead to skepticism, and it prevents one to reach the truth if one's belief in the first place was true.

[18] Matheson, "Disagreement and Epistemic Peers," sec. 4.1.1. Also, see the related articles: Adam Elga, "Reflection and disagreement," in *Noûs* 41, no. 3 (2007): 478–502; Christensen, "Epistemology of Disagreement," 187-217.

[19] Christensen, "Epistemology of Disagreement," 193.

abilities. The Equal Weight View suggests that none of us is more likely to be right. If there are no other reasons to demote my peer's epistemic status on this claim, then I should accept that I might be as fallible as my friend. Therefore, it does not make sense for me to insist on my belief over that of my friend.

Now let us have a look at the extreme restaurant check case:

> *[The Extreme Restaurant Check Case:]* Consider an (admittedly unrealistic) variant on the restaurant case, in which my friend becomes confident that our shares of the check are $450-quite a bit over the whole tab. Here, I think that I need not significantly reduce my confidence in my $43 answer or raise my very low confidence in the $450 answer. Let us concentrate on our disagreement about whether our shares are $450. I think it is initially far from clear that my reasons for selectively suspecting my friend to be in error are truly independent of the reasons on which I base my own belief. If asked why I think my friend is wrong, I'd naturally say something like "Well, $450 just can't be right-it's higher than the whole bill!" But this is exactly the reason I'm so confident that $450 is false. So the puzzle is: why does it seem right to discount my friend's belief in this Extreme Restaurant Case, but not in the Regular Restaurant Case we looked at earlier? [20]

What is different in this case is that my confidence level towards my belief is quite high. The reason that I am sure that my peer made a mistake is that our shares cannot be more than the total bill. Because of all the considerations above, in contrast to the Regular Restaurant check case, in the Extreme Restaurant Check case, our intuitions align more with the steadfast than with the conciliatory approach. It seems that our intuition regarding the appropriate response to a disagreement is changing from case to case.

1.1.3 Two Important Assumptions

This brief literature review reveals two important assumptions made by theorists of disagreement, which I shall call the *idealization assumption* and the *reason-centrism assumption*. The idealization assumption is that disagreement literature focuses on highly idealized scenarios which ignore features of real-life cases of disagreement thought to be epistemically irrelevant. This means that it is assumed that the norms determining the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement can be reached by analysis of *ideal* scenarios. The reason-centrism assumption is that the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement is identical to the *rational* response—as if the conditions for an

[20] Christensen, "Epistemology of Disagreement," 199.

epistemically appropriate response are exhausted by the conditions for a rational response. Therefore, it is also assumed that the norms relevant to determining the epistemically appropriate response to disagreement are rational norms. However, whether the epistemically appropriate response can be reached through analyzing the ideal cases and whether the epistemically appropriate response is only the rational response, is not obvious and seems to be worth questioning. In this subsection, I will take a closer look at these two assumptions and their implications for the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement. Even though at the first glance, these two assumptions seem independent from each other, their connection will be seen at the end of this chapter.

To start with the idealization assumption, it can be observed that the ideal scenarios commonly used in the literature abstract away from particulars of the identity of epistemic agents. Let us remember Christensen's Extreme/Regular Check Cases. These two examples not only show us that our intuitions are changing from case to case but also, they give us some clues regarding how cases or thought experiments, in general, are taken into consideration in the epistemology of disagreement. Notice, for instance, that neither case gives us any information about the epistemic agent's identities. We do not know whether any of the agents are male or female, a person of color or white, old or young, a mathematics professor or semiliterate, etc. Moreover, it is assumed that individuals *have* certain features. We assume that the disagreeing agents will have a respectful and reasonable conversation in which they will not be affected by any negative prejudices towards each other's claims and identities and their only aim will be to reach the truth. Most importantly, it is assumed that they will assess each other's epistemic statuses correctly—in our case, they will recognize each other as disagreeing peers.

Furthermore, it is assumed by the literature that the answer to the question of how epistemic agents should respond to disagreement with other epistemic agents looks for the *rational response*, which is only governed by the *norms of reason*. This reason-centrism assumption can be seen in the words of various philosophers. Nathan King says that disagreement might create some interesting questions: "Can it be rational to retain our beliefs in the face of a disagreement with an equally intelligent, equally well-informed subject (a so-called *epistemic peer*)? If so, *how*?"[21] David Christensen claims that "in general, I think it's true that if those who work in poor epistemic conditions were more

[21] King, "Disagreement: What's the Problem," 249.

epistemically rational, there would be less disagreement and many positions would be held in less confidence," and emphasizes the importance of rationality.[22] Richard Feldman states that ". . . there is a common tendency to think that reasonable people can disagree about these topics, that more than one point of view may withstand rational scrutiny," also his rationality emphasis can be seen through the article.[23] Thomas Kelly writes:

> Can one rationally hold a belief while knowing that that belief is not shared (and indeed, is explicitly rejected) by individuals over whom one possesses no discernible epistemic advantage?[24]
>
> . . . if I confidently retain my original view in the face of such disagreement, my doing so need not constitute a failure of rationality.[25]
>
> If we conclude that it is epistemically appropriate to give a great deal of weight to the judgements of others in revising our own beliefs, then we might view this unavoidable psychological tendency with relative equanimity, or even with pride, as symptomatic of our natural and reflexive rationality. If, on the other hand, we conclude that doing so is not the epistemically appropriate response, then we might view our inevitable tendency to respond in this way in a somewhat less favorable light . . .[26]

Notice, however, that even though literature focuses on the rational response and norms of reason, it is not immediately obvious that the e*pistemically appropriate* response can be exhausted by the rational response.

I believe these two assumptions are distinct but related. Since it is assumed that the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement can be found by analyzing ideal scenarios, it is also assumed that the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement is sensitive only to norms of reason. However, these two assumptions do not seem to reflect the problems that can be seen in real life as a result of identity prejudices. If we allow for slightly non-ideal conditions, we will be in a better position to evaluate the reason-centrism assumption.

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[22] Christensen," Epistemology of Disagreement," 215.

[23] Richard Feldman, "Epistemological Puzzles about Disagreement," in *Epistemology Futures* (2006): 216.

[24] Kelly, "Epistemic Significance of Disagreement," 168.

[25] Kelly, "Epistemic Significance of Disagreement," 170.

[26] Kelly, "Epistemic Significance of Disagreement,"171.

In contrast to the mainstream literature in the epistemology of disagreement, the main focus of this thesis will not be peer disagreements or the possible solutions to the problems that arise from peer disagreements. Instead, it will be to show that sometimes the *epistemically appropriate response* to a disagreement might require more than determining which response is the rational response to cases of peer disagreement. Some of the responses might include some further problems which cannot be resolved or even pointed out via using the tools of the disagreement literature. The implication of this is that it seems the epistemically appropriate response cannot be exhausted by the rational response and the norms of reason alone. In the next section, I will introduce a new case and four possible versions of it. In this way, the reader can see the new issues that can only be seen through focusing on the non-ideal cases in which disagreeing agents are affected by some identity prejudices in their judgments. Then the reader can decide whether the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement, especially in non-ideal cases, is only governed by the rational norms or not.

1.2 Non-ideal Cases

I believe the idealized scenarios of the literature block our way to realizing some further errors that can be seen in both the steadfast and conciliatory views because of our individual differences. The idealization made by the literature can be explained in three different elements. First, the epistemic agents who are parties to a disagreement are *idealized*. It is assumed that disagreeing epistemic agents do not have any negative prejudices, or they are not affected by any societal norms and traditions that might marginalize some parts of the society. Furthermore, it is presumed that they have *morally praiseworthy characters* as rational agents, whose only aim is to reach the truth, and that they cannot be influenced by any epistemically irrelevant factor—such as money, good repetition, socio-political power relationships, religious affiliation, etc. Second, the scenarios are idealized. The idealized agents are assumed to have a respectful conversation with one another. Or it is generally assumed that the parties to a disagreement have access to each other's track records of how many times they were right in their beliefs in the past and even it is assumed that they have the same track records—they were equally right in their beliefs. Thirdly, the *responses* coming from the idealized scenarios and agents are, also, idealized. This is to say that it is assumed that our ideal agents will assess the epistemic status of their disputants properly and can evaluate the

ideal scenario and decide what is the epistemically appropriate response—what doxastic attitude they will adopt. However, such idealized agents, scenarios, and responses too often fail to reflect real cases of disagreement.

It seems that what is missing from the non-ideal scenarios is something that makes the response inappropriate regardless of how one understands the rational obligations of agents faced with peer disagreement. In other words, even if conciliatory views or steadfast views are widely accepted among the epistemologists and even if all the criticisms are handled successfully, the theories will fail to recognize and find a solution to the inappropriateness of certain responses, especially in non-ideal scenarios. For the sake of explaining better what sort of epistemic inappropriateness I have in mind, let us consider the following case and four non-ideal versions of it and try to analyze what, if anything, bothers us in these versions.

> *Case 1: Epidural is(n't) needed:* Jasmine and Derrick are two equally successful anesthetists who received the same education and work in the same hospital. One day a pregnant woman, Julia, comes to the hospital for delivery. Because of some complications, her gynecologist thinks that delivery might be unusually risky. Therefore, the gynecologist asks the opinions of the most successful anesthetists of the hospital, Jasmine, and Derrick, to be sure whether epidural anesthesia is suitable for Julia. Derrick evaluates Julia's situation and determines with high confidence that the delivery is going to be difficult for both mother and the doctor. Therefore, he advises the use of epidural anesthesia. However, when Jasmine evaluates the case, she claims that the delivery can be done without epidural anesthesia. There are other ways in which Julia can deliver her baby safely, so there is no need to face the unwanted effects of epidural anesthesia. Furthermore, Jasmine just like Derrick is quite confident in her claim that Julia should not take epidural anesthesia.

Here, in Case 1 we have a peer disagreement in which both peers are highly confident in their claim. In other words, we have a peer disagreement in which our peers derive different conclusions, P and ~P, from the same evidential base, the same set of facts, E. I believe this is a hard case for both major positions within the epistemology of disagreement because we have a peer disagreement in which both peers are quite

confident. Furthermore, both peers have the same evidential base and there are not any other factors – such as any obstacle, drunkenness or sleep deprivation, or a time constraint that might make the agents unable to correctly assess the evidence, or an obvious mistake that can be pointed out easily, etc. – that can outweigh one of the beliefs adopted by the peers. Derrick and Jasmine regard one another as experts in their shared field. Thus, it seems there is a straightforward conflict between competing rational norms.[27]

Things get even harder if we introduce non-ideal factors. Let us have a look at the following versions of this case, then my point will be clear.

> *Non-ideal Version (V1): I am quite confident:* Derrick recognizes Jasmine as his peer on his subject of specialization, anesthesia. He arrives at the conclusion that Julia should take epidural anesthesia before he talks to Jasmine. After he learns that there is a disagreement between him and Jasmine, he infers that he must have wrongly assessed the epistemic status of Jasmine. Therefore, he demotes her epistemic status from peer to inferior, on the grounds that if Jasmine *were* his peer, she would believe that Julia should take epidural anesthesia.

Let us remember the two competing positions in the literature that are taken to be able to analyze the epistemic obligations in cases of peer disagreements, the steadfast and conciliatory views. To start our examination with steadfast views, notice the similarity between the case at hand and the Extreme Restaurant Check Case; in both cases, the confidence levels of our epistemic agents are quite high. Moreover, as stated in the earlier section, according to the self-trust argument Derrick might exhibit a natural egocentric bias towards his beliefs. Therefore, even if Jasmine and Derrick are peers regarding their occupation, Derrick might have stronger confidence and self-trust regarding his belief. So far, as in the Extreme Restaurant Check Case, Derrick's response in Version 1 seems to be epistemically appropriate according to steadfast views. However, our intuitions concerning Version 1 are different from the Extreme Restaurant Check Case. In Version 1, Derrick does not only insist on his belief but also demotes his peer's epistemic status. Since Derrick thinks that his reasoning and the conclusion that he arrives at is true, the

[27] Our aim is to increase the number of truths in our beliefs as well as reducing the falsehoods. While the former implies that we should remain steadfast so as not to lose any belief that might be true, the latter implies that we should suspend judgement to reduce the number of potential falsehoods.

only way of explaining the disagreement with an (alleged) peer is that the mentioned peer must have made a mistake. If the peer made a mistake and Derrick did not, this means Derrick has a better track record and better epistemic skills to evaluate the situation. However, still, there is something intuitively wrong: notice that Derrick does not yet know whose belief is false. Besides, Derrick's reasoning seems improperly motivated. Hence, Derrick's response in Version 1 is still epistemically inappropriate according to steadfast views because motivated reasoning of this sort is not generally thought to be compatible with the norms of reason.

Let us examine further from a conciliatory point of view this time. According to conciliatory views, there is no obligation to make a conciliatory revision in the face of disagreement with the inferior, but Derrick's route for assessing his disputant's epistemic status is deviant. To start with, as stated before, even though Derrick thinks that Jasmine must have made a mistake, it is actually not known whose belief is mistaken. Moreover, if we remember the Independence Principle, Derrick's reasons for insisting on his belief should be independent of the disagreement itself. However, it can be easily seen that Derrick's reasons for discounting his peer's opinion and demoting her epistemic status are entirely dependent on the disagreement. Furthermore, the reasons for Derrick to not only discount his peer's opinion but also demote her epistemic status are totally dependent on the disagreement. Perhaps, then, we should expand the scope of the Independence Principle to cover the epistemic status assessments: "Reasons to discount your peer's opinion [or demote your peer's epistemic status] about P must be independent of the disagreement itself."[28] However, the source of the problem is not the Independence Principle or the scope of it. The reason is that we are bothered by Derrick's answer and reasoning themselves not because it is incompatible with the Independence Principle.

As can be seen above, the disturbing point in Version 1 is not related to the adoption of steadfast or conciliatory views. The inappropriateness that we can sense intuitively is present in analyses regarding both views. This is to say that there would be a problem even though one claims that Derrick's response in *V1* can be supported by the self-trust argument, or even if one asserts that the response is not compatible with the

[28] For the original quote, see Frances and Matheson, "Disagreement sec. 5.1 para. 4.

Independence Principle. It seems there is something more, something deeper and inappropriate in Derrick's reasoning. Something that we cannot point out yet. What is it?

Let us continue with another response, which might help us to detect the problem.

> *Harder Non-ideal Version (V2): No different from the others:* For this response, consider further that Jasmine too is pregnant. Derrick thinks that women are "emotional creatures" who can be affected excessively by their environment, conditions, and relationships. Moreover, he thinks that since pregnancy boosts the hormones of women, they cannot think or act rationally in this period; they are prisoners of their emotions. However, since Derrick knows Jasmine and knows that she is a successful anesthetist who knows when the use of epidural anesthesia should be applied as much as he does, he thinks that he can trust Jasmine's professional opinion. After he learns that Jasmine disagrees with him about the proposition that Julia should take epidural anesthesia, he infers that he thought Jasmine was different from other pregnant women, but that he must have been wrong. Since Jasmine is a pregnant woman too, she over empathizes with the patient. He revises his assessment of Jasmine's epistemic status and demotes her from peer to inferior.

Compared to Version 1, Derrick's response in Version 2 is, clearly, much more disturbing. What is bothering us here? What is different? I suggest that the reason why our intuitions are stronger, in this case, is that we learned that Derrick's negative revision of Jasmine's epistemic status is based on sexist prejudices about the cognitive effects of pregnancy on women. Notice, however, that although one might think intuitively that the first and the second responses are quite different from one another, the doxastic attitudes of Derrick regarding the proposition that Julia should take epidural anesthesia is the same. Rationally, Derrick's response to the disagreement in the first and the second version is the same, since in both cases he does not change his belief but demotes the epistemic status of his peer because he learns Jasmine disagrees with him. But if so, then it seems we cannot explain why we find Version 2 more disturbing and inappropriate solely by reference to the norms of reason.

For the sake of making my claim above clear – that what is inappropriate is not related to the epistemic positions or the principles and arguments, and it cannot be explained by the rational norms alone – let us try to defend Version 2. We can use the self-trust argument and say that Derrick's response is affected by egocentric bias and that is why he trusts his belief more than Jasmine's belief. However, as can be seen easily, this cannot be an excuse for his sexist epistemic status demotion. Moreover, notice that in Version 2 Derrick does not violate the Independence Principle as his reasons for discounting his peer's belief and demoting her epistemic status are independent of disagreement itself; they are based on prior sexist prejudices. It seems that what is icky in this version cannot be described by the sources of—or the rational norms that are used by—either steadfast views or conciliatory views.

Then, how can we express the inappropriateness of Derrick's response? Given our aversion to the basis of Derrick's re-assessment of the epistemic status of Jasmine, the *moral norms* seem to be viable candidates. It is obvious that it is not appropriate or morally permissible to evaluate someone's personality, behaviors, actions, thoughts, or—in our case—intellectual capacity based on negative prejudices. Derrick demotes Jasmine's epistemic status because of sexist prejudices, even though he also views her as a competent and successful anesthetist. Jasmine's being a pregnant woman has nothing to do with her education, intellectual and inferential capacity, the time she devoted to assessing the evidence and expertise regarding her occupation, etc. Therefore, Derrick's response in Version 2 is not only against rational norms—because it includes motivated reasoning and the demotion of the epistemic status of his peer based on this reasoning, just like in Version 1—but it also violates moral norms, since Derrick's judgment of Jasmine's epistemic status is grounded in sexist prejudices.

At this point, one might wonder if moral norms are related to epistemic considerations. One might think that maybe since we are social beings with empathy, we are disturbed by social inequalities, and that is why our intuitions tell us something is wrong. Based on the things that are said so far, one might think that violation of the moral norms does not add a further issue about why the response is *epistemically* inappropriate. The only claim that we can agree on so far is that the thing that bothers us is related to the violation of moral norms. Whether or not it has epistemological implications needs to be argued for. I believe the next version will be helpful for this aim:

> *The hardest Non-ideal Version (V3): Who said we are equals?* Consider now that, again, Derrick forms his belief that Julia should take epidural anesthesia then he learns that Jasmine, who, again, is also pregnant, disagrees with him. However, suppose for this case that Derrick does not consider Jasmine as his peer before the disagreement because he thinks that pregnant women cannot think and act rationally and cannot make rational decisions. Thus, since he assesses Jasmine's epistemic status as inferior before recognizing a disagreement between them, he does not change or even revise his belief at all.

In contrast to the first and the second versions, the third version does not include, as in the first case, motivated reasoning, nor we cannot say that the belief revision process contains some mistakes. Let me explain what is going on here by starting with the epistemological side of the story. Since Derrick wrongly assesses the epistemic status of Jasmine because of prior negative stereotypes, prejudices, or sexist beliefs that he harbors, he does not correctly assess a piece of further evidence, namely *higher-order evidence*. A piece of higher-order evidence is the evidence about the evidence for a belief or "evidence about the character of … [the] first-order evidence," [29] "or about subjects' capacities and dispositions for responding rationally to E[vidence]."[30] Or, it can be defined for our discussions as ". . . finding out how an individual has evaluated a piece of evidence is itself (higher-order) evidence about that piece of evidence."[31] The higher-order evidence coming from an epistemic superior calls for a doxastic revision. On the contrary, the higher-order evidence coming from an epistemic inferior can be disregarded as the epistemically superior party is more likely to correctly assess the evidence. And lastly, whether the higher-order evidence coming from our peer requires a doxastic revision or change can be interpreted differently in accordance with steadfast and conciliatory views.[32]

[29] Kelly, "The epistemic significance of disagreement," 186.

[30] Thomas Kelly, "Evidence," in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Stanford University, August 11, 2006, sec. 2, para. 14, https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2016/entries/evidence/.

[31] Matheson, "Disagreement and Epistemic Peers", sec.3.1 para.1.

[32] Here, I should note that even though a person adopts steadfast views in the face of a peer disagreement, she still does not directly overlook the higher-order evidence coming from her peer as in the disagreements with an inferior. But rather, she assesses the evidence and decides that party who misevaluates the evidence must be her peer because of various reasons, such as the self-trust argument. Briefly, in the cases of disagreement with an inferior, we disregard or overlook the higher-order evidence coming from the epistemically inferior party, but in the cases of peer disagreements, even though we adopt

In Case 1, the tests regarding Julia's condition constitute the first-order evidence for both Derrick and Jasmine. Moreover, the opinions of a disagreeing peer count as higher-order evidence, since it too gives us extra information about the first-order evidence, namely, what can be inferred from it by reasoners as competent as us. This means that Jasmine's belief that Julia should not take epidural, ~P, on the basis of the tests, E, constitutes a shred of higher-order evidence for Derrick's claim that P. However, since Derrick thinks that Jasmine is his inferior because she is a pregnant woman who cannot think or act rationally or cannot make rational decisions, he treats the higher-order evidence coming from his peer's belief that ~P, as it is coming from an inferior. Since he assesses Jasmine's epistemic status as inferior, it is rational for Derrick to hold on to his belief in the face of—according to Derrick a superior-inferior—disagreement. Therefore, Derrick's response in the third version is not epistemically appropriate.

In addition to the epistemological side of the story, there is, of course, an ethical side. Since Derrick's belief-forming and status-assessing procedures are affected by and grounded on negative biases, prejudices, and sexist beliefs, his response in Version 3 is not only epistemologically but also morally inappropriate. Moreover, notice that because Derrick assessed the epistemic status of Jasmine before the disagreement, we cannot even apply any of the views, principles, or arguments standard among steadfast and conciliatory views here. In brief, to be able to use the self-trust argument or Independence Principle or any of the steadfast and conciliatory views, Derrick must have assessed the epistemic status of Jasmine appropriately as a peer. Since this is not the case,—since he thinks that there is a superior-inferior disagreement between him and Jasmine in which he is the superior one—there are no grounds on which to assert that his response is irrational, and therefore, inappropriate. However, given the morally impermissible grounds on which he assessed her epistemic status, we nevertheless have the intuition that his overall response to the disagreement is inappropriate. In short, here, we cannot even apply to any of the tools that are used by the literature because, in order for the suggested ways of the literature to work, Derrick should have assessed the epistemic statuses correctly.

steadfast views and insist on our beliefs, we still assess the evidence and decide the appropriate response as suggested by steadfast views. We make an analysis regarding the evidence and its indications.

Case 1, especially Version 3, puts us in a preposterous position. Let us remember that the main aim of the epistemology of disagreement is to find an answer to the question of how epistemic agents should respond to the disagreement with other epistemic agents. However, the suggested ways of answering this question and the tools used in support of these ways are not able to help us at all in Version 3. There are two related reasons for this: First, the literature only focuses on ideal scenarios in which it is assumed that the epistemic status assessments are rationally and appropriately done by the disagreeing subjects. All the particular, personal, socio-political, biological differences that can be obtained by the parties to a disagreement are disregarded. I am aware that it is not ideal to consider these differences precisely because such differences should not be important when we are making epistemic status assessments. In other words, if we were living in an ideal world in which all people are equally well-treated, and everybody acts in accordance with the moral norms, the differences between people would not have an extra effect in our efforts to find an epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement.[33] Therefore, it would not be a problem to take idealized situations into consideration. However, in real-life situations, unfortunately, this is not the case: people do suffer from prejudice, and from norms and traditions in various dimensions such as social, political, ethical, physical, economic as well as epistemic. This creates a different kind of failure to respond appropriately to an epistemic disagreement which has not been understood or adequately theorized by either steadfast or conciliatory views. Hence, as we saw in Version 3, when non-ideal cases are taken into account, although we can intuitively sense that the response is inappropriate, we cannot find a solution to the problem or even cannot express what is wrong by only referring to the norms of reason as suggested by the literature.

Secondly, since literature focuses only on idealized situations, rational norms seem to be the only norms that govern the epistemically appropriate response. What is needed is that when trying to find an answer to the core question of how epistemic agents should respond to an epistemic disagreement with other epistemic agents, the "should" in

[33] Here, when I am saying that individual differences would not be important when deciding the epistemically appropriate response, I do not mean that first-person point of views or experiences would not matter. Of course, people might have different experiences which are coming from their differences, and I believe this is an important part of our epistemic processes. What I mean was rather that in the discussion like whether Julia should take epidural anesthesia or not, Jasmine's being a pregnant woman would not be important for deciding the epistemically appropriate response in an ideal world.

the question should be taken into consideration. Then, the question is that is the "should" there sensitive to only rational norms, or – as Version 3 indicates – might moral norms have a role? Taking the moral norms into consideration is not only necessary for being able to point out what is inappropriate in the non-ideal scenarios but also for being able to find the epistemically appropriate response. The reason why is that, as can be seen in Version 3, the violation of the moral norms affects our ways of collecting information based on evidence and forming beliefs. Negative stereotypes, prejudices, traditions, and norms of society influence our assessments regarding the reliability of our sources and what we count as evidence. If so, it seems ethical considerations have epistemic implications. This suggests that epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement cannot be exhausted by the rational response and norms of reason, we need moral norms as well.

1.2.1 Objections

Before I pass to the conclusion, I would like to give an answer to an important objection. One might argue that it is misplaced to object to the steadfast views and/or conciliatory views on the basis of *V3* because although both views aim to analyze peer disagreements, *V3* is not a case of peer disagreement. Therefore, it might be argued that *V3* does not imply anything about the tools that are used for peer disagreements. In order to show that the problem that I want to point out still resists, let us consider the following case.

> *The Hottest Hardest Version (3.1): So, we are peers:* Consider for this version that Jasmine is Derrick's teacher which makes her an epistemic superior. However, again, Jasmine is pregnant, and Derrick thinks that pregnancy is an obstacle for women to be rational. Therefore, during Jasmine's pregnancy, Derrick thinks that she is his peer. Since before the disagreement Derrick thinks that, considering Jasmine's pregnancy, she is his peer, when he learns that she disagrees with him, he thinks that he can trust himself on this occasion.

As you can see, now we have a peer disagreement at hand, and we can analyze it by using the main approaches that are given for peer disagreements. We can discuss what is the epistemically appropriate response here according to conciliatory and steadfast views. However, still, there would be something that is intuitively wrong. Since Derrick

is actually Jasmine's epistemic inferior, it is rational for him to change or at least revise his belief and this is what the literature suggests. However, Derrick does not recognize Jasmine as his superior, but he thinks she is his peer during her pregnancy. Therefore, even though Derrick responds to the disagreement exactly in the same ways that are suggested conciliatory or steadfast views, his answer would be still epistemically inappropriate. Therefore, again, we need some tools for pointing out the problems that might arise from the non-ideal conditions of our everyday disagreements.

1.3 Concluding Remarks: Ethics in Epistemology

In this section, I will show the connection between ethics and epistemology better benefiting from various philosophers. Arguing that epistemology and ethics are related might seem an extraordinary claim at first glance. However, some epistemologists assert that they are related, and we should consider them together in our epistemological research. Miranda Fricker, for instance, argues that the "good informant", who does not only have true beliefs but also shares these beliefs truly, constitutes a crucial part of our knowledge validation processes:[34]

> Knowledge, then, is enshrined in the figure of the good informant. Our concept of knowledge as distinct from mere true belief arises from the fundamental human imperative to identify people who will tell one the truth about p. (...) The good-informant account is offered as an account of the 'common core' of the concept of knowledge, in order to bring to light the fundamental point that the concept has in our lives. [35]

Then, not only having true beliefs but also telling the truth about those beliefs—which is a moral obligation—plays a crucial role in our epistemic considerations. Moreover, Steven Shapin claims:

> Knowledge is a collective good. In securing our knowledge we rely upon others, and we cannot dispense with that reliance. That means that the relations in which we have and hold our knowledge have a moral character, and the word I use to indicate that moral relation is trust.[36]

[34] Miranda Fricker, "Rational Authority and Social Power: Towards a Truly Social Epistemology," in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* (Aristotelian Society, 1998), 159–177.

[35] Fricker, "Rational Authority," 163.

[36] Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Civility and Science in Seventeenth-century England* (University of Chicago Press, 1995), xxv. qtd in. Fricker, "Rational Authority," 159.

This conception of knowledge and the need for ethics is not only adopted by Fricker and Craig or Shapin. John Hardwig claims that most of our knowledge relies on others and their testimonies[37]. If we are seeking good informants, and if this requires trust, it seems our knowledge has a moral dimension. This can be seen better in Hardwig's words:

> … if much of our knowledge rests on trust in the moral character of testifiers, then knowledge depends on morality and epistemology also requires ethics. In order to qualify as knowledge (or even as rational belief), many epistemic claims must meet ethical standards. If they cannot pass the ethical muster, they fail epistemologically.[38]

And finally, Rima Basu claims that ". . . epistemic standards governing belief are not independent of moral considerations."[39] She argues that our beliefs are bound with moral norms because we can blame someone or feel resentment towards someone because of her beliefs.

What all different philosophers say in common is that epistemological considerations are actually related to moral considerations. Thus, my point is that the idea of combining ethics and epistemology is not new, and it is not an extraordinary claim. What is new in our case is to explore the role of moral norms in a new branch of epistemology, namely, the epistemology of disagreement. My aim is to show that a disagreement is an intersubjective phenomenon that can be affected by the errors – caused by the wrongly made epistemic status assessments under the influence of negative identity prejudices – that can occur in our social network. To be able to reach the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement then, we need some norms that can regulate not only our rational belief-forming processes but also our intersubjective relationships. My suggestion is that these regulations can be done with rational and moral norms. It seems, if epistemic disagreements are examined without applying to the moral norms the disagreement literature will be inadequate, especially in non-ideal scenarios. This inadequacy can be understood in terms of both ethical and epistemological considerations. Moreover, this kind of epistemic inappropriateness, which is neglected by

[37] John Hardwig, "The Role of Trust in Knowledge," in *The Journal of Philosophy* 88, no. 12 (1991): 693–708.

[38] Hardwig, "The role of trust in knowledge," 708.

[39] Rima Basu, Mark Schroeder, Brian Kim, and Matthew McGrath, "Pragmatic Encroachment in Epistemology," (2019), 181.

the literature, will cause further inequalities and injustices in social, practical, and epistemological dimensions. These further issues will be the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 2:
STATUS INJUSTICE AS A DIFFERENT KIND OF EPISTEMIC INJUSTICE

In the last chapter, I argued that the idealization of the cases of disagreement most often discussed by epistemologists has obscured other factors relevant to determining the epistemically appropriate response to disagreement. One consequence of such idealization is that certain epistemic harms caused by these obscured factors are not visible to standard approaches. Equally overlooked are the victims of these harms. Victims of these harms are generally persons against whom a large part of society carries negative prejudices. For example, a person can be discriminated against because she is a woman, or a person of color, or homosexual, or because she is old or disabled, and so on. The epistemic wrongs against the negatively prejudiced people are caused by unfair, biased, or otherwise incorrect assessments of epistemic status regarding them. In other words, prejudiced members of society might not be seen as trustworthy and accurate sources of knowledge because of their marginalized identity.

Let us remember the epistemic inappropriateness of Derrick's responses in different versions of our previous case, *Epidural is(n't) needed.*[40] What was common in all four versions of this case was that Derrick's epistemic status assessment regarding Jasmine was mistaken. Derrick thought that Jasmine was his inferior (or peer), even though she was actually his peer (or superior). I mentioned the epistemic and moral effects of wrongly assessed epistemic statuses in the first chapter. However, the purpose of my examination in that chapter was to discover our intuitions regarding this situation. In this chapter, my intention is to offer a philosophical analysis of what goes wrong when epistemic agents incorrectly assess their or their disputants' epistemic status in the face of a disagreement. To do this, I will look for resources beyond the epistemological literature on disagreement, drawing especially on the tools introduced by Miranda Fricker's theory of epistemic injustice. The aim of this chapter is to understand the epistemic wrong behind these misassessments[41] of epistemic status by drawing an analogy between epistemic status assessments and Fricker's virtue epistemological approach to credibility assessments.

[40] 1.2: Non-Ideal Cases, Case 1: *Epidural is(n't) Needed,* p.17.

[41] At this point I would like to clarify my terminology. I wanted to use a word to describe the wrongly or incorrectly made epistemic status assessments because it was quite wordy. According to English

This chapter consists of four sections. In Section 2.1, I will highlight the importance of epistemic status assessments in standard analyses of disagreement. My claim will be that even though great importance has been given to epistemic status assessments in attempts to answer the main question of the epistemology of disagreement—namely, how epistemic agents should respond to disagreement with other epistemic agents—little attention has been paid to the important question of *how* epistemic status assessments are and ought to be made. In section 2.2, I will introduce the theory of epistemic injustice by Miranda Fricker and examine the role of stereotypes in her analogous notion of credibility assessments in our attempts to identify "good informants".[42] I will dedicate section 2.3 to non-ideal assessments of epistemic status. Drawing again from Fricker's analysis, I will argue on the basis of this analogy that non-ideal assessments of epistemic status might end up with a specific kind of epistemic injustice, namely *status injustice*. I will use some cases to support and exemplify this claim. Lastly, in section 2.4, I will explore the effects of the harms that are caused by different kinds of epistemic injustice. Hopefully, by the end of this chapter, we will be in a position to see that the effects are not only moral but also epistemological.

2.1 Epistemic Status Assessments

As mentioned in Chapter 1, our response to an epistemic disagreement depends on how we assess the epistemic status of those with whom we disagree. There I defined the *epistemic status* of an agent who is party to a disagreement over a proposition *p* as that agent's status as a knower of *p* relative to the other parties to the disagreement.[43] Epistemic status, then, is a comparative notion that we use to analyze ours and our disputant's likelihood of being right about the truth value of a proposition. In accordance with four possible epistemic statuses, namely superior, inferior, peer, and unknown, we determine our epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement. In this section, I will closely examine the term and its components.

Epistemologists often point out that an agent's response to disagreement is sensitive to judgments about the epistemic and cognitive abilities of disputants. For this reason, according to which criteria agents assess each other's epistemic statuses turns out to be an

dictionary the most suitable candidates were misevaluation, misjudge and misvalue. However, none of them quite met the meaning what I thought as suitable as the word "misassessment." Therefore, I will use the word "misassessment" to refer to the assessments that are wrongly made.

[42] Fricker, *Epistemic injustice*.

[43] See, Chapter 0:Introduction, p.1 and 1.1.1: Forming Disagreement: Basic Terms and Concepts, p.9.

important consideration for an analysis of disagreement. Bryan Frances starts his examination of epistemic disagreements by introducing "Disagreement Factors" that might be used in explaining why agents hold different beliefs:[44]

> As stated previously, we saw various factors — the ***Disagreement Factors*** — that might cause reasonable people to come to reasonable yet contrary beliefs: data, evidence, time, ability, background knowledge, circumstances of investigation. (That is not an exhaustive list and the items aren't all mutually exclusive; it's just a good beginning.)[45]

Frances then compares the disputing agents according to these disagreement factors to see whether any of them surpasses their opponent in respect of one or more factors.[46] In addition to these, Bryan Frances and Jonathan Mattheson mention intellectual virtues, biases, attentiveness of the disputant, and distractions as relevant disagreement factors.[47] It seems that these disagreement factors are used to explain both the reason why epistemic agents disagree and who is likely to be right among them.

As can be seen, epistemologists consider various "disagreement factors" as relevant to an epistemic agent's judgments regarding the likelihood of a disputant's being right. Evaluating an agent's likelihood to be right is a judgment that is made regarding the epistemic credentials of that agent.[48] However, determining epistemic status is not simply a matter of determining the epistemic credentials of our disputant. The reason is that epistemic status assessments are essentially complex *comparative* judgments consisting of three components: 1) determining the epistemic credentials of oneself, 2) determining the

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[44] Frances, *Disagreement*.
[45] Frances, *Disagreement*, 34-35
[46] Frances, *Disagreement*, 34-35, 44-51.
[47] Bryan, Matheson, "Disagreement," sec. 4. para.4.
[48] David Christensen and Jennifer Lackey mention the effects of the epistemic credentials of others:

> Perhaps most obviously, the degree of belief-revision called for by an agent's learning of the disagreement of others will depend on what the agent believes—or, perhaps better, what the agent has good reason to believe—about the epistemic credentials of those others with whom she disagrees. Two dimensions of epistemic appraisal stand out here. The first dimension concerns the other person's familiarity with the evidence and arguments bearing on the disputed issue. . . The second obviously important dimension of epistemic appraisal has to do with the other person's competence at correctly evaluating evidence and arguments of the relevant sort. This dimension of assessment may address not only the other person's general cognitive abilities, but also the likelihood that the other person's general competences are impaired in the current instance.

David Phiroze Christensen, and Jennifer Lackey, eds, *The Epistemology of Disagreement: New Essays* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016),1–2.

epistemic credentials of one's disputants, and 3) making a comparison between them—one's own epistemic credentials and one's disputants' epistemic credentials.

1. Determining the epistemic credentials of oneself: In determining our own epistemic credentials, we have some introspective – but still fallible – idea of our own evidence for the disputed proposition, as well as our general reasoning, competence, and expertise in the relevant domain. However, even though we have familiarity with our own experiences regarding our abilities, we still might be poor judges of our own competence. It does not follow from the fact that we seem to ourselves to be – or not to be – knowledgeable or competent judges in the matter at hand that we really are – or are not – that knowledgeable and competent. Our judgment may be influenced by cognitive biases, or reflective of the (positive or negative) opinions of others of our own expertise. For instance, our having an academic title indicates that we are in a superior epistemic position in the field of study compared to the ones who do not have any. The role of these signs will be clearer in the second step of the epistemic status assessments, determining our disputant's epistemic credentials.

2. Determining the epistemic credentials of others: When we are establishing beliefs regarding someone else's epistemic credentials, we do not have access to the same introspective evidence. Rather, our evidence for our assessments of the other's epistemic credentials relies on public manifestations of those credentials. To illustrate, we can use a resume for having an idea about one's prior experience and background knowledge. Or, think about the various exams that students are required to take in order to prove that they are competent enough to pursue their education at various levels. Furthermore, we can directly ask others why they come to a particular conclusion and then try to understand their reasoning process. For instance, we can evaluate how strong their argument is, or whether they are open-minded enough to consider other beliefs that their evidence might lead to. In addition to these, we observe the attitudes of others. For example, think about an interview, a colloquium talk, or an everyday exchange of testimony. We pay attention to the use of language, eye contact, use of gestures and facial expressions, outfits, etc. to decide whether we are facing a reliable informer. Moreover, we take what other people say about the person in question into account. For instance, we are sensitive to rumors, gossip, compliments, and lampoons regarding people who we do not know very well.

3. Making a comparison: Lastly, after determining the epistemic credentials of ourselves and our disputants, we need to compare them. How do we make this comparison? How do we decide which one of us is superior and which one is inferior? Or, are we peers? What if the difference between ours and our disputants' epistemic credentials is incommensurable? To illustrate, we might have background knowledge regarding the proposition of dispute, but our disputant might have spent more time evaluating specific evidence regarding that proposition. In that case, how do we make a comparison between these two epistemic qualifications? This reveals a different question: do we have enough knowledge to determine a person's epistemic credentials, or should we allow for the epistemic credentials of our disputant to be unknown?

I have suggested that epistemic status assessments are complex comparative judgments involving (1) a partly introspective determination of our own epistemic credentials, (2) a determination of the epistemic credentials of our disputant on the basis of public evidence, and (3) a comparative judgment of the quality of the other's epistemic credentials relative to our own. As can be seen, there is an asymmetry between the first two judgments. In the first one, we can determine our own epistemic credentials in part introspectively; we have access to introspective evidence. However, in the second one, we are forced to make our judgments based solely on 2nd or 3rd person evidence. However, although the introspective evidence may contain some information that we do not have access to, it cannot be ensured that it will be reliable or true. Lastly, we are not always able to compare the factors that are seen as the main components of the epistemic credential assessments.

Given the complexity of epistemic status assessments, and how scant the evidence for these assessments can be, they seem to be liable to at least three different kinds of error:

1. Mistaking one's own epistemic credentials: This kind of error occurs when one wrongly evaluates the epistemic credentials of oneself. There are two ways in which one can misevaluate one's own epistemic credentials: overestimation and underestimation. For instance, if an agent overestimates her own epistemic credentials, she can be led wrongly to conclude that she is epistemically superior to a disputant with whom she is in fact a peer or even an inferior. Conversely, if she underestimates her own epistemic credentials, she can be led wrongly to conclude that she is epistemically inferior to a disputant with whom she is in fact a peer or even a superior. Another example is that an agent might think that he is in a peer disagreement because he underestimates his epistemic credentials, and so is in fact

epistemically superior to his disputant. Lastly, if an agent overestimates his epistemic credentials and may assume that he is in a peer disagreement when he is, in fact, epistemically inferior to his disputant.

2. Mistaking the epistemic credentials of others: This kind of error occurs when one overestimates or underestimates the epistemic credentials of one's disputant. Parallel to the first error, one might overestimate the epistemic credentials of her disputant and be led wrongly to conclude that her disputant is her superior when the disputant is her peer or inferior, or she might assume that her disputant is her peer when he is her inferior. Similarly, if an agent underestimates his disputants' epistemic credentials, he might see his disputant as inferior when peer or superior and peer when superior.

3. Erroneous comparison of epistemic credentials: This kind of error can arise in various ways as a result of the incommensurability of some epistemic abilities to each other. This means that even though one correctly evaluates the epistemic credentials of both oneself and one's disputant, one might still face problems when it comes to comparing them. To illustrate, an agent might realize that she has more experience regarding the proposition in dispute, but her disputant has superior theoretical knowledge. In this case, it seems the fair thing to do is to assume that epistemic statuses are unknown as it seems that there is not enough information to decide. However, our experienced epistemic agent might assume, without justification, that experience has a higher epistemic value compared to theoretical knowledge; therefore, she would take herself to be the superior to her theoretically knowledgeable counterpart. Or, she might think the opposite, that theoretical knowledge is more reliable.[49] Therefore, she might assess her epistemic status as inferior. These are varieties of what we might call *incommensurability problems*. Incommensurability problems can take various forms. For example, we cannot compare intellectual virtues with distractions, biases with the time that is spent for making the correct inference from the

[49] A similar discussion can be found in Aristotle's Metaphysics 1.1:

> With a view to action, then, experience seems no different from craft knowledge—on the contrary, we even see experienced people being more successful than those who have an account but are without experience.
>
> Nevertheless, we regard knowledge and comprehension as characteristic of craft rather than of experience, and take it that craftsmen are wiser than experienced people, on the supposition that in every case wisdom follows along rather with knowledge than with experience.

Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Translated by Charles David Chanel Reeve (Hackett Publishing Company, 2016), 981a13-15, 981a25-27.

evidence, background knowledge with cognitive abilities, and so on. However, in what follows, I will focus mostly on the first two types of error, erroneous comparisons that result from mistaking either one's own epistemic credentials or those of another, to be able to make a stable analysis based on the foreseeable possibilities.

These kinds of errors and their impact on the epistemic appropriateness of an agent's response to disagreement have not received much attention from epistemologists. The reason, as we observed in Chapter 1, is that the literature on disagreement focuses on the appropriate response in the ideal cases in which the epistemic status assessments have already been made. Most epistemologists when talking about peer disagreements assume and imply a mutually recognized peer disagreement and build their analysis on this.[50] However, when we face a situation that we saw in our case *Epidural is(n't) needed*—especially in Version 3, in which one of the peers does not recognize the other disputant as a peer but inferior—standard analyses fail to identify the source of epistemic appropriateness because we do not have a mutually recognized peer disagreement at hand.[51] Therefore, the process of how we make, and ought to make, epistemic status assessments should be examined without the assumption of epistemically ideal agents who routinely make the proper assessments. Since we do not have a sufficient analysis of the process of assessing the epistemic statuses at hand, I believe the tools that are used by Miranda Fricker in her theory of Epistemic Injustice will be beneficial to build one. In the next section, I will propose an account of epistemic status assessments and how they go wrong, drawing on Miranda Fricker's analysis of an analogous notion from the epistemology of testimony.

2.2 Good and Better Informants

2.2.1 Testimonial Knowledge and the Search for a Good Informant

The epistemology of testimony can be understood as an attempt to answer the following question: when are we entitled to treat a speaker as a *good informant*, that is, a trustworthy and competent source of knowledge? During a testimonial exchange, we want to ensure that our informant has the information and epistemic and communicative capacities necessary to process and express the information we are seeking. Moreover, we want to be sure that our

[50] See the articles from three well-known epistemologists in the field: Kelly, "The Epistemic Significance of Disagreement," Feldman, "Epistemological puzzles about disagreement," Christensen, "Epistemology of disagreement: The good news."

[51] See, 1.2 Non-ideal Cases: Case 1, p.17; *V1*, p. 18; *V2*, p.20; *V3*, p.22; *V3.1*, p.25.

informant is a trustworthy person besides being a sufficient epistemic source, since without the willingness truthfully to relate what they know, an informant will not be good despite what knowledge they might possess. Thus, in a testimonial exchange, we want our informer to be competent and trustworthy enough to express her knowledge accurately and sincerely. All of the expectations from the testimonial exchange that I have just mentioned reflect our expectations from a good informant.

Miranda Fricker separates the features of a good informant into two categories, namely *rational authority* and *credibility*. Rational authority refers to the desirable characteristics of good informants. She claims that rational authority is determined by one's *competence and trustworthiness*.[52] In order to be competent "the good informant as to whether p must believe that p if p is the case, and not believe that p if not-p is the case, across those possible worlds that are relevant to the predicament of the inquirer."[53] The requirements for trustworthiness are context-sensitive but some of the main features for being trustworthy can be listed as "informant's accessibility, speaking the same language, willingness to part with the information, and possession of a good track-record of non-deception," and so on.[54] However, we do not have direct access to rational authority since we cannot directly know whether the informant believes p when it is the case, whether the informant is willing to share the information accurately, and so on. We can only make inferences regarding the competence and trustworthiness of an informant based on the signs that are thought to represent the existence of required features of a good informant. Since this is the case, Fricker introduces the notion of credibility.

Assessments of credibility are determined by the *indicator-properties*, which can be defined as publicly accessible signs of the existence of competence and trustworthiness.[55] Indicator-properties "indicate that the potential informant is 'likely to be right about p' . . . [meaning] having 'a true belief on the matter.'"[56] What counts as an indicator-property can be extremely various, ranging from title to tone of voice that indicates the informant is a

[52] Fricker, "Rational Authority and Social Power," 60.
[53] Fricker, "Rational Authority and Social Power," 57.
[54] Fricker, "Rational Authority and Social Power," 57.
[55] Fricker, "Rational Authority and Social Power," 57-60.
[56] Edward Craig, *Knowledge and the State of Nature: An Essay in Conceptual Synthesis* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), 85, 18-19. quoted in Fricker, "Rational Authority and Social Power," 57.

reliable source of knowledge. Then to be a good informant one must have both rational authority and high credibility.[57]

We said that credibility assessments are done by looking at the signs of competence and trustworthiness, which means that they are 2nd and 3rd personal. But what are these signs, and how are we making meaningful inferences from them? Fricker says that stereotypes are a useful and sometimes necessary expedient when we are making credibility assessments:

> We are picturing hearers as confronted with the immediate task of gauging how likely it is that what a speaker has said is true. Barring a wealth of personal knowledge of the speaker as an individual, such a judgement of credibility must reflect some kind of social generalization about the epistemic trustworthiness—the competence and sincerity—of people of the speaker's social type, so that it is inevitable (and desirable) that the hearer should spontaneously avail himself of the relevant generalizations in the shorthand form of (reliable) stereotypes. Without such a heuristic aid he will not be able to achieve the normal spontaneity of credibility judgement that is characteristic of everyday testimonial exchange.[58]

It is important to note here that stereotypes in Fricker's sense do not have a positive or negative meaning attached to them. They are described by Fricker roughly as "widely held associations between a given social group and one or more attributes."[59]

Stereotypes can be reliable or unreliable. Reliable stereotypes are a useful and necessary part of credibility assessments. This can be seen in her words: ". . . reliable stereotypes are a proper part of the hearer's rational resources in the making of credibility judgements. . .."[60] As such, they are important components of testimonial exchange. Think about someone with a doctoral degree in philosophy. We probably assume that she is a credible source in philosophy, on the grounds that academic titles are generally reliable indicators of expertise in the relevant fields. However, of course, even reliable indicators might be misleading in some cases, since these are some socially made generalizations, not clear-cut facts.[61] By

[57] Fricker, "Rational Authority and Social Power," 60.

[58] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 32.

[59] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 30. She later describes stereotypes as images: "If we think of a social stereotype as an image which expresses an association between a social group and one or more attributes, and which thereby embodies one or more generalizations about that social group, then it becomes clearer how its impact on judgement can be harder to detect than that of a belief with the same content." see, 37.

[60] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 30.

[61] Titles might be misleading too. For instance, maybe our philosophy doctor bribed her jury to accept her thesis. So, she might not be as competent and trustworthy as expected from her title.

contrast, unreliable stereotypes cause epistemic distortions as they do not accurately reflect the person we are trying to evaluate epistemically.[62] For instance, matching womanhood with intuitiveness in the sense that "women are more intuitive than rational" creates an unreliable stereotype.[63]

As pointed out above, credibility assessments do not always reflect the facts about someone's competence and trustworthiness—what Fricker calls their "rational authority." That is why Fricker warns us about two possibilities of mismatch regarding rational authority and credibility.

> There is the possibility of someone's being rationally authoritative without being recognized as such; and there is the possibility of someone's seeming to be rationally authoritative when she is not. The latter possibility will be called mere credibility.[64]

The mismatch between rational authority and credibility can take the form of "credibility excess" or "credibility deficit." As can be guessed, in the former the informer gets more credibility than what he deserves. And, in the latter, he gets lower credibility when compared to his rational authority.[65] Even if it is deficient from an epistemic perspective, credibility excess is generally advantageous for the subject. However, Fricker says that there might be some cases in which credibility excess can actually be disadvantageous.[66] For instance, it might place an "unwanted ethical burden" on the informant's shoulders, or it might put the informant in such an excessively powerful and knowledgeable position that he might not get the required feedback from others, who do not see themselves competent enough to do so.[67] Fricker asserts that the disadvantages of credibility assessments cause "epistemic injustice" when taken cumulatively. Epistemic injustice, according to Fricker, is "a kind of injustice in which someone is wronged specifically in her capacity as a knower."[68] If this is the case, the particular cases of credibility excess do not create epistemic harm—as the subject's epistemic capacities are not demoted. However, when we consider them cumulatively, the epistemic injustice might be observed.[69]

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[62] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 30.
[63] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 31.
[64] Fricker, "Rational Authority and Social Power,"167.
[65] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 17.
[66] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 18.
[67] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 18-21.
[68] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 20.
[69] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 21. Fricker explains this difference with type/token distinction. The token cases of credibility excess do not constitute harm because there is no wrong that is done to one's

If an informant is given less credibility than what she deserves, this creates a credibility deficit, which is generally disadvantageous.[70] For Fricker, credibility deficits constitute the cornerstone of epistemic injustice, since in paradigm cases of credibility deficit the informant is given less credibility than what she deserves and is therefore "wronged specifically in her capacity as a knower."[71] Briefly, someone is thought to have less competence and trustworthiness than she actually has; hence, her capacity as a knower is thought to be lower, which constitutes a wrong she suffers specifically incapacity as a knower, namely epistemic injustice.

The errors in epistemic status assessment introduced in section 2.1, as well as the harms produced by these errors, can be understood in analogy with Fricker's analysis of epistemic injustice in testimonial exchange. The next sub-section develops this analogy.

2.2.2 Better Informants: An Analogy

Let us sum up what is said so far regarding the good informant and the possible mismatches in rational authority and credibility with a table:

Table 2.1: Rational Authority and Credibility.

		2nd and 3rd Personal	
		Credibility	**No Credibility**
1st Personal	**Rational Authority**	Recognized good informant	Epistemic injustice Credibility deficit (False negative)
	No Rational Authority	Epistemic injustice Credibility excess (False positive)	Recognized bad informant

capacity as a knower. However, cumulative cases of credibility excess when they are thought of as types can harm the subject.

[70] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 17. Fricker mentions some cases in which credibility deficit can actually be advantageous. However, since these situations are rare, they can be considered as exceptions that include no harm on part of the informant, see 19.

[71] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 20 and *passim.*

Recall that during a testimonial exchange we are trying to understand whether our epistemic source is a good informant. As can be seen in the table too, the one with both rational authority and credibility is to be counted as a good informant. Similarly, when making epistemic status assessments we evaluate our likelihood to be right about the truth value of a proposition and we compare it with our disputant's likelihood. Now, notice that in determining one's epistemic status relative to one's disputants, we are, in effect, asking who among oneself and one's disputants is a *better informant* concerning the proposition about which we disagree.

I suggest that there is an analogy between credibility assessments and epistemic credential assessments. As can be seen above, Fricker claims that credibility assessments are based on indicator-properties, public signs of competence and trustworthiness. The indicator-properties are used to evaluate the informant's likelihood to have a true belief to be able to determine whether the informant in question is a good epistemic source. Similarly, when we are determining the epistemic credentials of our disputant, we are evaluating our disputant according to some signs that we find epistemically relevant. This is equivalent to making a credibility judgment about our disputant.

What about determining our own epistemic credentials? One might think that since one has introspective evidence, one has access to one's own rational authority. Therefore, one might expect that there is an analogy between (so to speak) rational authority assessments and assessments of epistemic credentials of oneself. However, when we are evaluating our own epistemic credentials, we are, again, making a credibility assessment, an assessment of *self-credibility*. The reason for this is that even though we have the advantage of introspection, we do not have direct access to our objective epistemic position. Just like others, we evaluate ourselves within a society, its norms and rules, or its signs for success. We are evaluating ourselves according to the criteria that are established within that social world; we are comparing ourselves with others to see our epistemic place. If so, as stated above, just like making credibility judgments regarding others, we are evaluating our own likelihood to be right by using established signs of knowledge.

There is also an analogy in the harms produced when we mistakenly assess the epistemic credentials of others. Remember that Fricker warns us about the possibility of mismatch regarding rational authority and credibility. Just as it is possible to mismatch the rational authority and credibility when judging whether someone is a good informant or not,

it is also possible to mismatch when evaluating who is a better informant in the face of a disagreement. In other words, it seems that it is equally possible to misevaluate the epistemic credentials of our disputant and misjudge the epistemic status that the disputant deserves. Furthermore, it is also possible to misevaluate our own epistemic credentials and misassess the epistemic statuses of ourselves and our disputants. Therefore, facts about the epistemic status of an agent and the estimations made by the disputants about the epistemic status of that agent are two different things that may converge or diverge.

If in our epistemic status assessments, we are comparing judgments of our own epistemic credentials with judgments of the epistemic credentials of our disputants, misevaluating any one of these might create what I will call a *misassessment of epistemic status*. Recall from our discussion of Table 2.1 that credibility excess and credibility deficit might create epistemic injustice. Similarly, I suggest, if we assess our disputant's epistemic status as higher than it should be, this is the consequence of *status excess*, analogous to credibility excess. If we assess our disputant's epistemic status lower than it should be, then our disputant becomes a victim of a *status deficit*, analogous to credibility deficit. This is because we think that our disputants' epistemic credentials are lower than ours. For this reason, I argue, misassessments of epistemic status can cause an analogous kind of harm, a new variety of epistemic injustice. I will call this form of epistemic injustice *status injustice*.

2.3 Status Injustice: When Things Go Wrong

As can be seen above, there is a possibility of a mismatch between an epistemic agent's rational authority and her credibility. These mismatches, moreover, create the possibility of misassessed epistemic status in cases of disagreement with that epistemic agent. Status injustice arises when one party to a disagreement misassesses in a particular way the epistemic status of a disputant. One might overestimate or underestimate one's own epistemic credentials, or one might overestimate or underestimate the epistemic credentials of his disputant. What causes these sorts of misevaluations? In this section, I will evaluate various cases in which things go wrong and try to find an answer to why this is the case.

Remember that during assessments of credibility, we exploit various stereotypes. For instance, consider a tour guide for a church trip who gives lots of historical, religious, architectural, and sociological information about the visited church. We believe her words even though we do not know anything about her. We somehow think that the tour company

who assigns the guide must have known their jobs. We make this judgment about the tour company, and eventually, the tour guide, based probably on the success of the company by looking at the comments and evaluations about it, its popularity, and maybe its wealth, which might be seen as a means to hire competent staff. It seems that our reliance on the tour guide has nothing to do with her personal competence and trustworthiness but rather signs that we find epistemically reliable in our social environment—in this case, being an employee of a well-known tour company. As can be seen, our credibility judgments regarding the informer change according to social conditions or priorities. Even though we focus on various examples regarding the stereotypes and their effects on credibility assessments, realize that none of them directly relate to the identity of others. However, we surely have some stereotypes regarding the identities of people. For instance, what if the tour guide is a Muslim woman wearing a hijab? Would this affect our credibility assessments? Unfortunately, for some, the answer to this question is "yes."

The useful stereotypes highlighted by the previous example differ sharply from pernicious negative stereotypes routinely held about women, people with disabilities, old people, ethnic, racial, sexual, or religious minorities, and other marginalized people. They differ first of all because they are negative prejudices. Also, they are related to epistemically irrelevant features of a person's identity. A "negative identity-prejudicial stereotype" is defined by Fricker as follows:

> A widely held disparaging association between a social group and one or more attributes, where this association embodies a generalization that displays some (typically, epistemically culpable) resistance to counter-evidence owing to an ethically bad affective investment.[72]

This means that if our credibility assessment of someone is affected by a negative identity-prejudicial stereotype, this might create an epistemically culpable error, an error that creates an epistemic injustice. Fricker introduces two different types of epistemic injustice that are generally caused by negative identity prejudices, namely *testimonial injustice* and *hermeneutical injustice*.

[72] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 35.

2.3.1 Testimonial Injustice

As can be understood from the name, testimonial injustice is specifically related to the cases in which the informer faces a credibility deficit during a testimonial exchange with an informant. In Fricker's words, "Testimonial injustice occurs when prejudice causes a hearer to give a deflated level of credibility to a speaker's word. . . ."[73]

Since an epistemic disagreement is a kind of epistemic exchange, the testimonial injustice and the harms of it will be parallel but not quite the same with status injustice. In a case of disagreement, both parties consider themselves as sources of knowledge. Therefore, they tend to be more critical regarding each other's beliefs. On the contrary, in the testimonial exchange, the informant might be ignorant or might be willing to accept what the informer says. Furthermore, in a testimonial exchange, neither the informant nor the informer needs to make an epistemic status assessment, a comparative judgment. But similarly, in both the testimonial injustice and the status injustice misevaluation of epistemic abilities can occur.

2.3.2 Hermeneutical Injustice

Hermeneutical injustice is the second type of epistemic injustice that Miranda Fricker introduces. According to her, hermeneutical injustice is "the injustice of having some significant area of one's social experience obscured from collective understanding owing to hermeneutical marginalization."[74] Hermeneutical marginalization occurs when hermeneutical resources are dominated by the majority, their interests, needs, norms, and traditions. As a consequence of this cultural hegemony, the marginalized part of the society becomes unable to express and even understand experiences that are unique to them.[75]

Hermeneutical injustice comes about from a hermeneutical "lacuna" that makes the expression of some experience of the marginalized groups extremely hard or sometimes even impossible. During an epistemic exchange, these groups are not taken seriously as their experience has no correspondence in the society-at-large. This makes the speaker hard to

[73] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 1.
[74] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 158.
[75] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 155,158.

understand by people outside the marginalized group. This situation ends up with a credibility deficit on the part of the speaker. Fricker claims:

> That hermeneutical injustice most typically manifests itself in the speaker struggling to make herself intelligible in a testimonial exchange raises a grim possibility: that hermeneutical injustice might often be compounded by testimonial injustice.[76]

At the first look, it might be thought that hermeneutical injustice is irrelevant from the perspective of epistemic disagreement. However, hermeneutical injustice will be one of the most important components of status injustice, since it seems to be one of the reasons for the underestimation of a disputant's epistemic credentials and therefore for deficient epistemic status assessments. The reason why will be clearer in the next subjection.

2.3.3 Status Injustice

I proposed that status injustice is a distinct type of epistemic injustice occurring in disagreements, an injustice caused by 1) mistakes regarding one's own epistemic credentials, 2) mistakes regarding the epistemic credentials of others, and 3) erroneous comparison of epistemic credentials. Table 2.2 illustrates in what ways these mistakes come about.

[76] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 159.

Table 2.2: Varieties of Status Injustice.

		Erroneous Judgments (of)		
Possible Errors in Assessments of Epistemic Credentials		**Peerhood**	**One's Own Superiority/Other's Inferiority**	**One's Own Inferiority/Other's Superiority**
	Due to Self-overestimation	Other-harming	Other-harming	Not Applicable
	Due to Other-overestimation	Self-harming	Not Applicable	Self-harming
	Due to Self-underestimation	Self-harming	Not Applicable	Self-harming
	Due to Other-underestimation	Other-harming	Other-harming	Not Applicable
	Due to Self-overestimation + Other-underestimation	Other-harming	Other-harming	Not Applicable
	Due to Other-overestimation + Self underestimation	Self-harming	Not Applicable	Self-harming

Other-Harming Status Injustice

As can be seen from the table above, other-harming status injustice can occur in erroneous assessments of peerhood and one's own superiority via 1) underestimation of the epistemic credentials of one's disputant, 2) overestimation of the epistemic credentials of one's own, or 3) the combination of both.

1) The reason why one underestimates the epistemic status of others might be examined under two main categories. The first one is negative identity prejudice. An agent might wrongly think that her disputant cannot be as competent as herself because of her disputant's identity even though the difference in identity has nothing to do with his epistemic competence. Let us remember our first case, *Epidural is(n't) needed*.[77] Derrick and Jasmine are two equally successful anesthetists working in the same hospital who disagree on

[77] See, 1.2 Non-ideal Cases, Case 1, p.17.

whether Julia, a pregnant woman, should take epidural anesthesia. Recall further the third version of the case:

> *The hardest Non-ideal Version (V3): Who said we are equals?* Consider now that, again, Derrick forms his belief that Julia should take epidural anesthesia then he learns that Jasmine, who, again, is also pregnant, disagrees with him. However, suppose for this case that Derrick does not consider Jasmine as his peer before the disagreement because he thinks that pregnant women cannot think and act rationally and cannot make rational decisions. Thus, since he assesses Jasmine's epistemic status as inferior before recognizing a disagreement between them, he does not change or even revise his belief at all.[78]

In our analysis of this version, we said that Derrick's sexist prejudices are intuitively disturbing, and that part of what makes his response epistemically inappropriate is precisely that his epistemic status assessment of Julia is affected by these prejudices. We are now in a position to see that this intuitive assessment was a response to a kind of epistemic harm caused by Derrick's assessment of Jasmine's epistemic status. Notice that Derrick harbors negative identity prejudice regarding pregnant women. He thinks "pregnant women cannot think and act rationally and cannot make rational decisions." This is a widely held association regarding pregnant women and even though many pregnant women work, continue their life as usual, and make quite important decisions, this prejudgment does not seem to change. In our case too, Jasmine is as successful as Derrick and able to make important and rational decisions; yet Derrick does not accept this counterevidence regarding his beliefs about pregnant women.

Derrick's negative identity prejudice regarding pregnant women causes him to make a deficient epistemic status assessment. As a result, he concludes that his epistemic credentials are superior to Jasmine's. That is why he thinks that he is in a superior-inferior disagreement in which he is the superior. However, in fact, he was in a peer disagreement and he misassesses the epistemic status of the disputing parties, himself and Jasmine. As a result of the misassessment of epistemic status here, Jasmine is wronged in her capacity as a knower: specifically, as a knower of her occupation. Hence, Jasmine is suffering from an epistemic

[78] See, 1.2: Non-ideal Cases, V3, p.22.

injustice, specifically, status injustice. The reason is that since Derrick does not give enough weight to Jasmine's epistemic credentials and regards her as an epistemic inferior, he disregards her beliefs about the proposition of dispute, namely, that an epidural isn't needed in Julia's condition.

An epistemic agent's underestimation of one's disputant might be also caused by the unintelligibility to society-at-large of the experiences and expressions of the marginalized groups, harm resulting from a hermeneutical lacuna similar to the one identified by Fricker. In order to explain hermeneutical injustice and the hermeneutical lacuna that causes the injustice, Fricker uses the case of Carmita Wood, a victim of her eminent co-worker's sexual harassment.[79] Wood faces situations in which the harasser looks at her breasts or tries to kiss her in the elevator. Since at the time when these occur the concept of sexual harassment was not named yet, Wood was unable to explain what makes her uncomfortable, and this affects her life in many different ways—her occupation, private life, psychology, success, and so on.[80] Let us try to apply this case to our discussion of status injustice.

> *Just Looking?:* Imagine that Wendy is uncomfortable with some attitudes of her client and shares her unpleasant experiences with one of her friends, Oliver. Oliver disagrees with her about whether directly looking at a woman's breasts is wrong, or makes the woman uncomfortable, or whether it causes any harm. Wendy's beliefs are unintelligible to Oliver because the concept of sexual harassment does not yet enjoy wide currency. Being unable to express the experiences and beliefs regarding these experiences would make Oliver think that Wendy does not know what she is saying. Or, it is just that she does not like her client somehow and is annoyed by any kind of behavior of him. Since Oliver underestimates Wendy's epistemic credentials as a result of hermeneutical lacuna, he wrongly assesses Wendy's epistemic status as inferior, and this creates a status injustice.

As can be seen in our case *Just Looking?,* hermeneutical lacuna causes other-harming status injustice. Oliver underestimates Wendy's epistemic credentials and misasseses her epistemic status. This not only creates a status injustice but also makes Oliver's response

[79] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 149–150.
[80] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 149–150.

to a disagreement inappropriate. Now, let us have a look at other ways in which other-harming status injustice can occur.

2. Other-harming status injustice might also be caused by an overestimation of one's own epistemic credentials. The reason why one overestimates one's epistemic credentials can be explained by the socio-political power that one might have. For example, if an agent is powerful in one aspect of life that is seen as valuable in society, he might assume that his social superiority is a reflection of his basic epistemic superiority. Or, an agent might be an expert in one subject but might wrongly assume that she is an expert in other subjects as well. For instance, conversion therapy is offered by some religious groups or even some healthcare professionals to change someone's sexual orientation and sexual identity even though there is no evidence whether this is even possible, let alone it is emotionally traumatized.[81] Some extreme versions of conversion therapy, include "exorcisms, physical violence, and food deprivation" and even "corrective rape".[82] Then, a religious conversion therapist, for example, is thought to be an expert in the first-personal experience of a person's self-conception as well as in medical and psychological domains just because she has knowledge in a certain religion.[83] The following case illustrates this point:

> *The Exorcist:* Consider a homosexual woman who is treated by a religious conversion therapist, let us say by a priest. The priest thinks that she is possessed and determines exorcism is the solution. After a few seances, the woman thinks that exorcism does not work in the way that is expected by the priest, and also, it emotionally traumatizes her. When the priest learns that she disagrees with him on the proposition that exorcism is appropriate for her situation, he thinks that the "uncomfortableness" that the woman is experiencing can only be a good sign for showing that the seances are working. He does not take her belief into account by overestimating his epistemic credentials and thinking that since he is epistemically superior, he would know better.

[81] Harry Farley and Eleanor Lawrie, "What Is Conversion Therapy and When Will It Be Banned?," BBC News (BBC, May 11, 2021), https://www.bbc.com/news/explainers-56496423.

[82] Jayne Ozanne quoted in Farley & Lawrie, "What is Conversion Therapy," para.7. And, for the second quote Farley & Lawrie, "What is Conversion Therapy," para.8.

[83] Special thanks to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aret Karademir for his suggestion to use conversion therapy as an example and for inspiring me to rearrange the following two cases.

3. Lastly, other-harming status injustice can be seen as a result of underestimation of one's disputant's epistemic credentials while at the same time overestimation of one's own epistemic credentials. One of the possible scenarios that this kind of injustice can be observed is illustrated below.

> *The Demon Is Speaking:* Think about our former case, *The Exorcist*, again in which a priest and a woman disagree whether exorcism seances are a good way of "treating" the so-called possessed woman. But this time, consider further that while the priest overestimates his epistemic credentials, he at the same time underestimates the homosexual woman's epistemic credentials. The priest does not only think that he knows better than the woman but also thinks that she is not in a position to say what is better for her because first, she is possessed, and second, she is a woman. When she tries to express herself, the priest assumes that the demon is speaking.[84]

In both cases, the priest's overestimation of his epistemic credentials (and underestimation of epistemic credentials of his disputant) ends up with status injustice suffered by the unfortunate woman.

Self-Harming Status Injustice

Self-harming status injustice can occur in erroneous assessments of peerhood and one's own inferiority via 1) the overestimation of the epistemic credentials of one's disputant, 2) underestimation of the epistemic credentials of one's own, or 3) the combination of both.

1. One might overestimate the epistemic credentials of one's disputant for two main reasons. First, one might wrongly evaluate the public signs of credibility. For example, one might confuse the socio-political status of one's disputant with his epistemic status. Here, we can benefit from our case *The Exorcist*.[85] Suppose that this time the homosexual woman thinks that even though exorcism is not good for her, the priest knows better than her. Therefore, she changes her doxastic attitude and believes what the priest says. Another example is that

[84] This kind of status injustice cases can be also seen because of the underestimation of others' epistemic credentials as a result of hermeneutical lacuna and overestimation of one's own epistemic credentials as a result of socio-political power. But, I believe the present case (other-underestimation because of negative identity prejudices and self-overestimation because of socio-political power) is enough to state the point.

[85] See, 2.3.3: Status Injustice, *The Exorcist*, p.48.

one might be led wrongly to think that wealth is a sign of success and epistemic competence as illustrated by our following case:

> *Money Therapy:* Susan is a psychologist and disagrees with another psychologist, Richard, about whether antidepressants or game therapy is more successful for child clients. Susan thinks that since Richard is wealthy, he is also more successful and competent compared to her. Hence, she overestimates Richard's epistemic status and revises her belief.

In our case the *Money Therapy*, Susan assumes that being rich is a sign of epistemic competence. Even though money can be a sign of success and competence in the relevant field, in our case it is not a reliable indicator of competence. Therefore, since Susan wrongly evaluates one of the publicly available signs of credibility, she overestimates the epistemic credentials of her disputant. Susan's overestimation of Richard's epistemic credentials, and eventually his epistemic status, creates a self-harming status injustice on Susan's part.[86]

Second, one might overestimate one's disputant not because one wrongly evaluates the signs of credibility but because one's disputant might misrepresent these signs.

> *Fake Competence:* In this case, Susan and Richard disagree about the same topic. However, this time Susan considers Richard as an epistemic superior because he graduated from a better university. Consider further that Richard is a recipient of a huge inheritance. Throughout his undergraduate education, Richard hires another person to enter the exams for him and graduates thanks to the hired person's success.

In this case, Richard's license, which is ordinarily a reliable sign of competence, misrepresents his rational authority. Therefore, even though Susan depends on a reliable sign of competence—having a license—, she overestimates the epistemic credentials of Richard and suffers from self-harming status injustice.

[86] In this case the child, who is forced to take anti-depressants seems to be the "real" or practical/physical victim. This shows a significant point: Status injustice not only affects the underestimated agent, but also, it might affect the people who are not even a party to the disagreement, especially when the disagreement is about a practical issue.

2. Another component of self-harming status injustice is the underestimation of self-epistemic credentials. The first reason for self-harming status injustice is the confidence loss as a result of constant prejudice.

> *The Fly of Memory:* Mike is an elderly man who is interested in art, especially paintings. Mike faces ageism in many different areas of his life: people always imply that he does not remember things correctly, or he is not capable of relatively complicated mental calculations, and so on. When Mike disagrees with them, they even do not attend the discussion assuming that he is old and their epistemic inferior. Emma, the granddaughter of Mike, is 16 years old and does not have much interest in art. One day Emma visits an art gallery that consists of Salvador Dali's paintings as a school activity. Mike asks Emma what she thinks about the fly in "The Persistence of Memory." Emma says that there were no flies in that painting. Mike thinks that maybe he confused it with another painting. He underestimates his own epistemic credentials and suspends judgment.

In this case, we see that Mike's self-trust is undermined because of the systematic ageist discrimination. Even though Mike is knowledgeable about the painting in question, he does not trust his memory. Lack of self-trust hinders his intellectual abilities and causes him to underestimate his epistemic credentials, which ends up with self-harming status injustice.

The second reason for this kind of injustice is analogous to Fricker's hermeneutical injustice. Since marginalized groups cannot express and understand their experiences, they lose confidence regarding their epistemic abilities.[87] Consider Carmita Wood again.[88] She could not tell her story, thinking that this was a shameful experience for her and that other people will not understand.[89]

> *Maybe It Was Just Looking:* Consider our case *Just Looking?*, the disagreement between Wendy and Oliver on whether leering at a woman's breasts harms her, again.[90] Since her experience is not acknowledged by the

[87] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 163.
[88] Mentioned on: 2.3.3: Status Injustice, p.47.
[89] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 150.
[90] 2.3.3: Status Injustice, *Just Looking?*, p.47.

> people around her as a kind of harassment, and since she does not have conceptual resources to explain why it constitutes a harm, Wendy loses confidence in her own beliefs about the experience, as well as in herself. She thinks that maybe Oliver is right, and maybe it was "just looking."

Here, Wendy underestimates her epistemic credentials and misasseses her epistemic status as inferior. Therefore, she becomes a victim of self-harming status injustice.

3. Lastly, self-harming status injustice can be seen as a result of the combination of overestimating the epistemic credentials of one's disputant and underestimating the epistemic credentials of oneself. The following case illustrates this kind of status injustice:

> *Of course, It Was Just Looking:* Consider further that for this case Oliver is a very successful and powerful businessman. Wendy knows about Oliver's prestige and admires him. Differently from the former case, in this case, when Wendy learns that Oliver disagrees with her on whether leering at a woman's breasts constitutes a harm for the woman, she does not only have doubts about her belief but also, she thinks that, of course, Oliver, a highly prestigious man, knows how to treat a woman better than her. Therefore, Wendy concludes that of course, it was "just looking".[91]

Since we identify the different kinds of status injustice now, we are in a position to the effects and harms of status injustice to see its effects in our epistemic practices. And this is what I will do in the next section.

2.4 The Effects of Misassessed Epistemic Status

On the basis of an analogy with Fricker's account of epistemic injustice, I have argued that misassessments of epistemic status can cause status injustice. We saw that negative identity prejudice, hermeneutical lacunae, confusing socio-political status with epistemic status, and lack of self-trust are some of the main reasons for wrongly assessed epistemic statuses. Self-harming and other-harming status injustice and the cases that are introduced indicate that

[91] This kind of status injustice cases can be also seen because of the self-confidence loss as a result of systematic undermining of one's capacity as a knower and overestimation of one's disputant as a result of socio-political power. But, I believe the present case (self-underestimation because of hermeneutical lacuna and other-overestimation because of socio-political power) is enough to state the point.

marginalized groups suffer from systematic discrimination, oppression, and wrongly associated beliefs regarding their identities. As a result of this, they not only suffer from social, political, ethical, and material inequalities but also *epistemic* injustice. In this case, there are important questions to ask: How the wronged agents are affected by epistemic injustice, specifically status injustice? What are the harms of epistemic injustice? What are the effects of it on our knowledge validation processes? I believe that Fricker's analysis on the harms and effects of testimonial and hermeneutical injustice can be helpful in our analysis of the harms and effects of status injustice.

According to Fricker, testimonial injustice includes two different types of harm; "primary" and "secondary."[92] The primary harm of testimonial injustice concerns a person's being wronged in her capacity as a knower which has implications regarding arguably *the essential human value*, rationality:[93]

> To be wronged in one's capacity as a knower is to be wronged in a capacity essential to human value. When one is undermined or otherwise wronged in a capacity essential to human value, one suffers an intrinsic injustice. (. . .) The capacity to give knowledge to others is one side of that many-sided capacity so significant in human beings: namely, the capacity for reason.[94]

Someone's being insulted in a dehumanizing way has an impact on the agent's life not only epistemologically but also socially, as one is thereby treated as *less* than human.[95] Besides undermining one's capacity as a knower, epistemic injustice undermines one's status as a social being.[96] As a result of inhibited identity and persistent exclusion as a social being, the wronged agent's identity is distorted in a way parallel to the prejudices and stereotypes she suffers from.[97] Fricker states:

> A final twist is that, in some contexts, the prejudice operating against the speaker may have a self-fulfilling power, so that the subject of the injustice is socially constituted just as the stereotype depicts her (that's what she counts as socially), and/or she may be actually caused

[92] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 44.
[93] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 44.
[94] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 44.
[95] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 44.
[96] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 54.
[97] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 55.

> to resemble the prejudicial stereotype working against her (that's what she comes in some measure to be).[98]

The secondary harm of testimonial injustice can be seen as an extension of its primary harm. Moreover, according to Fricker, it has both a practical and an epistemic dimension. The practical dimension is related to the everyday life of the wronged agent. For instance, a person might be found guilty in court or might not reach the higher positions in her occupation.[99] The epistemic dimension of the harm of testimonial injustice, on the other hand, is related to the wronged agent's confidence regarding her beliefs, her justifications, and eventually her epistemic self-confidence. Systematic testimonial injustice hinders the wronged agent's intellectual abilities by preventing him from entering into an intellectual exchange, which hinders his intellectual development and the cultivation of rational authority. Considering the role of confidence in our current knowledge validation processes, losing confidence in one's beliefs, especially the true beliefs, causes one to lose knowledge.[100] In Fricker's words:

> The significance for the present discussion is that, on any confidence-including conception of knowledge, the implications for someone who meets with persistent testimonial injustice are grim: not only is he repeatedly subject to the intrinsic epistemic insult that is the primary injustice, but where this persistent intellectual undermining causes him to lose confidence in his beliefs and/or his justification for them, he literally *loses knowledge*. Perhaps some piece of knowledge he possesses is washed away in a one-off wave of underconfidence. Or perhaps he suffers a prolonged erosion of epistemic confidence so that he is ongoingly disadvantaged, repeatedly failing to gain items of knowledge he would otherwise have been able to gain.[101]

Moreover, loss of confidence and self-doubt prevents the wronged agent from gaining knowledge and some intellectual virtues such as intellectual courage.[102]

Similarly, hermeneutical injustice has primary and secondary harms. The primary harm of hermeneutical injustice stems from one's being unable to understand her own interests

[98] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 55.
[99] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 46.
[100] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 47-49. Here I would like to draw attention to the importance of self-confidence when deciding the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement. If a person is not confident in his epistemic abilities, he will not be able to assess his epistemic status correctly. Thus, he will tend to revise or even change his belief even when it is true.
[101] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 49.
[102] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 49.

and experiences because of the hermeneutical lacuna.[103] Since hermeneutical resources are meant to interpret the experiences of the majority, the marginalized subject finds herself in a position in which she is not able to benefit from and contribute to the hermeneutical resources and knowledge processes.[104] This constitutes, also, psychological harm since the wronged agent, eventually, becomes unable to understand herself and her identity. She becomes unable to think critically about who she is. Thus, her identity comes to be constructed wholly from the prevailing social norms and stereotypes regarding her identity.[105]

The secondary harm adds a practical and epistemic dimension to the primary harm. The wronged subject's career, social life, relationships, and even health are affected by hermeneutical asymmetry and inequality.[106] The epistemic dimension of the secondary harm is quite parallel to the epistemic dimension of secondary harm of testimonial injustice. The wronged agent loses confidence in his beliefs and his intellectual abilities; also, he loses intellectual virtues such as intellectual courage.[107]

A disagreement, as a type of exchange in which disputants try to explain and express their beliefs confidently, seems to prepare a suitable ground for many types of negative identity prejudices to come to light. When the epistemic credentials of one party of a disagreement are underestimated by her disputant, and when her epistemic confidence and abilities are systematically undermined as a result of any kind of epistemic injustice, the wronged agent turns into a shadow of herself. A shadow that has no effect on the knowledge validation processes or the knowledge pool that we share as social beings.

Obviously, this seems morally abhorrent, but it is also epistemically abhorrent. First of all, the disregarded information coming from the epistemically undermined agent disappears. Moreover, since the epistemic credentials of marginalized groups are wrongly underestimated in their discussions with a member of the majority group, their contributions to the knowledge validation process are not taken into account. This makes them more and more socially isolated. Furthermore, the hermeneutical lacuna makes them unable to express and understand their own experiences. In the end, marginalized groups lose knowledge of

[103] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 162.
[104] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 162.
[105] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 163–169.
[106] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 162.
[107] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice*, 163.

their own experiences and also lose the knowledge that they could have gained without undermined intellectual abilities. The majority group, on the other hand, loses knowledge coming from various parts of the society, loses the opportunity to see things from different perspectives, and misses the opportunities to learn from epistemic disagreements.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I investigated the term epistemic status by benefiting from the tools that are introduced by Fricker. Then, I examined the process of assessing the epistemic statuses and pointed out the ways in which things can go wrong. I introduced the term *status injustice* to refer to the specific kind of epistemic injustice that occurs as a result of wrongly assessed epistemic statuses in the face of a disagreement. After that, I showed that the harm that is caused by status injustice is not only moral but also epistemological. In the next chapter, I turn the question of what we are entitled to conclude from the morally as well as epistemologically abhorrent harms suffered by victims of status injustice.

Chapter 3:
DETERMINING APPROPRIATE NORMS

In the previous chapter, I argued that the harm caused by status injustice has both moral and epistemological dimensions. The moral dimension has to do with a person's being undermined in her capacity as a knower. As can be seen in Fricker's analysis of the harms of epistemic injustice, undermining someone's capacity as a knower means that her capacity to reason, the very feature that arguably makes us human, is threatened. The epistemological dimension of the harm affects both the culprit and the victim of status injustice. The culprit does not correctly assess higher-order evidence or blocks her own way of accessing new information that might come from the underestimated agent, whether her disputant or the agent herself. The victim, on the other hand, loses self-confidence and eventually loses the knowledge that she has and might have gained. What needs to be analyzed is that which norms are violated by status injustice and whether these violated norms could be the norms governing the epistemic appropriateness of a response. This is what I will discuss in the present chapter.

The aim of this thesis is not to give a full defense of the claim that there is an ineliminable moral component to our epistemic practices, specifically in the epistemology of disagreement, but to identify ways of coping with status injustice seen in non-ideal cases, to determine the norms required for these identifications, and eventually to examine the role of these norms in determining the epistemically appropriate response to disagreement. For the sake of this aim, in section 3.1, I will take a closer look at how moral and rational norms have been characterized by various philosophers to see whether these characterizations help us identify the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement. In section 3.2, I will argue that the norms violated by status and make the status-unjust responses epistemically inappropriate might actually be the norms that govern the epistemically appropriate response. While investigating the violated norms by status injustice, I will consider the possible objections regarding the involvement of moral norms in the realm of disagreement. I will give a theoretical and practical reason why moral norms are related to the epistemically appropriate response. Lastly, in section 3.3, I will suggest two alternative approaches for the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response: either we should adopt both rational and moral norms as the governors of the epistemically appropriate response to disagreement, or we

should adopt an intersubjective conception of rationality, which requires certain kinds of ethical behavior.

3.1 Rational and Moral Norms

In order to regulate our epistemic practices in a way that provides us with the best epistemic benefits, we follow a set of rules, or, as we say in our discussions, we follow certain norms. Karl-Dieter Opp defines a norm as: ". . . any statement claiming that something ought or ought not to be the case under certain conditions."[108] Different kinds of norms can be classified in various ways, as Elizabeth O'Neill points out:

> Some of the possible dimensions along which one could categorize norms include formal features, content, the domain or context the norm addresses, the grounding for the norm or the justifications people supply to defend it, how people respond to violation of or compliance with the norm, and the proximal, developmental, and distal causes of the norm.[109]

Then, for our aims to identify the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response, let us investigate how rational and moral norms are characterized by various philosophers. Hopefully, this investigation will give us clues about their nature and main concerns.

Rational norms are seen as the basic standards of rationality that are required for thinking beings. In Davidson's words, ". . .all thinking creatures subscribe to my basic standards or norms of rationality. . . it is a condition of having thoughts, judgments, and intentions that the basic standards of rationality have application."[110] In a similar fashion, Alvin Goldman says:

> It is certainly plausible to hold that some, at least minimal, logical abilities are required for learning, and for general problem solving. So unless a creature has at least those

[108] Karl-Dieter Opp, "Norms and Rationality. Is Moral Behavior a Form of Rational Action?" in *Theory and Decision* 74, no. 3 (March 2013): 384.

[109] Elizabeth O'Neill, "Kinds of Norms," in *Philosophy Compass* 12, no. 5 (2017): 2.

[110] Donald Davidson, "Incoherence and Irrationality," in *Dialectica* 39, no. 4 (1985a): 351. quoted in Simone Gozzano, "Davidson on Rationality and Irrationality," in *Interpretations and Causes* (Springer, Dordrecht, 1999), 138.

> minimal abilities, as part of its cognitive architecture, it would indeed count as irrational or unintelligent.[111]

As can be seen, the norms, or standards of rationality determine whether the creature has a certain cognitive capacity and abilities. Basic standards of rationality are generally thought to be the principles of logic, consistency, accuracy, and coherence in beliefs, and the ability to calculate probability. Simone Gozzano's words based on the ideas of Donald Davidson and Daniel Dennett present this point:

> So, we cannot be considered rational unless we have a large number of beliefs; moreover, these beliefs must be, for the most part, true. In this sense, the "pattern of beliefs" Davidson is talking about is an integral whole consisting of logical connections, by which we infer a belief from other beliefs. Truth goes hand in hand with consistency, and consistency is a matter of inference. So, in order to attribute beliefs, we have also to attribute inferential abilities. . . we may say that Davidson's view of rationality is deeply rooted in his view on truth and consistency as essential parts of the pattern of beliefs each of us should be interpreted as having.[112]

> This point has been well expressed by Dennett also, who says: "one gets nowhere with the assumption that entity x has beliefs p, q, r, ...unless one also supposes that x believes what follows from p, q, r,...; otherwise there is no way of ruling out the prediction that x will, in the face of its beliefs that p, q, r, ...do something utterly stupid."[113]

Of particular significance for the present discussion is the widely recognized "requirement of total evidence." Donald Davidson points out that "the requirement of total evidence" that is emphasized by Rudolf Carnap and Carl G. Hempel is a maxim that would be approved by any rational person.[114] The requirement of total evidence is defined by Carnap as the following:

> *Requirement of total evidence:* in the application of inductive logic to a given knowledge situation, the total evidence available must be taken as basis for determining the degree of confirmation.[115]

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[111] Alvin I Goldman, *Epistemology and Cognition* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1986), 283.

[112] Gozzano, "Davidson on Rationality and Irrationality" 138.

[113] Daniel C Dennett, "Intentional systems," in *The Journal of Philosophy* 68, no. 4 (1971): 94–95. quoted in Gozzano, "Davidson on Rationality and Irrationality" 138.

[114] Donald Davidson, "How Is Weakness of the Will Possible?" in *Essays on Actions and Events*. 2nd ed., (Oxford: New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 2001), 42.

[115] Rudolf Carnap, *Logical Foundations of Probability* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1962), 211.

The requirement of total evidence is not an inductive logical principle but rather a directive for applying these principles in a rational belief-forming process.[116] In Hempel's words:

> The requirement of total evidence is not a postulate nor a theorem of Inductive logic; it is not concerned with the formal validity of inductive arguments. Rather, as Carnap has stressed, it is a maxim for the application of inductive logic; we might say that it states a necessary condition of rationality of any such application in a given 'knowledge situation,'. . ..[117]

As can be seen, rational norms are related to individual oneself, one's cognitive abilities, and capacity to make inferences and make probability calculations. If a person does not follow the rational norms when forming a belief, her rationality will be at risk. For instance, if a person were to say that she likes cats and she does not like cats, we would assume that she is not thinking rationally. We would think that she must be under the influence of alcohol, or else that she must be mentally unwell. Violation of the rational norm that one ought not to have conflicting beliefs would not constitute a problem for others. This is why rational norms seem to be self-regarding, unlike moral ones.

Moral norms are defined by William Harms and Brian Skyrms as: ". . . the rules of morality, those that people actually follow and those that we feel people *ought* to follow, even when they don't."[118] In addition, O'Neill states that "Nucci and Turiel identified moral norms by content as those relating to 'justice, welfare, or rights of individuals or groups.'"[119] In accordance with the definitions above, it can be seen that we are concerned not only with our compliance with the moral norms but also with whether others follow or violate these norms. In a similar way, we are not only concerned with our well-being but also with the well-being of others. It seems others play an important role in moral

[116] Davidson, "How Is Weakness of the Will Possible," 42.

[117] Carl G Hempel, *Aspects of Scientific Explanation: And Other Essays in the Philosophy of Science* (New York: Free Press, 1970), 397.

[118] William Harms, and Brian Skyrms, "Evolution of Moral Norms," in *Oxford Handbooks Online*, July 10, 2008, abstract, https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195182057.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780195182057-e-019.

[119] Larry P. Nucci, and Elliot Turiel, "Social Interactions and the Development of Social Concepts in Preschool Children," in *Child Development* 49, no. 2 (June 1978): 402. quoted in O'Neill, "Kinds of norms," 4.

norms.[120] This other-regarding conception of the moral norms is explained by Geoffrey Brennan, Lina Eriksson, Robert E. Goodin, and Nicholas Southwood as follows:

> What is special about moral judgements and hence moral norms is that they involve principles that require us to perform actions that have an important (positive) bearing upon others' core human interests—say, their interest in avoiding certain kinds of harms, in being treated fairly, and so on.[121]

In the light of the characterizations that are given for rational and moral norms by various philosophers, one way of distinguishing these norms is to focus on their self-regarding and other-regarding natures. Briefly, it seems that rational norms, as the self-regarding norms, are related to individuals' reasoning capacities, the "cognitive architecture" that provides them with the capacity to make logical inferences, probability calculations, and the ability to correctly assess the relevant evidence. And, the moral norms, as the other-regarding norms, concern the well-being of others, justice, individual rights, and welfare. However, even though identifying rational norms as self-regarding and the moral norms as other-regarding are crucial for our aims to grasp their nature, it cannot be the only criterion according to which we decide whether a specific norm is moral or rational. To illustrate, celebrating a friend's birthday is not a moral norm but rather it is an other-regarding social norm that we follow to make our loved ones happy. Although the distinction between self-regarding and other-regarding norms is not determinative for rational and moral norms, it is still a useful distinction for our aims to discover the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response.

In Chapter 1, I suggested that the epistemically appropriate response to disagreement is governed by both rational and moral norms. Involvement of the moral norms, I claimed, stems from the fact that epistemic disagreements are inextricably intersubjective phenomena, which indicates that our epistemic practices have a social as well as moral

[120] This claim might be objectionable for ethical egoists. It might be argued that we are eventually concerned with ourselves and our well-being. But here too, even though the ultimate aim for our actions is thought to be self-regarding, we are trying to reach this aim by following the norms which are related "justice, welfare, or rights of individuals or groups". For instance, it might be argued that we defend the rights of individuals because we want to be sure that our own rights are protected. It is not that we are ultimately concerned with the rights of others. However, even if this is the case, defending the rights of individuals has still have an other-regarding dimension because it affects the well-being of others. Shortly, what I want to say is that even though the ultimate aim of moral norms is thought to be self-regarding, it can still be claimed that they have an other-regarding feature (maybe as a steppingstone for our well-being).

[121] Geoffrey Brennan, Lina Eriksson, Robert E. Goodin, and Nicholas Southwood, *Explaining Norms* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 64.

dimension.[122] An inevitable consequence of the myriad social networks in which we find ourselves embedded, we come to know things; we learn from each other. To be able to reap the greatest epistemic benefits from these social networks, we have duties to ourselves and to others. In other words, we are duty-bound to follow both self-regarding norms and other-regarding norms. Then the question for us to consider is this: Can we claim that epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement is governed by both rational and moral norms solely focusing on their self-regarding and other-regarding nature? I think it is still not obvious whether epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement is governed by both rational and moral norms. Therefore, we need to continue our investigation.

3.2 Norms Violated by Status Injustice & The Norms Governing the Epistemically Appropriate Response

Since status injustice constitutes an obstacle for reaching the epistemically appropriate response, norms that are violated by status-unjust responses can give us clues about the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response. This is because the epistemic inappropriateness of status-unjust responses seems to be explained by the norms violated by status injustice. Then, if the violation of certain norms by status injustice causes the epistemic inappropriateness of a response, meeting the requirements of the same norms can help us to reach the epistemically appropriate response. Based on our intuitive expectations in the first chapter and our philosophical analysis in the second chapter, it seems that status injustice violates both rational and moral norms. Now, I will examine why and how status injustice violates these norms closely to understand whether they actually govern the epistemically appropriate response.

[122] It can be argued that the epistemic practices that are not in the realm of social epistemology do not have to have a social dimension. For example, the information coming from my senses, and my inference based on these senses, does not seem intersubjective. However, the fact that most of our knowledge does not rely on our senses only should also be taken into account. We are relying on the discoveries, experiments, or testimonies of others that we accept as experts. Therefore, still, most of our epistemic practices seems to benefit from the social network we are in. In a similar line of thought, John Hardwig argues that (especially scientific) knowledge is the knowledge of the scientific community. He says, "For finite minds can know many things only through epistemic cooperation." Hardwig, "Role of Trust in Knowledge, 707.

3.2.1 Violation of the Rational Norms by Status Injustice

In the face of a disagreement, an agent is rationally expected to correctly assess the evidence, make valid inferences using the principles of logic and make necessary probability calculations. To be able to meet these requirements, before forming a justified belief, the agent should consider and assess all the relevant pieces of evidence and information available to that agent. In other words, one should meet the requirement of total evidence as stated by Davidson, Hempel, and Carnap. A person who commits status injustice, however, does not correctly assess the higher-order evidence or does not take the new information that comes from the underestimated party to a disagreement into account.[123] That is why, a culprit of status injustice does not act in a way that is rationally expected from her; thus, she violates the rational norms.[124]

3.2.2 Violation of Moral norms by Status Injustice

Considering that moral norms regulate our social relationships and our attitudes towards others, harming others in any way and judging them based on the prejudices that negatively stereotype marginalized groups may be seen as violating these norms. Focusing on the harms that are created by status injustice, it can be seen that status injustice, just like other types of epistemic injustice, undermines the very features that make one a human. Clearly, then, status injustice violates the moral norm that we should respect and invest every human being with intrinsic value. Moreover, we argued that an agent who is the victim of an epistemic injustice loses self-confidence and is psychologically harmed. Since we are responsible for our actions as rational and moral

[123] One might say that in cases of status injustice, one does not ignore but rather misinterprets the higher-order evidence coming the underestimated party. Therefore, this is not a violation of the Requirement of Total Evidence. I will respond to this objection by saying that misinterpreting the higher-order evidence is a rational error, albeit not a violation of the Requirement of Total Evidence. Furthermore, when the epistemic credentials of a party to a disagreement is underestimated, the culprit does not only misinterpret the higher-order evidence, what can be inferred from the original evidence, but also ignores the information that constitutes the reasoning of the underestimated party. For example, remember our case *Just Looking?* in which Wendy and Oliver disagree about whether leering at women's breasts constitutes any harm. (See, 2.3.3: Status Injustice, *Just Looking?*, p.47). Oliver does not only wrongly assess the higher-order evidence that "leering at women's breasts constitutes a harm", but also he does not take Wendy's first-personal experience regarding her emotions or discomfort into consideration. Even though Wendy's testimony is a new information and evidence for him, he ignores them when forming his belief. Thus, he still violates the Requirement of Total Evidence.

[124] At this point one might think that this is not the only rational violation relevant to mistaken status assessments. It might be argued that making judgements on the basis of prejudices, indefensible and mostly inaccurate generalizations, creates an error in inference, and violates the rational norms. For the sake of the flow of this thesis, this possibility will be considered in the objection section below.

agents, we are also responsible for the harm we cause to others psychologically. Furthermore, status injustice might cause practical – physical, social, and political – harms as well. For example, a disagreement between a police officer and a suspect, or a doctor and a patient might constitute practical harms for which we might be morally culpable. Then, the status injustice violates the moral norms not only because it is caused by the assessments of epistemic credentials that are made on the basis of prejudices but also because it harms the victims in various dimensions.

3.2.3 Do Norms Violated by Status Injustice Govern the Epistemically Appropriate Response?

In sub-sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2, I showed that status injustice violates rational and moral norms. Determining which norms are violated will give us some clues about the norms that are necessary for eliminating the negative identity prejudices, unreliable stereotypes, and biases that eventually cause status injustice. However, even though status justice can be seen as a violation of both rational and moral norms, this does not yet show that both sets of norms explain the epistemic inappropriateness of status-unjust responses to disagreement. One might claim, for example, that even if status injustice violates moral as well as rational norms, it is only the violation of rational norms that makes status-unjust responses to disagreement epistemically inappropriate.

In the earlier chapters, I claimed that to be able to understand which norms govern the epistemically appropriate response, we should focus on not only the stage that epistemic status assessments are already made but also the processes of assessing epistemic status. This is because an error in the assessments of epistemic statuses can prevent us from reaching the epistemically appropriate response. Therefore, we need certain norms that can regulate the process of making epistemic status assessments to prevent a possible error that can create an epistemically inappropriate response to disagreement. If so, the norms that govern the epistemic status assessments are also a part of the epistemically appropriate response. Furthermore, I claimed that status injustice is caused by either a result of negative identity prejudices, unreliable stereotypes, and biases—for the sake of brevity, from now on I will call these "prejudices"—or lack of epistemic self-confidence as a result of prejudices. Thus, I suggest, the norms that command us to eliminate prejudices can also be the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response.

Based on what we have said so far, violations of the relevant moral norms are caused by prejudices and the harms that occur as a result of these. By contrast, violations of the relevant rational norms are caused by malfunctioning belief-forming processes, a malfunction resulting from the omission of information and misinterpretation of the evidence coming from the underestimated party to the disagreement. Since status injustice as a result of prejudices causes the omission of the information and misinterpretation of the evidence, it might seem at first glance that status injustice can be diagnosed solely by appeal to rational norms, specifically the requirement of total evidence. If so, however, then it may also seem that even though the moral norms are violated in cases of status injustice, they are not the reason why status-unjust responses to disagreement are epistemically inappropriate.

Let us remember, one more time, our Chapter 1 case *Epidural is(n't) needed* and different versions of it.[125] The obvious question is if the epistemic inappropriateness of Derrick's responses can be explained by appeal to rational norms, why is appeal to moral norms required at all? One might argue that all of the above-mentioned versions of our Chapter 1 case *Epidural is(n't) needed* were epistemically inappropriate not because they violate the moral norms but because Derrick did not respond to a disagreement in the way that he should have responded due to the misinterpretation the evidence coming from his peer. Hence, the reason why Derrick's responses are epistemically inappropriate can be shown without appealing to the moral norms. However, I believe, even though Derrick's doxastic attitude was correct, his response would be still epistemically inappropriate if his process of epistemic status assessments is affected from prejudices. What I have just said will be clear after the following version.

> *The Lucky Version (V4): Look! She is the inferior!* Consider for this version that, again, Derrick and Jasmine are equally successful anesthetists. Because of his sexist prejudices regarding pregnant women, Derrick thinks that Jasmine is his inferior. Thus, he does not take her opinion into consideration and remains steadfast. Consider further that Jasmine has not slept well the past two days because of hot weather and hot flashes resulting from her pregnancy. Since Jasmine is sleep-deprived, she confuses Julia's condition with that of another pregnant woman.

[125] See, 1.2: Non-ideal Cases, Case 1, p.17; *V1*, p.18; *V2*, p.20; *V3*, p.22; *V3.1*, p.25.

> Therefore, on this occasion—the disagreement on the proposition that Julia should take epidural anesthesia—Julia is Derrick's inferior.[126]

This Gettier-type version illustrates the possibility that for this specific occasion, Jasmine is sleep-deprived and confuses the patients. This makes her an epistemic inferior compared to Derrick, who has the required and accurate information regarding Julia's condition. Furthermore, Jasmine is recognized as an inferior not because Derrick is aware of her sleep deprivation, but because Derrick has a negative identity prejudice against pregnant women. In this case, then, Derrick makes the correct assessment and adopts the correct doxastic attitude. In addition, Derrick assesses the higher-order evidence coming from Jasmine correctly, as the evidence coming an inferior. However, can we say that Derrick's response is epistemically appropriate?

My claim is that even though Derrick does not overlook any evidence or information and responds to the disagreement with the correct doxastic attitude, his response is nevertheless epistemically inappropriate. The reason why is that although his final assessment and attitude are correct, he does not have them for the right reasons. His seemingly correct response is a result of epistemic luck. He still violates the moral norms by having prejudices and acting in accordance with them. Also, his prejudicial approach to Jasmine still harms Jasmine in social, moral, practical, and epistemological dimensions.[127]

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[126] Special thanks to Assist. Prof. Dr. Damien Storey for his feedback and comments that made me come up with V4.

[127] Here, one might argue that since Derrick correctly assesses the epistemic status of Jasmine, there is no status injustice and therefore, there are no epistemological harm that is done to Jasmine. Even though Jasmine suffers from a social injustice and even if this can be pointed out by reference to ethical norms, these are not related to epistemically appropriateness of the response. I must disagree. Status injustice, just like epistemic injustice in general, is not caused by single instances of misassessments but rather it causes by many instances of underestimation of epistemic credentials due to identity prejudice. In other words, our concern is not individual acts of misassessment, but rather it is about the intellectual character of the agents. If an agent does not have a good intellectual character—if a person does not have the virtues that provide her with best epistemic benefits such as, ability to correctly assess the evidence, ability to eliminate prejudices from her reasoning, ability to communicate well with others in an information exchange, and so on.—it is much more likely that her actions lead to commit status injustice or epistemic injustice in general. Since Derrick's assessment of epistemic inferiority is independent from Jasmine's sleep deprivation, the next day, when Jasmine gets enough sleep, his assessment will be the same and will be wrong this time. In this case Derrick has a bad intellectual character. This means that as long as prejudices are in play, Jasmine will suffer from status injustice in the long term. Furthermore, the harms of status injustice not only related to the wrongly evaluated epistemic credentials, but also about the general attitudes of the culprit and intersubjective relationships within the society, which most likely includes some prejudicial norms. Thus, besides the social, practical and ethical harms, epistemological harm still exists. Hence, in our case, even though Derrick got lucky this time, his response is still status-unjust, and therefore, epistemically inappropriate.

If that's right, and if Derrick does not disregard or misinterpret any evidence, then the reason why his response is epistemically inappropriate can be explained by appealing to the moral norms. Is this enough to prove that moral norms have a role in the epistemically appropriate response? Can we explain why Derrick's response in *V4* is epistemically inappropriate by appealing to rational norms? These questions and possible objections will be discussed in the following sub-section.

3.2.4 Possible Objection

My claim above can be objected to by saying that Derrick's response in Version 4 violates rational norms because it also includes a false inference. Briefly, we can capture the negative epistemological effects of Derrick's appeal to negative identity stereotypes solely by appeal to rational norms since his inference rests on an indefensible generalization regarding pregnant women. If so, we can give a full account of the epistemic inappropriateness of Derrick's response in *V4* without appealing to moral norms. Then, it can be argued that there is no room for moral norms in the search for an epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement.

The worry above can be expanded. One might argue that prejudices violate rational norms just like they violate moral norms. On one plausible view, prejudices are defined as judgments that are resistant to counterevidence, counterexamples, and rational arguments. Therefore, they cannot be counted as a part of rational belief-forming process. For instance, Kwame Anthony Appiah claims that (extrinsic) racist beliefs are generally caused by racist prejudices, which cannot be rational. He says:

> . . . prejudices are really not subject to any kind of rational control, we may wonder whether it is right to treat such people as morally responsible for the acts their racial prejudice motivates, or morally reprehensible for holding the views to which their prejudice leads them. . . Racial prejudice, like prejudice generally, may threaten an agent's autonomy, making it appropriate to treat or train rather than to reason with them.[128]

A person with prejudices is unable to respond to any rational input that can show that she is wrong. Appiah claims that since people with prejudices do not have control over

[128] Kwame Anthony Appiah, "Racisms," In *Anatomy of Racism*, by David Goldberg (University of Minnesota Press, 1990), 9.

their reasoning and may even lack autonomy, their rationality can be questioned.[129] If so, then since prejudices are resistant to counterexamples, counterarguments, and counterevidence, a prejudiced person cannot abide by reliable processes of belief-formation. Furthermore, in our case, the prejudicial agent violates the requirement of total evidence by not taking into account the new information coming from his peer or superior. Also, by misinterpreting the higher-order evidence, she violates the rational norms. If this is the case, again, having prejudices and making judgments based on them violate the rational norms. Thus, the source of the problem, making epistemic credential assessments based on prejudices and biases, can be pointed out solely by appeal to rational norms.

3.2.5 Possible Response

Put most simply, the objection above is as follows. The reason why we should not make judgments based on prejudices can be explained in two ways: we can focus on the irrational attitude of having them and we can focus on the harms that are created by them. If we analyze the issue in this way, it seems that the former concerns rational norms and the latter concerns moral norms. Therefore, it can be argued that one does not need to apply any other norms to eliminate prejudice in one's reasoning process when one is assessing the epistemic credentials of the disagreeing parties. Thus, one does not need to focus on harms in order to eliminate them.

In response to this objection, I will give both a theoretical and a practical/ameliorative reason why moral norms are relevant and necessary for eliminating prejudices in our process of epistemic status assessments.

Firstly, even though the objection seems to be a good way of showing that status injustice can be explained by only appealing to rational norms, I believe our epistemological analysis will be incomplete without touching on the harms caused by status injustice. The reason for this is that the harms caused by status injustice are not only ethical but also epistemological. As we have observed before, status injustice and other forms of epistemic injustice cause knowledge loss on the part of both the victim and the culprit. Therefore, overlooking the harms and focusing only on why having prejudices are irrational does not comprehensively explain their effects on our epistemic practices.

[129] Appiah, "Racisms," 9.

Thus, our theoretical analysis will be incomplete without appeal to the relevant moral norms.[130]

To consider my practical/ameliorative reason, let us assume for the sake of argument that we can theoretically grasp why we should not rely on prejudices in our process of assessing the epistemic credentials of others without appeal to moral norms. Even if this is the case, moral norms are still useful as the regulators of social behavior—considering their ameliorative character in everyday life. Trying to eliminate prejudices only because they will imply irrationality might not be sufficient in our efforts to cope with them because we do not always realize that we have them, especially when they take the form of an implicit bias. To illustrate, a person who does not have any explicit racist beliefs might nevertheless have an implicit bias that Black people are crime-prone. Seeing a Black man opening his bag at a store might be enough to make that person think that he stole something from the store. At this point, we need extra motivation for being critical about our own judgments regarding others. Again, one might argue against my claim by saying that the rational norms are enough to be critical. For example, our doubtful agent can reflect on her belief and find out that her belief was not produced by a rational belief-forming process. However, it is also a possibility that she might rationalize her belief in order to justify it. She might think, for instance, the reason why she suspects the Black person is because he opened his bag near a shelf of the store that consists of expensive products, rather than because he is Black.

I believe, the extra motivation for being critical for similar situations as illustrated above can be provided by ethics. Ethics has an instructive dimension that makes us hyperaware of our behaviors and beliefs. It allows us to have second thoughts for our reasoning process. For instance, with an ethical burden to consider others and to achieve social justice, our doubtful agent might ask herself further questions: "Why was I interested in the actions of the Black person in the first place? Did I notice anyone else who opens their bags at all? Is it possible that I realize Black person because I have some negative bias towards Black people? Is it possible to have a negative bias even though I do not have any racist beliefs? Is it just for me to think that he is a thief? Am I acting in

[130] At this point there might be further objection: One might say that the argument assumes that we cannot focus on harms by appealing solely to rational norms. I believe, the harms can be pointed out by the rational norms if the rational norms are taken in their broader and intersubjective sense. This intersubjective approach to the rational norms will be taken into account in the following pages.

accordance with moral norms?" and so on. Of course, it is not obvious whether after this critical thought process the agent will change her belief or not, but it is a step towards eliminating implicitly held prejudices.

Peter Schulte's analysis regarding the difference between rational and moral norms will be helpful here, to ground my worry that rational norms might not be enough for eliminating prejudices in our assessments of epistemic credential assessments.[131] Schulte starts his examination by focusing on the difference between moral and rational judgments. He claims that while moral judgments demand, rational ones recommend.[132] Then he claims that morality and rationality also constitute two different kinds of normativity, demanding normativity and recommending normativity.[133] He argues that this difference can be seen in natural language.[134] Consider, for example, these two judgments: (1) "Frozen foods ought to be kept in the fridge." and (2)"All races ought to be treated equally." (1) is a judgment that can be reached by following the rational norms, more specifically by the basic rules of logic. It seems to be a prescription or a piece of advice that a rational person would follow. (2) can be reached by following moral norms grounded in the values of equality, social justice, and the well-being of others. It requires acting or behaving in a certain way.

In addition to the intuitive difference that can be observed in natural language, there is a difference between the implication of the violation of these norms. While we criticize a person who violates the rational norms as being unreasonable or acting foolishly, we hold responsible the ones who violate the moral norms.[135] Think about our sentences above, if I violate (1) and end up with melted ice cream, the obvious reaction to me would be "what did you expect?" The result of my action would be seen as the natural outcome of irrational or unreasonable behavior. Others would not be mad at me because my ice cream melted, but would rather reconsider their claims regarding my rationality. On the other hand, if I violate (2), people would be mad at me because they will think that I am a racist person, and they will hold me responsible. In this case, I would be blameworthy not because it is irrational to treat unequally to the members of different races but because

[131] Peter Schulte, "The Difference Between Moral and Rational 'Oughts': An Expressivist Account," in *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice* 15, no. 2 (2012): 159–174.
[132] Schulte, "The Difference Between Moral and Rational Oughts," 160.
[133] Schulte, "The Difference Between Moral and Rational Oughts," 163.
[134] Schulte, "The Difference Between Moral and Rational Oughts," 160.
[135] Schulte, "The Difference Between Moral and Rational Oughts," 163.

I failed to do what is required for me by the moral norms. The same claim regarding the distinction between the violation of moral and rational norms can be seen in Thomas Pink's words:

> Suppose someone breaches a moral obligation. The criticism which they meet is rather different from that which meets mere disregard of reason. Unless they have some excuse, […] who breach obligations are blamed for what they have done. And to blame someone is not so much to criticize them as foolish or less than sensible, but rather to hold them responsible for having done wrong.[136]

Furthermore, Pascal Engel points out that norms of rationality do not force us to behave in a certain way:

> The point is that a description of a certain individual as meeting certain "normative" standards of rationality does not imply that the individual is in any way herself committed or bound by the standards.[137]

> The fact that rationality requires of me something, objectively, does not mean that subjectively, I am required to have a certain belief. In other words, knowing what it is rational to do or think (here to think) is not the same as knowing what to do or think in a particular circumstance. What rationality tells me that I ought to do or think is not the same as what I ought to do in a given case.[138]

If this is the case, rational norms by themselves do not do anything but recommend or prescribe certain ways of acting. What we need, however, is something that can have an impact on us such that makes us feel responsible. I believe this extra motivation can be provided by moral norms and by a good intellectual character. A person with a good intellectual character will have the qualities for reaching the best epistemic results such as, ability to correctly assess the evidence, ability to collect and disseminate information, not being affected by non-knowledge related factors—negative identity prejudices, material factors, socio-political relationships, etc.—in her belief-forming processes, being aware of the fact that she is liable to error and so on. I believe certain virtues are related here, intellectual honesty and dignity, intellectual humility, intellectual courage, intellectual responsibility, open-mindedness, curiosity, and so on. Thus and so, a person

[136] Thomas Pink, "Moral Obligation," in *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplements*, 54 (Cambridge University Press, 2004), 160. quoted in Schulte, "The Difference Between Moral and Rational Oughts," 162.

[137] Engel, "Epistemic Norms and Rationality," 366.

[138] Engel, "Epistemic Norms and Rationality", 367.

with a good intellectual character in a way double-checks his response. He thinks twice about his decision, once for the sake of rationality, for whether he has ignored any evidence or information because of any prejudice—in short, for whether he acts in the way that is recommended by rationality—, and once for the sake of ethics, for whether his behavior harms anyone and whether he was fair in his judgments of epistemic status—in short, for whether he acted in the way that is demanded by ethics.

3.2.6 Objection to the Practical/Ameliorative Reply

When the practical/ameliorative character of my second reply is taken into consideration, it might be argued that the reply focuses on social justice rather than epistemic appropriateness. More clearly, it might be claimed that the second reply focuses on the regulation of social behaviors via moral norms. However, our aim is to find the norms that can eliminate prejudices in order to prevent status injustice and to discover the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement. The fact that social justice is an important issue does not have to mean that it is relevant to our discussion of the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement. Therefore, if we can regulate the process of assessing the epistemic statuses with rational norms in a way that the status injustice could be prevented, it can be claimed that the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement is governed only by rational norms.

3.2.7 Response

As a response to this objection, in addition to what I said above, I would like to point out the multifaceted character of the epistemology of disagreement and social epistemology in general. In social epistemology, we are focusing on inextricably intersubjective phenomena, such as testimony or disagreement, and we are trying to understand how these intersubjective relationships are relevant in our knowledge validation processes. Hence, since we are not talking about separate individuals' formation of justified beliefs, the social dimension of the issue cannot be ignored. If the social environment is somehow distorted in a way that individuals are not able to contribute or receive useful information from each other, this directly affects the social knowledge validation process. Thus, social justice, in this sense, plays a crucial role.

A second and related point is that when we are trying to determine which norms govern the epistemically appropriate response to disagreement, we are in fact discussing how we should regulate our epistemic practices—in other words, how we should do epistemology. This meta-epistemological debate investigates the long-standing rules of epistemology to see whether they are the best rules to regulate our epistemic principles. This means that we are not bound to adhere to the long-standing rules of epistemology but rather to question and improve these rules. Hence, if some other norms, in our case moral norms, are seen to be relevant, it seems it is the right place to consider them as beneficial additions to the rules governing our epistemological investigations.

3.3 A Hybrid Model (of Rationality)

In section 3.2.2, I claimed that a person with a good intellectual character will have a chance to be hyperaware of whether her belief-forming process includes any kind of (implicit) prejudices. This is because she will have the qualities and virtues that enable her to evaluate her reasoning with respect to both rational and moral norms for reaching the best epistemic results—in our case to reach the epistemically appropriate response. If so, what are these qualities and virtues of a person with a good intellectual character, and which virtues are related the most in the realm of disagreement are the questions to ask. Towards this end, I will investigate the intellectual virtues in the light of virtue epistemology. I will look for specific virtues that can be helpful for our aim to reach the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement. Then, I will explore Fricker's hybrid virtues namely, "testimonial justice" and "hermeneutical justice" to see whether they can be used as a model for our aim. In the light of this examination, finally, I will suggest two possible ways of analyzing the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement.

3.3.1 Intellectual Virtues and Virtue Epistemology

Intellectual virtues are defined by Jason Baehr as ". . .the qualities or capacities of a good thinker or knower."[139] Epistemologists have various claims regarding the nature of

[139] Jason Baehr, "Virtue Epistemology," Digital Commons at Loyola Marymount University and Loyola Law School. (2013): 1, https://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/phil_fac/27/, to appear.

intellectual virtues.[140] However, since the aim of this thesis is not to examine the nature of the intellectual virtues, I will use the intellectual virtues in a broader sense, to refer to the virtues that lead to truth and good intellectual character.[141] Then, the question for us to consider is: which of these intellectual virtues are required for responding to a disagreement in an epistemically appropriate way?

According to Allan Hazlett's definition, intellectual humility seems to be quite relevant to our search for the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement. For him, "intellectual humility is the disposition not to adopt epistemically improper higher-order epistemic attitudes, and to adopt (in the right way, in the right situations) epistemically proper higher-order epistemic attitudes."[142] This can be also interpreted as making the correct assessment of epistemic status in such a way that the epistemic credentials of any party to a disagreement will not be underestimated or overestimated so that one can decide what is the proper doxastic attitude. The words of John Turri, Mark Alfano, and John Greco also show that intellectual humility is closely related to the epistemology of disagreement: "This conception of intellectual humility is most pertinent in the realm of disagreement."[143] If this is the case, the virtue of intellectual humility is actually the key virtue for making the correct epistemic status assessments—for neither underestimating nor overestimating the epistemic credentials of one's own and one's disputants—, for adopting the proper doxastic attitude in the face of a disagreement and therefore, to reach the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement.

[140] The question of what the nature of these intellectual virtues is create three main camps in the literature, virtue reliabilists, virtue responsibilitists, and—what I will call—the mixed view. See, John Turri, Mark Alfano, and John Greco, "Virtue Epistemology," in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Stanford University, November 7, 2017, sec.3, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/epistemology-virtue/. The first group is called virtue reliabilists who claim that certain cognitive faculties such as perception, intuition, memory count as intellectual virtues because they are epistemically reliable. (Turri, John, Mark Alfano, and John Greco. "Virtue Epistemology.", sec. 3, Baehr, "Virtue Epistemology" 1.) The second group, the virtue responsibilitists argue that just like moral virtues, intellectual virtues such as; intellectual humility, intellectual honesty, open mindedness, etc. are related to one's "good intellectual character." (Turri, John, Mark Alfano, and John Greco "Virtue Epistemology." sec.3,Baehr, "Virtue epistemology", 4.) However, both camps have their strong and weak sides. Therefore, Heather Battaly claims that the nature of the intellectual virtues cannot be explained only by relying on the one camp. Intellectual virtues as the qualities of a good epistemic subject and the virtues whose ultimate aim is truth, consist of the virtues from both camps. (See, Turri, John, Mark Alfano, and John Greco. "Virtue Epistemology.", sec 3.)

[141] Just like Battaly suggested.

[142] Allan Hazlett, "Higher-order Epistemic Attitudes and Intellectual Humility," in *Episteme* 9, no. 3 (2012): 220.

[143] Turri, John, Mark Alfano, and John Greco. "Virtue Epistemology", sec.10.2, para.5.

What are the requirements for being an intellectually humble person? Which other qualities are related to or required for intellectual humility? How can we understand this virtue better? Markus Christen, Mark Alfano, and Brain Robinson in their article "The Semantic Space of Intellectual Humility" propose a psycholexical analysis of intellectual humility. [144] Using the antonyms and synonyms of the term "humility", they offer an analysis of the meaning of intellectual humility.[145] According to their analysis, the synonyms of the term can be examined under three main groups: "the Sensible Self", which includes the qualities such as mindfulness, agreement, sensitivity, and responsiveness; "the Inquisitive Self" which includes scrutiny, curiosity, and learning; and "the Discreet Self", which includes decency, humility, humbleness.[146] According to the antonym analysis, we have again three different groups: "the Underrated Self", including servility, submissiveness, timidity, and diffidence; "the Underrated Other" including prejudice, bias, narrowmindedness, and animosity; and "the Overrated Self", including arrogance, self-importance, and egotism.[147]

As can be seen, especially the antonyms of the term intellectual humility are quite parallel to our discussion of epistemic status assessments and status injustice. Just like Underrated Self, we are interested in the possibility of underestimation of one's own epistemic credentials. A similar parallel can be seen between Underrated Other and underestimation of one's disputant's epistemic credentials and Overrated Self and overestimation of one's own epistemic credentials. Even though the antonym map does not include any term that can be a parallel for overestimation of one's disputant's epistemic credentials, I believe there is enough similarity to show us that we are on the right track.

Benefiting from the antonym analysis, we can propose a model of the intellectual vices pertaining to epistemic disagreement. If to be intellectually humble is to adopt the epistemically appropriate attitudes in the right situations, as it is pointed out by Hazlet, the underestimation or overestimation of epistemic credentials may be seen to occur as a result of the corresponding vices. The vices can be categorized under two: *intellectual*

[144] Markus Christen, Brian Robinson, and Mark Alfano, "The Semantic Space of Intellectual Humility," in *Proceedings of the European Conference on Social Intelligence* (2014),1–10.
[145] Christen, Robinson and Alfano, "The Semantic Space of Intellectual Humility," 3.
[146] Christen, Robinson and Alfano, "The Semantic Space of Intellectual Humility," 6.
[147] Christen, Robinson and Alfano, "The Semantic Space of Intellectual Humility," 7.

arrogance, which creates overestimated self and underestimated other and *intellectual spinelessness*, which creates underestimated self and overestimated other.

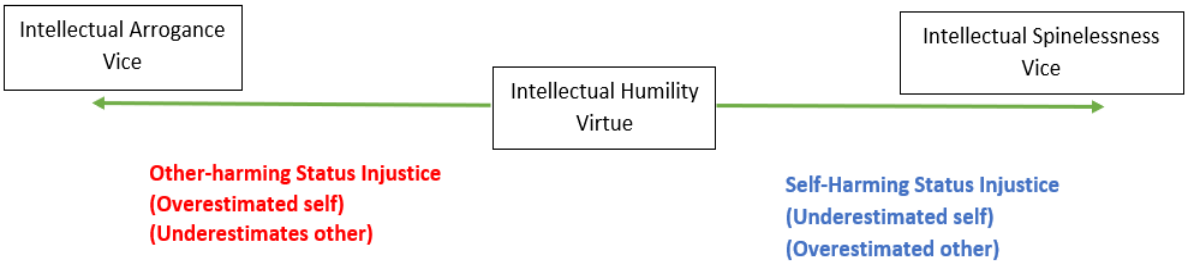

Figure 3.1: The Virtue of Intellectual Humility.

If the antonyms of the virtue intellectual humility give us a clue about the vices it is opposed to, its synonyms can enlighten us about the virtues of disagreement. According to this model, one should be mindful, responsive, open-minded, curious, interested, impartial, inquisitive, humble, and so on towards someone with whom one has a disagreement. This means that the virtue of intellectual humility is bound up with many character qualities that someone with a good intellectual character must have.

My suggestion, then, is that intellectual humility represents the relevant character qualities that are required for the epistemically appropriate response. In a similar way, intellectual arrogance and intellectual spinelessness represent the character qualities that might create an obstacle for reaching the epistemically appropriate response. Notice that both the virtue of intellectual humility and the two vices, intellectual arrogance and intellectual spinelessness, have both rational and moral dimensions. One needs to be curious, inquisitive, responsive, mindful, and attentive as well as be humble, open-minded, and sensitive. Furthermore, one should not be either pretentious or submissive. Also, one should not have prejudices or biases. The mentioned qualities are related to both oneself and others, they are required for forming justified beliefs and creating good intersubjective relationships. To illustrate, while violation of curiosity and inquisitiveness prevents intellectual development, having prejudices or violation of pretentiousness destroys good intersubjective relationships and harms people in different ways—moral, political, social, intellectual, and so on. In order to understand and explain these two dimensions, rational and moral, of intellectual humility, Miranda Fricker's two hybrid virtues, testimonial justice, and hermeneutical justice, once again provide a good model.

3.3.2 Fricker's Testimonial Justice and Hermeneutical Justice

Fricker claims that to be able to get rid of prejudices in our credibility judgments and prevent testimonial injustice and hermeneutical injustice we should appeal to the virtues of testimonial and hermeneutical *justice*. The virtue of testimonial justice is defined by Fricker as ". . . a virtue such that the influence of identity prejudice on the hearer's credibility judgment is detected and corrected for."[148] She claims that in order to understand whether the virtue of testimonial justice is an intellectual virtue or an ethical one, we should look for its ends.[149] She claims that the ultimate end of testimonial injustice as an intellectual virtue and as an ethical virtue will be different—truth for the former and justice for the latter. However, their immediate ends will be the same: "neutralizing prejudice in one's credibility judgments."[150] However, since the ultimate end of many virtues are the same, the ultimate end cannot be the criterion that can be used for distinguishing different virtues.[151] Hence, she concludes that testimonial justice as an intellectual virtue and as an ethical virtue is one and the same thing.[152] In her words:

> If we ask what is the immediate end of testimonial justice considered as an intellectual virtue, the answer is 'neutralizing prejudice in one's credibility judgements', and its ultimate end will be truth. For neutralizing prejudice is necessary for achieving the appropriate openness to truth that the subject is ultimately aiming at—if the hearer allows prejudice to influence her credibility judgement, she is liable to miss out on a truth. If we now ask what is the immediate end of testimonial justice considered as an ethical virtue, the answer is, once again, 'neutralizing prejudice in one's credibility judgements', and its ultimate end will be justice. For neutralizing prejudice is the necessary means to avoiding doing one's interlocutor a testimonial injustice. Thus testimonial justice considered either as an intellectual virtue or as an ethical virtue contains the very same individuating motivation: to neutralize prejudice in one's credibility judgement. I conclude that they are one and the same virtue, even while the ultimate end that is most appropriately attached (truth or justice) will change according to the context. In contexts where the practical predicament is such that openness to the truth is paramount, it will be appropriate to consider the virtue under the aspect of an intellectual virtue. In contexts

[148] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice,* 6.
[149] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice,* 121.
[150] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice,* 122.
[151] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice,* 121.
[152] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice,* 122.

> where ethical considerations are paramount, it will be most appropriate to consider it under the aspect of an ethical virtue.[153]

For the virtue of hermeneutical justice Fricker says:

> This virtue is such that the hearer exercises a reflexive critical sensitivity to any reduced intelligibility incurred by the speaker owing to a gap in collective hermeneutical resources. That is, he is alert to the possibility that her relative unintelligibility to him is a function of a collective hermeneutical impoverishment, and he adjusts or suspends his credibility judgement accordingly.[154]

Just like the virtue of testimonial justice, hermeneutical justice is a "hybrid" virtue. It can be taken as an ethical and intellectual virtue depending on the context.[155]

Fricker's identification of testimonial and hermeneutical justice as hybrid virtues can help us identify the virtue of intellectual humility. In the next subsection, I will examine intellectual humility as a hybrid virtue and present it as one of the possible approaches that could be used for the process of epistemic status assessments when looking for the epistemically appropriate response.[156]

3.3.3 Intellectual Humility as a Hybrid Virtue

Before starting to analyze the virtue of intellectual humility, a question that needs to be answered: Can we categorize an epistemic disagreement as a context in which only the truth is concerned? Is it possible to reach the truth without being just to the parties to a disagreement? As I stated above, the epistemology of disagreement is a field that is social in its nature. Therefore, for the sake of reaching the truth and finding the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement, one should not ignore the intersubjective

[153] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice,* 121–122.
[154] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice,* 7.
[155] Fricker, *Epistemic Injustice,* 174.
[156] Here, I would like to state a concern. Fricker's hybrid virtues are such that their ultimate aim is the same under the context of truth and justice. Therefore, she concludes that these virtues play a hybrid role as being ethical and intellectual in different contexts. This conception cancels out the possibility that intellectual virtues are the virtues that combine the rational and ethical elements together under the context of epistemology and therefore truth, which also requires justice. In other words, this conception implies that the contexts of truth and justice are actually separate. However, in a social context that truth is derived from intersubjective relationships, without social justice truth cannot be reach. Furthermore, if epistemology in general, is considered as social and intersubjective as Hardwig claims in his article "The Role of Trust in Knowledge", it seems ethical considerations, especially trust and honesty, are at the very core. Taking these into consideration, I will offer an alternative: Intellectual humility is a hybrid virtue whose aim is to find the truth as well as to be just.

dimension of the phenomenon of disagreement. Hence, the epistemically appropriate response is not independent of the norms of social justice.

In the light of Fricker's analysis of a hybrid virtue above, one of the possible ways of analyzing intellectual humility might be to claim that it is a hybrid virtue. We said that it has two dimensions, rational and moral. Unlike Fricker, I will not claim that in a context in which justice is prioritized, it can be examined as a moral norm and in a context in which truth is prioritized, it can be examined as an intellectual norm. But rather, I claim that intellectual humility is a hybrid intellectual virtue, whose aim is the reach the truth as well as to be just to every party to a disagreement. What makes intellectual humility is a hybrid virtue is its very feature that it includes rational and moral elements. As can be seen in the psycholexical analysis of Christen, Alfano, and Robinson, it requires some character qualities that can be analyzed as rational and moral, which lead to both truth and justice. Presenting intellectual humility as a hybrid virtue that is bound up with rational and moral norms is one of the possible ways of analyzing it. But, as far as I can see, there is one more possible way. This will be the subject of the next subsection.

3.3.4 The Transitivity Between Ethical and Rational Norms

If the same virtue consists of elements from two different realms, rational and moral, maybe this says something about the nature of the rational and moral norms. Philip Clayton and Steven Knapp assert that there is not a sharp distinction between ethics and rationality, since rational norms, like moral norms, are irreducibly intersubjective:

> Rationality is both an intersubjective and a normative notion; a given belief counts as rational to the extent that the believer has reason to think it meets or could meet what the believer takes to be the standards of the ideal discursive community.[157]

They emphasize the importance of feedback from the community in the process of forming a rational self-conception.[158] For instance, let us think of a man who considers himself as an expert on the movements of the earth. He claims that there is a bull buried in the center of the earth and when it gets angry, we feel an earthquake. He claims that today he made some noise unwillingly and made the bull angry. This is why there will be

[157] Philip Clayton, and Steven Knapp, "Ethics and Rationality," in *American Philosophical Quarterly* 30, no. 2 (1993): 153.

[158] Clayton, Philip & Knapp, "Ethics and Rationality," 153.

an earthquake today and people need to leave their homes. In this case, if society does not take him as an expert on earth movements, his self-conception does not make any sense even for him, if he is a rational agent. Therefore, the feedback from society plays a crucial role in rationality and rational self-conception.[159] Then, according to this "intersubjective model" of rationality, social relationships are at the core of rationality. Therefore, certain moral rules can be inferred from the requirements of rationality. Clayton and Knapp say:

> . . . general ethical dispositions are implied by the long-term requirements of rational agency as such: (1) a commitment to honesty or truthfulness, and (2) a commitment to the emergence and/or preservation of a certain type of social order. Not all of a rational agent's behavior must be ethical; ours is not an exceptionless derivation of ethics based on rationality.[160]

This means that the norms that regulate our social relationships, namely the moral norms, are quite relevant or even inseparable from rationality. Thus, there is not a sharp distinction between the rational or the moral norms. However, this does not mean that all moral norms can be explained by reference to rational norms. In particular, whether eliminating prejudices is one of the moral norms that can be inferred from rational norms seems to be open to discussion.

The intersubjective model of rationality has some implications in our discussion. The epistemology of disagreement is a discipline devoted to an irreducibly intersubjective phenomenon, one that must be governed by both the norms which regulate social justice as well as rational behavior. My claim was that these two kinds of regulation can be done by appealing to both the rational and moral norms relying on the traditional definitions. However, under this conception of rationality, it seems we do not need to find different names for these norms. If the required regulations can be done with the norms that are implied under intellectual humility as I proposed as one of the possibilities, intellectual humility can be seen as a hybrid virtue, or it can be seen as a virtue that is bound to intersubjective rational norms. The outcome of this debate seems to imply the following:

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[159] The "mentally unwell" earthquake man example is an intuitive case that we can agree on easily. However, it tells us something important about our social interactions. Consider a woman who is a very competent employee of a company. However, since her co-workers harbor sexist prejudices, her ideas are not taken seriously. In this case, is she irrational to think that she is competent enough to make contributions? Whose beliefs are needed to change, her beliefs regarding her self-conception or her co-workers' beliefs regarding her? How can we define the norm "employee's competence should be evaluated independently from their gender"?

[160] Clayton & Knapp, "Ethics and Rationality," 159.

In order to account for an epistemically appropriate response that requires rational belief-forming processes, correctly made epistemic credential and epistemic status assessments, and adoption of the appropriate doxastic attitudes, we should either appeal to independent moral norms in addition to the rational ones or adopt an intersubjective model of rationality.

3.4 Discussion & Conclusion: Rational and Moral Norms Reconsidered

My aim for this study was to show that when we are looking for the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement, we should consider the cases that I named as non-ideal. The reason was to show that when we are trying to find the principles and norms that govern the epistemically appropriate response, we should consider the process of epistemic status assessments. I claimed that the norms governing epistemic status assessments are not only rational but also moral. My main motivation for this claim was to prevent the status injustice caused by malfunctioning processes of epistemic status assessment to be able to decide the proper doxastic attitude, to respond appropriately to the disagreement.

I offered two alternatives for eliminating prejudices in our assessments of epistemic status to be able to reach the epistemically appropriate response: The first is that we need both rational norms and moral norms when looking for an answer to the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement. I offered intellectual humility as a hybrid virtue that includes some rational and moral dimensions. And, secondly, I argued that the intersubjective model of rationality might be the answer even though whether eliminating prejudices can be inferred from rationality is open to discussion.

This thesis and my suggestions are just a contribution to a larger movement in epistemology which seeks to illustrate the ways our practices as knowers interface with moral considerations. To show that both rational and moral norms are relevant to epistemology is a project beyond the scope of this thesis. It would require addressing broader questions, such as: what is the relation between ethics and epistemology, what is the relationship between rational and moral norms, and are moral norms also rational norms? This project has only the more modest aim of showing analyses of the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement should include the considerations for the non-ideal cases—in which the assessments of epistemic credentials assessments

are affected by the negative identity prejudices, social norms and traditions, and socio-political relationships—, the process of making epistemic status assessments as well as the errors that might occur in this process, and status injustice to achieve a comprehensive theoretical ground.

Chapter 4:
CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis has been to show that the search for the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement will be incomplete if the non-ideal aspects of real-life disagreements are not taken into account. I argued that this non-ideal aspect stems from the effects of negative identity prejudices, pernicious social norms and traditions, and unbalanced socio-political relationships on disagreeing agents' assessments of epistemic credentials. If disagreeing agents underestimate or overestimate the epistemic credentials of their disputants or of their own as a result of these factors, they will not be able to assess each other's epistemic statuses correctly.[161] This not only creates status injustice but also hampers the agent's ability to respond to the disagreement in an epistemically appropriate way.

My analysis of the status injustice characteristic of these non-ideal cases has two major implications: First, for the reasons given above, the assumption that the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response can be identified by analyzing only ideal scenarios—what I called the idealization assumption—should be abandoned. Second, the phenomenon of status injustice demonstrates that the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement are not independent of the norms that govern our social interactions in an epistemic community. Briefly, the norms governing our social interactions are needed to prevent status injustice by eliminating prejudices in our assessments of epistemic credentials and to be able to reach the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement. I claimed that, here, we need to question the reason-centrism assumption—that the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement is the rational response governed by the norms of reason—and suggested that the required accounts can be provided by appeal to both rational and moral norms.

I offered two possible ways of conceiving the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response. First, I proposed intellectual humility as a hybrid virtue that has rational and moral dimensions that require us to correctly assess the epistemic credentials

[161] Except the Gettier-type cases. (such as *V4*; see, 3.2.3: Do Norms Violated by Status Injustice Govern the Epistemically Appropriate Response?, *V4*, p.65) In those cases, the epistemic status assessments might be seemingly correct as a result of epistemic luck. However, as argued before, epistemic luck is not enough to make a response epistemically appropriate as well as to prevent status injustice.

of ourselves as well as our disputant, and correctly evaluate the proposition of dispute to be able to adopt an appropriate doxastic attitude in the face of a disagreement. This is one of the ways of proposing rational and moral norms as the governors of the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement. A second possible approach is to adopt an intersubjective conception of rationality in which some moral norms can be derived from rationality. In this way, the moral dimension of our intersubjective epistemic practices, especially of our disagreements can be accounted for. I offered these two possible approaches as ways for analyzing the epistemically appropriate response to a disagreement and the norms governing it. There might be other ways in which the norms governing the epistemically appropriate response can be characterized. I will be happy to consider these alternative approaches as viable analyses of the epistemic appropriateness of a response to a disagreement as long as they can give a comprehensive theoretical ground for the epistemically appropriate response and the norms governing it by taking the non-ideal scenarios, the process of epistemic status assessments, and the status injustice into account.

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