An Inquiry into the Nature of Truth

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ABSTRACT

What is truth, and what do we mean when we say a proposition is true? Is truth in any sense dependent, or independent of our mind, what is the criteria of truth? These are questions central to the study of truth. Philosophers remain split over the nature of truth, which is one of the most fundamental questions in philosophy. According to the correspondence theory and in light of our gut feelings, we say a belief is true when it corresponds to the way things actually are, when a fact or an event corresponding to it can be established beyond the belief, or generally when the belief corresponds with reality. But there are situations where a belief is evidently true, yet no corresponding factor is present. It is partly these cases where no such reference to the world can be determined, that have led some philosophers to tie truth to mind, a position advocated by coherence proponents, who argue that the truth of a belief consists in its coherence with the entire body of our knowledge. Generally, when we consider whether a belief is true, we normally look to the external world to see whether any corresponding referent can be found, except when the belief concerns our mental life, such as feeling pain or pleasure. In this inquiry, I aim to survey key problems in these two rival accounts of truth, and argue in favor of the correspondence notion, which draws its appeal from our intuitions and common sense on matters of truth and falsehood.

KEY WORDS: Truth, Mind, Belief, Correspondence, Coherence.

INTRODUCTION [1]

The universe is believed to consist of space, matter, and energy. These elements of the universe are there independently of our mind. Their existence is an objective, universal, and mind-independent reality. However, knowledge of them depends on our mind, but only in the sense of knowledge entailing belief and thereby requiring a mind to recognize things, not in the sense of their being requiring a mind. In other words, our mind is a bridge between us and the world. The being of the world is independent of our mind, yet it is through the mind that we acquire truth about it.

The world is represented to us through our mind. We perceive the world through mental faculties. Some of these mental representations turn out to be accurate, some inaccurate. Thus, the investigation into the nature of truth boils down to two key elements: the external world and the mind, given that we are dealing with truth of the physical not mental world. The question of a proposition being true or false, is essentially metaphysical in nature. When we ask whether a belief is true, we want to find out whether the world is as the belief claims it to be. A belief is true if it matches how the world is, and false if it does not. The controversy over the nature of truth, emanates from the absence of unanimity on what it is like for a belief to represent the world.

Driven by a realist view of the world, correspondence proponents argue that a proposition is true if it is referentially accurate. That is, a belief is true only if it has a referent in the external world, or if it corresponds to how the world is. Thus, on the correspondence view, truth is a mind-independent property, meaning the conditions that make a belief true, are objective and external to the believing subject. Whether there is a cat on the couch, is irrelevant to whether or not I believe it. It is some external reality that constitutes truth about the physical world, not our perceptions or what goes on in our mind. However, mathematical truths, so-called truths about beauty, and true beliefs about our mental life, fail

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to be explained by external reality for in such cases there is no corresponding entity to be found in the world.

When we entertain the truth value of a proposition, we are immediately drawn to see whether there is any corresponding fact beyond the proposition, provided that the proposition in question concerns some state of affairs about the physical world. Our immediate gut reaction and expectation will be that there should be some reality matching the propositional content if it is true. Similarly, when we deny a statement being the case, we do so because we think it does not represent an actual state of affairs. The presence or absence of this correspondence relation between a belief and the world aligns with our intuitions and gut feelings about matters of truth and falsehood. That is, the link between a true belief and a corresponding entity outside of the belief, draws its appeal from our commonsensical understanding of language uses. That is why whenever we find this connection missing, we feel unease considering a belief true.

Exponents of the coherence theory, however, contend that the truth of a belief resides in its coherence with a person's belief system or body of knowledge, which is essentially an idealist way of looking at the world. That is, truth is a subjective and mind-dependent property, according to the coherence view, which takes truth-making conditions to be internal to us.

In this inquiry, I aim to examine the validity of these two key theories of truth, which are widely considered to be the most common umbrella accounts of truth. Despite the challenges and limitations it suffers from, I argue in favor of the correspondence theory. The problems the correspondence notion of truth faces, limit its explanation of truth as a whole, the truth of mental phenomena in particular. In contrast, the problems that plague the coherence theory, not only detract from its value, but dismantle it altogether.

1. TRUTH AND PRACTICE

Truth is the ultimate objective of our epistemic endeavors, with which we are naturally driven to align our beliefs. In addition to its intellectual values, truth is indispensable in many practical aspects. Truth, or at least justified belief, is ideally the goal of many of our practical endeavors, such as inquests, autopsies, scientific inquiries, police investigations, space explorations, laboratory examinations, and many other critical aspects of life. That is why it is important to understand what truth consists in. Whenever we consider a proposition, our intuitions compel us to know whether it is true because we are naturally hardwired to conduct our mental and practical operations based on our understanding of reality. In other words, we normally aim at truth when we entertain a statement or proposition. However, not all our cognitive operations aim at the truth, given that taking aim at something is a conscious and intentional activity. Strolling along a beautiful boulevard, I unconsciously form many visual beliefs without taking aim at the truth.

American philosopher William Alston (1996a, p. 235) notes that truth plays an "indispensable role in our intellectual and practical transactions with the world." Alston (1996b, p. 235) adds that it is "important for us to consider whether our beliefs are true. ... Because it is important for us to determine what states of affairs obtain where that has a bearing on our practical or theoretical concerns." Furthermore, Alston (1996c, p. 235) concurs with the commonplace idea that "it often makes a big difference to how we should conduct ourselves, theoretically or practically, whether a certain state of affairs obtains." For example, it "makes a crucial difference to what it is most advisable for me to do next whether a burglar is in the house," argues Alston (1996d, p. 235).

Recognizing the essential role truth plays in our practical and theoretical lives, Alston (1996e, p. 237) details his defense for the argument that knowing the truth enhances the quality of our life and also the way we relate to the world around us: "A concern with truth bulks large in practical reasoning and, more generally, in the mental direction of our efforts to deal with the environment. ... If our interactions with X are guided by true beliefs about X they are much more likely to be successful in attaining the goals of that interaction … than if they are guided by false beliefs." To this end, Alston (1996f, p. 237) gives an example where he says, "If I set out to repair an air conditioner I am well advised to have true rather than false beliefs about the structure and operation of that device."

The same is true of our mental lives. In order for us to intellectually or emotionally sway a person, it is important for us to have true beliefs about them, as argued by Alston (1996g, p. 237): "If I am trying to influence someone to adopt a certain course of action it is crucial for me to have true beliefs about the present beliefs, attitudes, and prejudices of that person." Moreover, there is complete unanimity among philosophers that truth is a necessary condition for knowledge. I can know that there is a barn across the street (p) if and only if p is true and I am justified in believing that p, and that p's being true is no mere fluke, as demonstrated by Edmund Gettier in his seminal essay on the nature of knowledge in 1963. Thus, truth is indispensable for our practical and intellectual lives, although sceptics argue that truth is unattainable, and that we cannot know whether or not we have attained it even if we do.

There are two questions central to any account of truth – establishing the nature of truth and determining

whether a proposition is true. The latter is clearly subservient to the former. And the correspondence theory of truth is largely an account of the nature of truth. British philosopher Anthony Woozley (1949, p. 129) argues that establishing the nature of truth can also help us determine whether a belief is true: "that which makes a true belief true is also that by means of which we discover it to be true", adding that, "if we can decide what the nature of truth is, then in any case in which we could discover that nature to be present we should have tested the claim of the belief concerned to be true."

1.1. Truth and Mind

Truth and mind are inextricably linked, but only extrinsically. Truth is connected to mind in the sense that truth-bearers (beliefs) emanate from the mind. In other words, belief is a mental state, and truth is a property of belief. The fact that beliefs are appropriate objects of truth-value attribution explains the connection between truth and mind, as argued by Bertrand Russell (1998a, pp. 74-75): "truth and falsehood are properties of beliefs, yet they are in a sense extrinsic properties, for the condition of the truth of a belief is something not involving beliefs, or (in general) any mind at all, but only the *objects* of the belief."

Russell (1998b, p. 70) further argues, "It seems fairly evident that if there were no beliefs there could be no falsehood, and no truth either ... In fact, truth and falsehood are properties of beliefs and statements: hence a world of mere matter, since it would contain no beliefs or statements, would also contain no truth or falsehood." However, Russell (1998c, p. 70) argues that in a "world of mere matter," there would still be "facts" in the sense that there would still be rivers flowing downstream, the cattle grazing in the field, water freezing at 32 degrees Fahrenheit, the moon lightening the night, apples falling downward, rain pouring down, snow falling from the sky, and other facts. But a world of mere matter would lack truth or falsehood, for in such a world there would be no mind judging or believing these facts. That is, truth values obtain only when there is a mind judging things.

The question whether truth depends on the mind, is key to any inquiry into the nature of truth. We will later learn that we normally attach truth and falsehood to beliefs, propositions, statements, or judgments, which are all cognitive functions of the mind. The truth of moral statements, human emotions, beauty, logical and necessary truths also give rise to the idea that truth might ultimately be dependent on our mind, a position pursued by idealists and proponents of the coherence theory. Cases where a proposition is evidently true in the absence of any corresponding facts, like Santa Claus does not exist, also encourage attempts to tether truth to the mind. Further highlighting the connection between truth and mind, Russell (1998d, p. 75) rightly maintains, "beliefs depend on minds for their *existence*, [but] do not depend on minds for their *truth*."

If truth and falsehood are exclusive properties of beliefs, and beliefs are exclusive functions of the mind, then "it is plain that there can be no truth or falsehood unless there are minds to judge. Nevertheless it is plain, also, that the truth or falsehood of a given judgment depends in no way upon the person judging, but solely upon the facts about which he judges," argues Russell (2009, p. 143). British philosopher Harold Joachim (1906, p. 14) too argues that there would be no truths in the absence of a mind recognizing ideas or entertaining propositions: "Truth, I shall assume, is not truth at all except in so far as it is recognized, i.e. except in so far as it is the living experience of a mind."

1.2. Truth and Reality

In order for a proposition to be true, it should be real. In other words, a proposition is true when its corresponding entity has an element of actuality. Truth depends on reality in the sense that something or someone should be real in order for beliefs about them to be true, but reality does not depend on truth for its being. Reality can exist regardless of whether or not we recognize it, but truth does not exist in the absence of a mind recognizing it. For example, the proposition, the earth orbits the sun, is a fact or a reality, and will remain so even if no mind existed to recognize it. But the truth of the given proposition depends on a mind recognizing it, not in the sense that truth depends on mind for its being, rather, in the sense that truth is an extrinsic property of belief and belief depends on mind for its formation, but not for its truth, as we noticed earlier.

Consider these two propositions, a horse is grazing in the field, and a pegasus is grazing in the field. In the first case, the proposition is true if there is in fact a horse grazing in the field. In the second case, the proposition is false because no such thing as pegasus actually exists. Pegasus is a figment of human imagination. American philosopher Willard Van Orman Quine (1948a, p. 22) argues that in order for something to be real or to exist, it should have "the special attribute of actuality." Quine (1948b, pp. 21-22) argues against the thesis that even non-being should be something in order for us to deny its existence, rejecting the idea that, "Non-being must in some sense be, otherwise what is it that there is not?", adding that "It is some such line of thought that leads philosophers like McX to impute being where they might otherwise be quite content to recognize that there is nothing."

Quine (1948c, p. 26) maintains that the idea of pegasus needs no "objective reference in order to be meaningful," arguing that the meaningfulness of statements of non-being like those involving pegasus "in no way presupposes there being" such entities in the real world.

Quine (1948d, p. 31) adds, "we can use singular terms significantly [meaningfully] in sentences without presupposing that there be the entities which those terms purport to name." As the example of pegasus illustrates, names are "altogether immaterial to the ontological issue" unless "a corresponding entity can be spotted in the things we affirm," observes Quine (1948e, p. 32). Therefore, Quine (1948f, p. 26) concludes, "So the old notion that statements of non-being defeat themselves goes by the board." Thus, statements involving pegasus can be meaningful without presupposing there to be any such entities in the real world.

Furthermore, Quine (1948g, p. 25) holds that we do not commit to the existence of pegasus when we say there is no such being, for the meaningfulness of a statement of non-being x does not presuppose an actual entity named by x: "we might meaningfully use seeming names without supposing that the entities allegedly named be." Quine (1948h, p. 28) details: "We commit ourselves outright to an ontology containing numbers when we say there are prime numbers between 1000 and 1010; we commit ourselves to an ontology containing centaurs when we say there are centaurs; and we commit ourselves to an ontology containing Pegasus when we say Pegasus is. But we do not commit ourselves to an ontology containing Pegasus … when we say that Pegasus … is *not*. We need no longer labor under the delusion that the meaningfulness of a statement containing a singular term presupposes an entity named by the term. A singular term need not name to be significant [meaningful]."

Echoing Quine's reasoning on a term not necessarily deriving its meaningfulness from a possible referent in the actual world, German philosopher Gottlob Frege too argues that sense should not be confused with reference. The former can stand independently of the latter. For example, a term can be meaningful, like pegasus, but might not refer to any object in the real world. That is, despite the term having sense, no object in the world is picked out by the term. Frege (1948a, p. 211) observes that an empty name or an expression might make perfect sense to informed speakers of a certain language, while lacking a referent in the world: "It may perhaps be granted that every grammatically well-formed expression representing a proper name always has a sense. But this is not to say that to the sense there also corresponds a referent. The words "the celestial body most distant from the earth" have a sense, but it is very doubtful if they also have a referent. The expression "the least rapidly convergent series" has a sense; but it is known to have no referent, since for every given convergent series, another convergent, but less rapidly convergent, series can be found. In grasping a sense, one is not certainly assured of a referent."

2. THE CORRESPONDENCE THEORY OF TRUTH

The correspondence account of truth is broadly corroborated by ordinary language uses and our commonsensical understanding of truth and falsehood. When determining whether a proposition is true, we are naturally led to look beyond ourselves for a reference, except when the proposition concerns our inner life, such as feeling pain or joy, in which case we look inward to appeal to its corresponding reality. Tethering the truth of a proposition to a reference in the world, Frege (1948b, p. 216) argues that we are naturally and intuitively "driven into accepting the *truth value* of a sentence as its referent" outside of the sentence.

Being a key proponent of the correspondence account of truth, Russell (1998, p. 70) too argues that truth "consists in some form of correspondence between belief and fact." Russell (2009a, p. 145) elaborates on his support for the correspondence notion of truth and observes, "We feel that when we judge truly some entity 'corresponding' in some way to our judgment is to be found outside our judgment, while when we judge falsely there is no such 'corresponding' entity." However, Russell (2009b, p. 145) recognizes that there are many true propositions without any corresponding entity, arguing that in cases where there is truth, the corresponding reality might not necessarily be the "grammatical subject of our judgment", adding, "if we judge, e.g., 'Homer did not exist', it is obvious that Homer is not the entity which is to be found if our judgment is true, but not if it is false. Nevertheless it is difficult to abandon the view that, in some way, the truth or falsehood of a judgment depends upon the presence or absence of a 'corresponding' entity of some sort." This and other examples, like Santa Claus does not exist, are true, but not in virtue of any corresponding entities. Rather, they are true in virtue of a fact, which is the non-existence of something or someone claimed by the proposition, as shown in greater detail later.

Normally, we attribute truth values to truth-bearers like beliefs, propositions, judgments, or statements. Quine (1990a, p. 77) argues that it is "propositions" which we consider "true or false", taking propositions to be sentences. "Declarative sentences thus refined – eternal sentences – are what I shall regard as truth vehicles, " observes Quine (1990b, p. 79), adding that eternal sentences are propositions "whose truth or falsity, known or unknown, is unchanging." Furthermore, Quine (1990c, p. 78) argues that "truth values need not be known, but they must be stable. " This, however, does not mean that the truth values of a proposition do not change when the reality that corresponds to the proposition in question changes. There are propositions that are true now, but later turned false by subsequent changes in their corresponding reality. For example, the proposition, there

is water in River Thames, is true as long as there is water in the river. It will be false whenever the river dries up. That is, the proposition will be false when uttered after water has dried up in the river. But the truth of some propositions like, water consists of H2O, is unchanging because the reality that makes this proposition true, is unchanging.

Australian philosopher John Mackie (1970, p. 323) observes that the "bearers of truth" are "propositions or statements in the sense of what is said, as contrasted with the saying of it", adding that if "a statement in the sense of the saying of something, an utterance or a remark, is described as true, this is a secondary matter, an extension of the application of the term 'true' … it is the saying of something which is true in the primary sense. " To put it another way, it is the content of a statement or what is stated, to which we attribute truth values, rather than the act of stating something.

The central question of any theory of truth revolves around the nature of truth, and whether truth is in any way dependent on our mind. Throughout the history of philosophy, the correspondence conception of truth has, despite its drawbacks, been the most commonsensical and intuitive, which Aristotle espouses. The statement of the theory in contemporary philosophy is mainly credited to Joachim and Russell. Joachim (1906a, p. 7) argues that "to 'speak the truth' is to speak 'in accordance with' or 'in conformity to' the facts[2]. A 'true' man, or a 'true' friend, is a person whose outward acts 'correspond to' — faithfully reflect — his inner feelings. A narrative is 'true' if it 'represents', in essentials and within its own sphere, the real order of events."

Joachim (1906b, p. 20) adds that truth is "a 'correspondence' between a 'mental' factor (certain thoughts, judgements, and inferences) and a 'real' something." Furthermore, Mackie (1970, p. 323) too argues, "Any correspondence theory, it is thought, identifies truth with some kind of correspondence between words and the world, with some relation that holds between a linguistic term and a non-linguistic term; but it is not linguistic items of any sort that we ordinarily describe as true." In other words, it is not the linguistics of a statement which we characterize as true or false. Rather, it is the entity corresponding to the statement, to which truth values are attributed.

Moreover, Woozley (1949a, p. 126) too argues that a proposition is true or "correct if it agrees, or conforms, or accords, or corresponds with the facts", adding that truth is "a relation of some kind between what a man judges, on the one hand, and the facts of the case, on the other." Although Woozley (1949b. p. 127) maintains that the words used to indicate this relation of truth, such as correspond or agree, are "vague or ambiguous", they essentially mean a true proposition is "*identical*" with reality. Thus, exponents of the correspondence theory contend that truth is a relationship holding between a belief and reality.

And this relationship is based on the premise that there is a mind-independent objective world that we can know. According to this account of truth, a belief is true if and only if it corresponds or conforms to an objective reality – if the belief correlates or matches with what is actually the case, with a fact, an event, or an actual state of affairs in the world. That is, epistemic realism lies at the heart of the correspondence theory of truth, meaning a proposition is true only if there is a correspondence relation between the proposition and an existing state of affairs in the world. To sum up, a belief is true if it reflects, captures, pictures, represents, or corresponds to how things actually are, according to the correspondence notion of truth. For example, my belief that there is a fire on the mountain, is true if my perception accurately corresponds to how things actually are in the world. In other words, my belief is true if the smoke I see rising from the mountain, in fact comes from a fire on that very mountain, and not from a volcano or some other geological event happening up there. If there is conformity between the belief and how things actually stand in the world, then the belief can be appropriately characterized as true.

Emphasizing the widely accepted fact that truth is independent of the mind, Joachim (1906a, p. 13) observes, "Truth is what it is independently, whether any mind recognizes it or not. We do not make the correspondence, which is truth; we find it, and our finding is irrelevant to its being, and must be separated therefrom by any sound theory." Thus, the truth of a belief does not depend on the belief itself. A true idea would still be true even if we did not recognize it. Believing something is extraneous to what constitutes the truth of the belief. Joachim (1906b, pp. 13-14) further elaborates on truth being independent of the mind: "We do not create truth, but only find it; and we could not find it if it were not there and (in a sense) independent of our finding."

In the final clause of the quote, Joachim qualifies his argument for truth being completely independent of the mind. He says Aristotle's correspondence theory of truth is confined to judgments where a reference to the world can be established, adding that the truth of judgments where no such reference is available, is dependent on our mind. Joachim (1906c, p. 14) states, "The finding of a truth, as an historical process of (or in) my mind, is irrelevant to the nature and the being of the truth. A truth is, independently of my thinking it, and, again, in independence of the process through which I come to think it. But it does not follow, as the criticism assumes,

[2] Woozley (1949, p. 166) argues that a fact and a true proposition are "logically equivalent."

that a truth is, independently of any and all thinking it, nor even in independence of any and all process of reaching it." He rightly argues that the truth of true propositions where no reference between the mental element and the world can be established, such as statements about artistic beauty or human emotions, depends on the mind. Joachim (1906d, p. 16) draws on the example of a portrait depicting an individual, observing that the truth of beliefs about the beauty of the portrait depends on the mind perceiving it: "What the painter sees in the face, that he expresses in his portrait; and the portrait will be more or less 'true' or 'faithful' according to the painter's insight, and, again, according to the mind of the spectator who sees and compares both the original and the picture."

Joachim (1906e, p. 21) details his defense of truth as a mental creation: "Thus the beauty of a work of art – e.g. Hamlet, Beethoven's violin concerto, a great picture, or a statue – has its being partly in the experience of its creator, partly in the experience of those who appreciate it ... The beauty of a poem, a play, or a piece of music clearly is dependent in a very vital sense upon the reciter, the actors, or the executant musician; but it is dependent also upon the emotional and intellectual individualities of the audience. The beauty of a picture or a statue seems independent of the individual interpretations of the lovers of beauty, but it is not so in reality, any more than it is independent of the artistic personality of its creator."

Joachim (1906f, pp. 15-16) argues that it is our mind that brings about the truth of true judgments on artistic beauty, not any corresponding entity outside the judgment: "it seems clear that the 'truth' of a narrative or a portrait — or even of a reflection — becomes increasingly dependent on the nature of the 'recognition' by the apprehending mind. We can no longer suppose that the mind plays the part of the absolutely disinterested spectator and in no sense 'makes' the facts. On the contrary, the mind sees what it makes by its interpretation: and the 'truth' of the corresponding factor varies in degree with the nature of the recognition which the mind brings to bear." Further emphasizing the role our mind plays in constituting the truth of such judgments, Joachim (1906g, p. 18) maintains: "I am not suggesting that the truth is nothing but the mind's apprehension, though in a sense this may turn out to be true." As he builds his case against the correspondence notion of truth, Joachim (1906h, p. 30) concludes, "we must endeavour to dispose of a view which has long been haunting us: the view that truth and falsity are qualities of certain entities entirely independent of mind."

One criticism against the counter-example on the beauty or exactness of the portrait could be that judgments of beauty are subjective anyway, whereas truth is an objective concept. But other examples about human emotions also corroborate the argument that the truth of certain judgments depends on our mind. Consider these cases where no corresponding entity between the statements and the world is present: I am grieving, I have a headache, I am disappointed, I am thinking, or I am happy. What makes these propositions true, if true, is a fact about my mental state, which is internal to me and where no corresponding entity can be found outside of the propositions. The same is true of other human conditions, for example, I am deaf, I am blind, or other examples such as, snow is white, water is fluid, ice is hard, the mountain is high, the village is remote, the school is nearby, scientific or logical facts such as 2+2=4. It is these cases where no corresponding entity outside of the propositions can be found, that pose a challenge to the correspondence theory of truth.

2.1. Corresponding Factors

The above examples show that a belief can be true in virtue of the obtaining of a mental state, or a fact about something or someone, while a corresponding reference to the world can be absent. Whereas according to the correspondence notion of truth, a belief is true only when the corresponding reality is found outside of the belief, or, to put it another way, when there is a relationship holding between the belief and the world. The corresponding reality outside of the belief might consist of a physical object or an event. For example, in the singular affirmative proposition, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, there is a historical event that happened on that day, which corresponds to the given proposition. But Woozley (1949a, p. 134) argues that referring to a corresponding event is not that straightforward in the case of singular negative propositions, such as "Mr Churchill did not die on 11 August 1947," which is a true proposition to which there is no known corresponding event. If pressed to present a corresponding event for the truth of the proposition, we "would hardly say, unless we were struggling in the last ditch to save a theory, that there was an event consisting in Mr Churchill's not dying on that day," argues Woozley (1949b, p. 134).

It is logically possible to suppose that a failed assassination attempt was made on the life of the former British prime minister on that day, or that he suffered a non-fatal stroke on that day. Then, we can arguably adduce one of these supposed events as corresponding to his not dying on that day. And Woozley (1949c, p. 134) observes that any such event should have "lasted all day," adding that we "cannot say it occurred in the morning, for that would be consistent with his having died in the afternoon or evening, in which case the proposition would be false. " However, Woozley (1949d, p. 135) argues that it is not the happening of an event on that day that makes the given proposition true, but the fact that he didn't die on that day: "What makes the proposition true

is not the occurrence of an event to make it true, but the non-occurrence of an event (the death of Mr Churchill) to make it false; and the non-occurrence of an event is not an event but a fact."

In this case, there is nothing concrete in the world that we can point to as corresponding to the proposition, other than a fact about him not dying on that day, yet the proposition is true. In other words, it is a fact, not an event, that makes the proposition true. This is another case where the correspondence theory of truth fails to account for the truth of a proposition on the basis of correspondence to something outside of the mind of the believing subject (epistemic realism). Woozley (1949e, p. 135) therefore outlines different variations to characterize propositions of this nature, notably, "it is a fact that Mr Churchill did not die on that day, or that as a matter of fact he did not die on that day, or that we know for a fact that he did not die on that day."

Recognizing the difference between multiple affirmative events and a fact about such events without getting specific about any single relevant affirmative event, Woozley (1949f, p. 135) presents another scenario to show that a proposition can be true without corresponding to anything concrete in the physical world. He exemplifies the case with propositions involving the notion of "some", as in "Some Englishmen went to Switzerland in 1947," which he says is "true provided that at least two Englishmen went there." Woozley takes some to mean "more than one," and he says that many more Englishmen did in fact go there in 1947, adding, "although the necessary number of events occurred to make the proposition true, none of the events corresponds to it in the way in which events could be said to correspond to singular propositions." He rightly maintains that it is not an event that makes the given proposition true, but a "fact about events."

Highlighting the uniqueness of propositions on facts about the nature of things being a certain way should certain conditions obtain where no single relevant event is picked out, Woozley (1949g, p. 136) presents another case regarding general propositions which he says do not "assert the occurrence or existence of anything. " He argues that a general proposition "assert[s] a connection of characteristics, without also asserting that anything exists possessing those characteristics." Woozley gives an example about the natural constitution of water freezing at zero degrees Celsius: "Water freezes at 32 degrees Fahrenheit," which he says is true in light of a "material fact about the constitution of water, such that *if* there is any water and *if* the water is subjected to certain conditions it will behave in a certain way." Woozley adds that if anything is said to correspond to the given proposition, that thing is surely "not a certain occurrence of water freezing at that temperature, or even a collection of such occurrences, however large it might be, but the non-occurrence of water remaining liquid when brought down to that temperature; and … non-occurrence is not itself an event, but a fact about events." He also gives the example, "An Englishman is a hypocrite." This proposition is, given that there is at least one man in the world who is English and a hypocrite, also true without referring to any specific Englishmen. That is why Woozley (1949h, p. 149) contends that "correspondence cannot be the only criterion [of truth], for often enough it is not available," as demonstrated by the examples above.

2.2. Nature of Correspondence Relation

Though there is no consensus among philosophers as to what exactly the nature of the correspondence relation is between a proposition and its corresponding reality, there is an overwhelming convergence of ideas that describe this relation as one of identity or resemblance. Woozley (1949i, p. 137) outlines the most common characterizations of the correspondence relation as "that of copy to original; a one-to-one relation between the elements in each term; between two terms sharing a common structure; unique and unanalysable." Furthermore, Woozley (1949j, p. 137) argues that the copy view of the correspondence relation "makes the proposition somehow or other mirror that which makes it true, and is clearly the simplest and neatest account," according to which a proposition is "the mental reflection of reality, which is true when it is exactly like what it reflects."

Woozley (1949k, pp. 137-138) touches on two key objections levelled by critics against the copy view of the correspondence relation: "first that propositions are in general not in the least like the things they are about, and secondly that in particular there are degrees of exactness." Woozley (1949l, p. 138) instantiates the first objection by the example "My dog is brown and lazy," which he says is "true if my dog is brown and lazy, but the proposition is not in the least like my brown lazy dog." Emphasizing the distinctness of a linguistic construct like a proposition from its corresponding entity, which is a dog in this case, Woozley (1949m, p. 138) argues, "it makes sense to say of that dog that it is brown or lazy or that it needs brushing, but it does not make sense to say any of those things of the proposition." As regards the second objection about degrees of exactness, Woozley (1949n, p. 138) observes, "in the case of the mirror image there are only certain very limited respects in which the image can resemble the original."

Normally, when we compare two things and establish that one is a copy of the other, the two items should be visible to us in order to be able to reach such a conclusion. But this is not the case with propositions and their corresponding entities because propositions and some corresponding facts are invisible, which is why Woozley (1949o, p. 138) argues that we should be "using 'copy' in

a very queer sense, because one thing is not normally said to be a copy of another unless both are visible, and although my dog is visible, neither the fact that it is lazy and brown nor the proposition asserting that it is are visible." However, Woozley (1949p, p. 138) maintains that if the word "copy" is used as a synonym for "resemble", then that a "proposition and a fact are invisible would not prevent them from resembling each other; for not only can other sensibles like two smells, or two sounds, or two tastes, resemble each other, but so also can insensibles, e.g. two arguments, or two religious doctrines."

Woozley (1949q, pp. 138-139) rejects the copy view of the correspondence relation understood as resemblance, arguing that a proposition can only be true if it and its corresponding fact are the same, rather than resemble each other in which case there will be differences between the two, for two things resemble each other only when they share similarities and differ in certain respects and are therefore not identical, in which case they are two different things, and a proposition cannot be true if it is different from its corresponding fact: "I fail to see how a true proposition and a corresponding fact could resemble each other, because I quite fail to see what difference there would be between them. For two things to be qualitatively alike they must be numerically different, i.e. they must be *two* things."

Exponents of the correspondence theory of truth argue that this correspondence relation is unique and unanalyzable "because their previous attempts to analyse it have failed," argues Woozley (1949r, p. 141), adding that the theory's proponents characterize the correspondence relation as such in an attempt to "make their theory good in a formula of mystery, not that it clearly *is* unanalysable, but that it obviously *must* be … if the theory is to be saved." Woozley (1949s, p. 142) recognizes that he cannot rule out the possibility that this correspondence relation might be unique and unanalyzable, but stresses that he "find[s] the method of discovery that it is of that character intellectually disquieting," characterizing it as a "dishonest solution" to the challenges caused by the elusive nature of the correspondence relation between a proposition and a corresponding fact.

Proponents of the correspondence notion of truth argue that a judgement is true if it "exhibits an inner structure identical with the inner structure of the 'real' factor, or of some subordinate whole within that factor" (in Joachim, 1906, p. 24). Identifying the correspondence relation as one of mirroring, Mackie (1970, p. 324) too argues that the correspondence account of truth requires that "there must be a point-by-point correspondence, a mirroring relation, between the words of a sentence that expresses a true statement and distinguishable objective items." But Australian philosopher David Armstrong (1973, p. 113) argues that two things correspond only when they are somewhat different, in which case there is no identity, which is required for a relationship between a true belief and its corresponding entity: "a relation of correspondence demands that the correspondents be distinct from each other, and for true propositions this demand is not met," adding that in the case of true beliefs, the belief only "coalesces" with reality, rather than corresponding with it.

Joachim (1906a, pp. 25-26) echoes the argument that a correspondence relation between two entities obtains when they are different, while truth requires this relationship to be one of identity, which cannot exist between a linguistic unit and a non-linguistic unit: "we have made an assumption which we cannot justify; and yet, without it, we cannot maintain the correspondence-notion. For we have been forced to regard correspondence as identity of structure, and to attribute truth to my judgement because it repeats in its internal organization the inner structure of the 'real' factor, or of some subordinate whole within that. Now if there is no difference in the two factors, there clearly is no 'correspondence' – there is identity. But if there is a difference, e.g. what we loosely called a 'material' difference, how can there also be identity of structure?" The exact nature of the correspondence relation between a proposition and its corresponding fact, is another challenge facing the correspondence account of truth. Consider the proposition, River Thames flows through London. If we regard the properties of the proposition and those of the corresponding fact as identical, then these two things are the same, which Joachim says cannot be because a proposition is a linguistic construct and the corresponding fact here is a material object situated somewhere in the world.

On the other hand, if we suppose that the properties of a proposition and those of its corresponding fact are different, then there is no correspondence relation between them. If they are similar, then we can appropriately describe relations between them as more or less corresponding to each other for if two things are similar, they can resemble each other to a greater or lesser degree, depending on their degrees of similarity. But if we admit degrees of correspondence between a proposition and a corresponding fact, then the proposition can be characterized as more or less true for there will then be degrees of truth, which cannot be because truth is an absolute notion. A statement can either be true or false. It cannot be very true, somehow true, partially true, or less true. Due to these defects in the theory, Joachim (1906b, p. 28) argues that correspondence as identity of structures between a primarily-individual factor and a primarily-universal one is not a sufficient condition of truth: "the fact of correspondence showed itself as at most a symptom of truth." Therefore, Joachim (1906c, p. 29) concludes, "the whole notion of correspondence, however

useful as a working hypothesis, breaks down if regarded as an adequate conception of truth."

Pointing out other less serious inadequacies in the correspondence notion of truth, Joachim (1906d, p. 29) argues that although the real factor of a true judgment is universal and independent of our mind, it has its own "individuality" and "dependence on personal and private conditions," owing to the fact that we all, by virtue of being different in unique ways, perceive reality our own way despite its universal nature and its independence of our mind. To put it another way, despite its universal nature, we never experience reality as it is. We experience reality as our mind shapes it, as stated by Joachim (1906e, p. 24), who argues that neither the mental factor of a proposition is purely mental, nor is the universal factor of the proposition purely universal: "We have, in the first place, wrongly assumed that the 'mental' factor is purely personal; and we have wrongly contrasted it with the 'real' factor as purely universal. The contrast cannot be maintained so sharply. For the 'real world', which forms the felt background of myself and my fellows, enters into, or is, the experience of each of us in a fashion uniquely tinged with our respective individualities. And on the other hand, the 'mental' … is never 'purely personal'. The 'purely personal' would be strictly incommunicable; but judgements, even 'my private opinions', are essentially communicable."

Thus, despite its universal nature and independence of our mind, we see reality from our own perspective marked by our unique individualities. Looking at the moon, I see this perceptual reality through my own prism individuated by my unique faculties. What comes within my purview or field view, might be different from what another person sees even if we look at the moon from the same position or even if we have the same curiosity for detail. Although we both see what we characterize as the moon, none of us actually sees the perceptual reality completely as it is outside our mind. Owing to our unique individualities and personal conditions, we see reality only as our mind perceives it, as rightly argued by Joachim above. And this is not to say that reality depends on our mind for its being. It is only to emphasize that we all see reality differently, and that our perception of reality differs from person to person due to our unique individualities.

2.3. Limitations of the Correspondence Theory

The limitations of the correspondence theory of truth spring from the epistemic realism that drives the theory, namely the requirement that a true belief should have its corresponding reality found outside of the belief. There are many propositions which are true, yet their corresponding entities are absent. Consider hypothetical propositions like, I could have been in London today, which is a true logical possibility that lacks any corresponding entity. The same can be said of deductive propositions involving entailment relations such as, all humans are mortal, I am human, I am therefore mortal. These propositions are true in virtue of a range of facts about human condition, entailment relations, empirical data, and consistent human observations, while their corresponding entities are absent. Moral statements are also true without having their corresponding entities present, for example, embezzlement is wrong. Multiple other propositions show limitations of this nature: discrimination is wrong, cheating is wrong, being faithful is right, slavery is immoral, grass is green, snow is white, the statue is beautiful, or 1+1=2.

American philosopher Paul Moser (1989a, p. 25) presents three cases where the given propositions are supposedly true, yet their corresponding entities are absent. First, he gives the case of "true propositions about unrealized situations," such as, "I shall pay my taxes next year" and "If I were a physical education instructor, I would be in better physical shape than I am as a philosophy professor." Second, he gives the case of arguably true propositions about "normative considerations," such as, "I *ought* to devote more time to assisting people in poverty." Third, he gives the case of mathematical and logical propositions, which are evidently true without having to correspond to facts in the world. Moser (1989b, p. 25) argues that it is not "clear that such propositions are *solely* about isomorphically representable features of the actual world," adding that it is therefore unclear whether their truth is a "function only of their relation of correspondence, construed as isomorphic representation, to the actual world."

But Mackie (1970, p. 333) rightly rejects the idea of conditionals or moral judgments being appropriate bearers of truth, or being appropriate entities for truth attribution: "I myself believe that conditionals, other than material conditionals, are more like arguments than straightforward statements, and are not capable of being simply true or false. The same may hold for judgements of probability in some important senses, and for moral judgements or for judgements of value generally. It has been suggested that this holds for all open universal judgements too." This, however, excludes the case of material conditionals or logical conditionals, namely, if Talia has a cat, then she has a pet. Or, if Eva is the sister of Aros, then Eva has a brother; if Eva and Aros are siblings, then Aros has a sister; if Talia is the wife of Tom, then Talia is married. These logical conditionals are appropriate bearers of truth values.

Thus, in the case of mathematical equations, moral statements, and statements about beauty, there is nothing concrete in the world which we can point to as being a certain number, or as being right, wrong, or beautiful. These properties exist only in our mind. We make sense of them only through a mental connection. There is no

reference between the statements expressing them and the concrete world, and it is the absence of a relationship of this nature that poses a challenge to the correspondence notion of truth. The corresponding relation is missing in these cases, yet the statements are arguably true, given that we recognize moral statements and hypotheticals as appropriate bearers of truth.

The correspondence theory also fails to account for necessary truths through a correspondence relation with the outside world. Necessary truths differ from contingent truths in the sense that the former could not have been false, and are therefore necessarily true and their denial would lead to a logical contradiction. That is, necessary truths are true under all circumstances and in all possible worlds, whereas contingent truths are true by virtue of the world being the way it is. In other words, contingent truths could have been false because the world we live in could have been different. Suppose that Nick shows up at his wedding party, wearing a blue tie. The statement is true only contingently for he could have worn a different color. Therefore, the statement could have been false, with the denial of the statement causing no logical contradiction.

A paradigmatic case of a necessary truth would be a tautology like: all bachelors are unmarried. There is no conceivable possible world where this proposition can be false. It is, therefore, necessarily true, although its corresponding entity is absent. The same is true of mathematical equations (7+4=11). This mathematical statement is true too regardless of the world we live in, and irrespective of the state of affairs that obtain, and to deny this, is a logical contradiction. Armstrong (1973, p. 133) rightly argues that the correspondence theory's solution to logical truths is to appeal to corresponding reality in "mental furniture such as concepts," or to argue that "*no correspondent is required*" in the case of necessary truths.

Another limitation to the correspondence theory is caused by the difficulty to establish that a proposition fully corresponds to the world, a drawback that makes the theory appear as "a sceptical theory of a milder kind," argues Mackie (1970a, p. 332). Moreover, Mackie (1970b, p. 332) observes that a proposition "cannot be numerically identical with part of the world." Hence, Mackie (1970c, p. 332) rightly concludes that the correspondence account of truth cannot give us a completely accurate picture of how things actually are in the word: "If the best we could achieve was that our statements should somehow correspond to what is there, we should still be falling a bit short of having things just as we state them to be. A correspondence theory of truth is analogous to representative realism as a theory of perception, whereas what we want, at least with regard to truth, is direct realism."

Thus, according to the correspondence notion, a true proposition is just a mere representation of reality, rather than complete reality. Mackie (1970d, p. 332) rightly argues that the correspondence relation between a true proposition and its corresponding entity "may be both loose and complicated; it is not likely to be a matter of one-one correlation or congruity; it will not in general be possible to find one exact part of the world to which a belief corresponds or fails to correspond; and this correspondence is not what we are asserting when we call the belief true." However, despite the challenging cases which the correspondence theory fails to adequately address, most philosophers concur that truth entails a correspondence relation with the world. Recognizing the intuitive appeal of the correspondence notion of truth, Armstrong (1973, p. 133) argues, "despite the difficulties raised by the truths of logic and mathematics, there is something intuitively appealing in the idea that truth involves correspondence." Woozley (1949, p. 126) too states that common sense "seems to support Correspondence, and would cite the usages of language as evidence that the view is widely, if not universally, held."

2.4. Minimal Correspondence

The minimal correspondence account of truth has been proposed to replace, and also address the challenges facing the traditional correspondence theory. The minimal correspondence notion of truth dates back to Aristotle, who observes, "to say of what is that it is not or of what is not that it is is false, and that to say of what is that it is or of what is not that it is not is true" (in Ross, 1924, p. 284). Plato (2003a, p. 310) echoes this line of thought as well, arguing that a "true statement speaks of things that are, or states facts, *as they are*." Socrates too observes that a true statement "speaks of the things that are, as they are" or "states that the things that are, are" (in Plato, 2003b, p. 310).

Drawing on Aristotle's definition of truth, Mackie (1970a, p. 328) argues, "*To say that a statement is true is to say that things are as the statement states*." Reformulating his argument in different terms, Mackie (1970b, p. 329) maintains, "*To say that a statement is true is to say that whatever in the making of the statement is stated to obtain does obtain*." Mackie (1970c, p. 328) further argues that the "importance of this lies not in what it says but in all the things it studiously avoids saying," referring to his apparent attempt to avoid subjecting truth to correspondence as a mirroring relation between a proposition and its corresponding entity.

To put it another way, according to the minimal correspondence notion, a proposition is true if it "states how things actually are," says Moser (1989a, p. 35). Thus, exponents of the minimal correspondence notion maintain that the truth of a proposition is a function of it

saying or stating how things actually are. This way, the minimal correspondence account accommodates mental reality for it "does not at all require the existence of a mind-independent world" and it is "logically compatible with a form of idealism stating that there are only minds," argues Moser (1989b, pp. 32-33).

A frivolous objection against the correspondence theory, including its minimal version, is its lack of detailed necessary conditions for the test of truth or to determine whether a proposition is true. Moser (1989c, pp. 33-34) responds to such criticism, arguing, "we cannot fault a *definition* of truth for failing to specify means for finding out whether a proposition is true. A definition of truth need not specify such means." After all, the nature of truth remains the overriding concern for any sound theory, rather than stipulating criteria for the test of truth. Also, critics rightly object that the minimal correspondence account is just another version of the correspondence theory merely stipulated in different words, with both being the same by virtue of both being a relational account of truth – the relationship between a proposition and its corresponding facts.

However, Mackie (1970a, pp. 331-332) disagrees, arguing that a "relation between words … and parts of the world might conceivably have been one of correspondence, but the relation between what is stated and its being so is too close and intimate to be called correspondence, whether we think of this as correlation or as congruity." Qualifying his position on the apparent distinctness of the minimal correspondence account, Mackie (1970b, p. 332) rightly acknowledges that "there will also be relations between the believings and what is there, and here it may be quite appropriate to speak of correspondence. When a piece of believing is true … there will be some sort of correspondence between what is going on in the believer and some part of the world." From my perspective, the minimal correspondence notion is just a version of the correspondence theory reformulated using different terminology in an effort to bypass the correspondence requirement of truth. They both boil down to one description for the nature of truth – a relationship between a proposition and its corresponding facts.

3. MENTAL REALITY: FACT VS EXPERIENCE

In ordinary language, when a belief is characterized as true, we normally expect a reference to be found between the belief and a corresponding entity outside of the belief. This is our commonsensical understanding of truth, and this is what we generally mean when we say a belief is true. Consider these true propositions: the book is on the table; the book is green. The correspondence theory can straightforwardly account for the truth of the first proposition, because the object of the belief is an independent spatiotemporal entity with which a relationship is found to exist. But the theory fails to explain the truth of the second proposition for the thing described as true, green, is not an independent entity, which is why no relationship can be established between the belief and how the world looks outside of the belief. In other words, no reference can be found between the belief and a concrete entity outside of the belief, which we can point to as green. The property of greenness does not exist as an independent entity. Rather, green exists only in relation to other physical objects. In this case, greenness exists as a property of a book, which is an independent entity.

Inspired by his correspondences with George Moore and Russell on the nature of truth, Joachim (1906a, p. 33) unsuccessfully tries to explain the nature of truth on the basis of a logical postulate which he himself rightly takes to be erroneous: "experiencing makes no difference to the facts." And by experiencing, Joachim (1906b, p. 40) means "my vision, my hearing, my judging ... of a particular subject." He acknowledges that Moore and Russell suggested this view to him, but says they probably did not subscribe to it either. Joachim (1906c, p. 33) tests this logical postulate on sensation, where the immediacy of our experiences is erroneously taken to guarantee truth: "In sensation - so we are to assume - we are in direct contact with the Real. The Real is indeed 'given' to us ... But what is given to us in sensation is independent of the acceptance and of the recipients ... the nature of the Real is in no way affected by its presence to the sentient consciousness."

This is the second premise of the argument, which reinforces the first premise, namely that our perception of things does not alter their character. On what sensation is, Joachim (1906d, p. 34) observes, "Sensation - the sentient apprehension of a sensible quality - must be analysed into two simple factors and a relation. The factors are (1) the Quality - a simple, timeless, unchangeable, independent Real; and (2) the Apprehension - something 'mental' or 'psychical'." Furthermore, Joachim (1906e, p. 34) defines the relation between sensation and the object of sensation as "unique", adding that the nature of the relation is "such that it holds the related factors together, and yet also leaves them completely untouched and unaffected by the union."

Further to the nature of the correspondence relation between the mental element and the world, Joachim (1906f, p. 35) argues, "the 'mental factor' either is entirely, or essentially contains, a formative structure which just is not the structure of the Real. And 'correspondence', as we saw, requires identity of structure in the corresponding factors." And this shows that the two elements of sensation are essentially two different things, while truth requires identity between the two. Joachim (1906g, p. 35) tests this view of sensation to see whether he can "sever

the 'Real' in sensation from everything 'mental'" and also establish whether there are "no psychical replicas, no mental counterparts of the given Real." Joachim (1906h, p. 36) begins the application of this view of sensation along with its underlying logical postulate which he considers erroneous, and initially considers it preposterous to think that our perceptions make reality:

> It is ridiculous to suppose that my vision makes the greenness of the tree, or my hearing the harmony of the chord. No doubt, *to be experienced*, the greenness must be seen, and the harmony must be heard. But the fundamental postulate of all Logic is expressed in our 'assumption': viz. that the 'experiencing' makes no difference to the facts. The notes of the chord are in harmony, or the harmony is *there*, whether I hear them or not. No matter whether I see it or not, the tree is green. Its greenness is *there*, an independent unchangeable fact. Now the same holds in principle of Judgement and Inference. For it is ridiculous to suppose that the equality of the interior angles of a triangle to two right angles is made by me in the judging; or that this 'truth' became true when the first geometer discovered it, and would cease to be true if no one believed it. No doubt, *to be experienced*, the equality must be judged, or in some way apprehended. But we must sever the psychical apprehension from the 'truth' apprehended. The 'truth' is *there*, timelessly, unchangeably, independently itself.

However, Joachim (1906i, pp. 34-35) later recognizes that much of what is given to us through our perceptions, is affected by our mind, and this is his established position on the nature of truth: "No doubt this Real, as we experience it, is always given in relation to our apprehension, and always in conjunction and combination with much that is 'the work of the mind'." Joachim (1906j, p. 40) therefore questions the veracity of logic's most fundamental postulate that experience makes no difference to facts, arguing that abstract properties like greenness have their being dependent on our experiences:

> The tree is green, the notes form a harmonious chord, the angles are equal to two right angles, whether I, or you, or Euclid, or any individual subject, is or is not actually experiencing them. It is not so plain how we are to interpret 'the facts', to which no difference is made. 'Greenness', 'Harmony', 'Equality' are to remain eternally and unalterably themselves, whether they are also experienced or not. They are 'the facts', and they *are there* independently and in themselves. But what is their *being there*? Not, on the theory, 'their being experienced'; for that is to mean their 'being actually sensated or judged', a mere adventitious accident of their *being there*. 'Then does it mean 'their being as objects of possibly-actual sensating and judging'? Is greenness e.g. *there*, in the sense that it is such that, under determinate conditions, there is an actual sensated green, or an actual sensating of green? But this would imply ... an essential relatedness ... to sensating and thinking ... And an 'essential relatedness' would mean that 'the facts', in and by themselves, *are not there* at all; that what *is there* is something within which the so-called 'facts' are a partial factor, dependent for its being and nature on another factor, and incapable of being 'in itself' or independent. And this other factor is of the nature of 'experiencing'.

Drawing on Plato's realism, Quine (1948, p. 33) argues that "universals or abstract entities have being independently of the mind; the mind may discover them but cannot create them." Failure to account for the being of abstract entities independently of any and all our experiences, is a major drawback for the correspondence theory. For example, abstract entities like justice, love, beauty, happiness, sadness, colors, or shapes, have their being in our thoughts, and they are there too. There is nothing concrete in the world which we can point to as green, yet it is there as part of the nature of things which have a physical being. The fact that greenness is there whether or not we perceive it and despite our failure to point to anything concrete in the world named green, is enigmatic. While we cannot rule out the existence of abstract entities, attempts to explain their being independently of our mind, remain largely futile. Joachim puts a great deal of effort and detail to trace the being of abstract entities like colors, arguing that greenness is either there as an actual case of sensated green, in which case its being is not inherent in itself. Rather, it owes its being to our perceptions, and does not therefore exist independently and in itself.

Joachim considers a second similar possibility for its being, arguing that greenness can be there as the object of potential experiences of green and that under the right conditions there is an actual case of sensated green, in which case its being is dependent too, for it owes its being to our mind perceiving it. In both cases, there is this essential connection between greenness and our mind, rendering green dependent for its being on both the physical object it is a part of and our mind too. And because the being of abstract entities is not inherent in themselves, they do not qualify as independent entities. Their nature is therefore affected by our perceptions. Thus, experiencing makes a difference to facts.

Drawing on the doctrine of unique and inexplicable relations, Joachim (1906a, pp. 42-43) considers an argument corroborating the validity of the given logical postulate to show the inexplicability of abstract entities

existing both independently and in relation to experience: "greenness *both* 'is there' in itself and *also* is (at times or always) in relation to sentient or conceptual consciousness ... Greenness is an entity in itself. And though, as experienced, it is related to a sentient consciousness, yet even in that relation it remains in itself and unaffected by the sentience." It is, however, logically incoherent for an entity to both exist independently and in itself, but also in relation to something else. On the criticism as to how green can exist as an independent entity while it also gets its being from being experienced, Joachim (1906b, p. 43) responds on behalf of advocates of the logical postulate in question: "Vision and greenness come together, and we have a 'seeing of green', or a 'sensated green'; but the meeting of the two is cool and unconcerned, and indicates no affinity in their natures. Their meeting is one of those ultimate inexplicabilities of which - on some theories at any rate - the Universe is full."

In the end, he rightly rejects the premise that truth and falsity are properties of independent entities only, arguing that experiencing makes a difference to facts, contrary to what is assumed by logic's most fundamental postulate. Joachim (1906c, p. 51) rightly argues that the truth of abstract entities like green vindicates that any defense of truth being completely independent of any and all our experiences is futile: "Truth *in itself*, truth neither known nor recognized ... remains beyond all and any knowledge, and is a mere name for nothing. And I hesitate to believe that the theory which we are criticizing worships this 'unknown God', or maintains the 'independence of truth' in this futile sense."

Drawing on his conclusion that no independent entity named green exists in the world, yet greenness exists as part of the nature of things and accurate propositions about green are actually true, Joachim (1906d, p. 39) says that if truth is independent of mind, then it is unknowable, if it is knowable, then it is a private property dependent for its being on our experiences: "For either the 'independent truth' will be and remain entirely in itself, unknown and unknowable; or, if known or knowable, the truth will become a private and personal possession, dependent for its being upon an individual intuition which itself is a particular psychical existent."

4. THE COHERENCE THEORY OF TRUTH

This is an idealist account of truth, according to which truth resides in the consistency or coherence of a proposition with a person's entire body of knowledge. Proponents of the coherence theory argue that the truth of a proposition consists in its coherence with a "body of mutually coherent propositions" (in Woozley, 1949, p. 162). Being a key exponent of the coherence theory, Brand Blanshard (1921, p. 264) defines the truth of a proposition as its coherence with our overall experience and belief system: "at any given time the degree of truth in our experience as a whole is the degree of system it has achieved. The degree of truth of a particular proposition is to be judged in the first instance by its coherence with experience as a whole." Kevin Lowery (2007a, p. 82) too argues that "propositions are not true individually" from the standpoint of the coherence theory, adding, "Rather, truth is the property of a group of propositions, namely its coherence." Rejecting coherence as the nature of truth, Lowery (2007b, p. 82) points to stories people recount of Santa Claus, which he says are mostly coherent and consistent, yet are not "grounded in reality." Thus, truth is dependent on the mind, advocates of the coherence theory argue.

Leading coherence theory advocate Joachim (1906a, p. 57) too argues that the truth of our beliefs "means for us that a whole system of knowledge stands and falls with them, and that in that system they survive as necessary constituent elements." Lumping together truth and coherence, Joachim (1906b, p. 66) adds that a coherent body of knowledge is "such that all its constituent elements reciprocally involve one another, or reciprocally determine one another's being as contributory features in a single concrete meaning." Thus, on this view, a belief is true if it is evidentially supported by or is consistent with an entire body of knowledge, and also proves to be a necessary element entailed by the whole system in which there is mutual entailment of all constituent elements.

Three problems follow immediately from the coherence requirement of truth. First, a fully coherent system of knowledge will remain unattainable for a person's belief system is constantly in the works and evolving, and will therefore never be complete. Second, such a complete system requires knowledge of all reality, which is impossible to achieve, as we will learn later. Third, even if coherence was possible in this sense, it would still not be a sufficient condition of truth.

Highlighting the idealist nature of the theory, Woozley (1949, p. 150) argues that the coherence theory of truth "forms part of an idealist system of epistemology and of metaphysics, which is of a highly abstruse character, and which requires the utmost patience, not to say tolerance, in unravelling." Regarding the essence of the theory, Blanshard (1921a, p. 260) says that the "view that truth is coherence rests on a theory of the relation of thought to reality," indicating that the aim of thought is to identify with reality. Blanshard (1921b, p. 261) elaborates on the origin of the theory, arguing, "To think is to seek understanding. And to seek understanding is an activity of mind that is marked off from all other activities by a highly distinctive aim. This aim ... is to achieve systematic vision, so to apprehend what is now unknown to us as to relate it, and relate it necessarily, to what we know already."

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That is, he says we normally aim to know reality whenever we engage in thought. And granted that our past experiences were aligned with reality, whatever new propositions we add to our repository of beliefs would be true as long as they are coherent with the body of our knowledge, according to the coherence theory. That is why Blanshard (1921c, p. 259) argues that "Coherence is our sole criterion of truth." But sometimes, no matter how much we want to, our thoughts do not identify with reality. Therefore, not all past experiences might be accurate to constitute a reliable body of knowledge that transmits truth to new propositions.

4.1. Coherence Relation

Woozley (1949, p.153) argues that the notion of coherent is synonymous to consistent in these two important senses: "When we say of two propositions that they are consistent we very often mean that they are not incompatible, that they do not contradict each other." Examining the nature of the coherence relation among propositions, Alfred Ewing (1934, p. 231) argues that "it is wrong to tie down the advocates of the coherence theory to a precise definition. What they are doing is to describe an ideal that has never yet been completely clarified but is none the less immanent in all our thinking." That is why it is difficult to establish the exact nature of the coherence relation, owing primarily to the fact that "it is represented as an ideal at which actually asserted propositions aim rather than a universal which the particular relations between propositions and reality instantiate or exemplify," argues Woozley (1949a, p. 152). It is this unrealized ideal that makes the coherence theory appear "so wildly unplausible and to lead to such fantastic consequences as hardly to merit serious consideration," adds Woozley (1949b, p. 150).

Woozley (1949c, p. 152) defines coherence as the "relationship holding between a body of propositions such that no one of them can be false if all the rest are true, and that no one of them is independent of the others. That is, between all of the several propositions there exists a mutual entailment such that any one of them is deducible from all the rest, and that no one of them could be true if any of the others were false." While it is logically possible for there to be such a body of mutually coherent propositions, Woozley (1949d, p. 152) maintains no such coherent system is actually available: "Naturally the theory is unable to provide any actual example of such a coherent body, because *ex hypothesi*, being an unrealised ideal, there is no actual example available." Echoing arguments that coherence is merely an ideal to aspire, Blanshard (1921, p 264) observes, "Fully coherent knowledge would be knowledge in which every judgement entailed, and was entailed by, the rest of the system. Probably we never find in fact a system where there is so much of interdependence."

Woozley (1949a, p. 155) argues that a fully coherent set of propositions requires knowledge of all reality, an unviable requirement that dooms the coherence theory: "because the only fully coherent system of propositions would be the complete knowledge of all reality, any body of propositions or so-called knowledge that falls short of that will be only loosely coherent, and all propositions will be partly true and partly false; no proposition is wholly true and none is wholly false." Moreover, proponents of the coherence theory erroneously argue, "because every true proposition logically depends on all other true propositions, no proposition can then be completely and absolutely true unless one knows all the others" (in Woozley, 1949b, p. 158). To put it another way, according to the coherence theory, the truth of a proposition depends on knowledge of all reality or on all other true propositions. But it is impossible for us to know all reality in the world, it is therefore impossible to establish the truth of a proposition according to the coherence theory.

As the following example shows, the coherence theory is neither successful as the test of truth, nor does it explain the nature of truth. It is not the impossibility of establishing the truth of a proposition, but its claim to explain the nature of truth that dooms the coherence theory of truth. After all, the truth of a proposition does not count on knowing all the other true propositions: "the question whether a proposition is true or not cannot depend on the question whether I or anybody else know the conditions on which it depends; a proposition does not gain in truth if I happen to know not merely what are the propositions which entail it but also that they themselves are true; and a proposition does not lose in truth if no evidence can be found for it whatever," argues Woozley (1949c, p. 158).

Woozley (1949d, p. 157) gives a fitting example about a page completely written in English to show that coherence among propositions does not necessarily lead to truth. The argument goes like this: suppose we are talking about this very page that you are currently reading, which actually is written completely in English. Now, although evidently false, proponents of the coherence theory would argue that "This page is entirely written in French" is true because it coheres with "This page is written in some language or other" and "There is such a language as French." Though these two latter propositions are evidently true and are entailed by the former, the entailment or coherence among these three propositions in no way shows that "This page is entirely written in French" is true, because it clearly is written in English, not in French. While it is evidently false, from the standpoint of the coherence theory, "'This page is entirely written in French' cannot be absolutely false unless this page has not been written on at all or does not exist, and

unless coupled with that there is no such language as French," argues Woozley (1949e, p. 158).

This example shows that coherence is neither a necessary, nor a sufficient condition of truth. While it is a good thing for our beliefs to be coherent, coherence does not account for the nature of truth. These examples also show that coherence fails as a test of truth too. In the above example, although there is proper coherence among all three propositions and the two entailed propositions are in fact true, yet the proposition "This page is entirely written in French" is false. Thus, the coherence and pragmatic[3] theories fail to respond to our underlying intuitions and instincts about the nature of truth. Pragmatists, or otherwise known as instrumentalists, argue that a belief is true if "it is one that would produce fulfilment or satisfaction" (in Chisholm, 1977, p. 97).

In other words, pragmatists[4] argue that a belief is true if it is useful. This is known as the utility conception of truth. Rejecting the pragmatic account of truth, Woozley (1949a, p. 130) argues, "that a belief is useful or works may be a very valuable criterion for testing its truth. But that it is useful is surely not what is meant by saying that it is true." In other words, a belief's being useful is a good reason to investigate whether it is also true, but is no condition for its truth. Pragmatism, therefore, provides a good reason for testing the claim of a belief for truth, but fails to account for the nature of truth due to its non-epistemic considerations, as argued by Woozley (1949b, p. 130): "Had pragmatism maintained that the test of truth was a more important question than the nature of truth, it would have been on far firmer ground."

The coherence and pragmatic theories are driven by sceptical considerations, thinking that reaching the truth is "beyond us," and therefore coherence among beliefs and their utility are "the most we can achieve," says Mackie (1970a, p. 322). While recognizing that these rival theories do not dispute the constitutive nature of truth, Mackie (1970b, p. 322) argues that coherence and pragmatic accounts of truth maintain that the commonsensical meaning of truth we intend when we make a statement is "out of place," and we are therefore "either not entitled to assert what we do commonly assert [as the truth] or wrong in thinking that this is worth asserting."

CONCLUSION

In this essay, I have argued in favor of truth residing in the correspondence of belief with reality. I have also shown the crucial difference truth makes in our practical and intellectual lives. After examining the merits and demerits of the two most common theories of truth, the essay concludes that while coherence and consistency among our beliefs is a good thing to achieve intellectually, coherence alone cannot be a reliable mark of truth. Of the two accounts of truth analyzed, the correspondence theory remains the most viable.

The coherence theory is essentially an idealist account, which takes truth to be a function of coherence among our beliefs. But we learned that a proposition's coherence with other propositions might not necessarily lead to its truth. As widely recognized by its critics and exponents, the coherence account remains as a merely unrealized ideal by virtue of subjecting truth to an entire body of coherent knowledge where the truth of a proposition depends on all other true propositions or knowledge of all reality, which is a condition impossible to meet. That is, a key irresolvable problem arises from the coherence condition of truth, which is the impossibility to arrive at a completely coherent system of knowledge by virtue of the system requiring knowledge of all the universe. Truth, on the coherence view, is therefore unknowable or unattainable. We also learned that even if the coherence condition was met, it would still not guarantee truth.

The correspondence notion of truth is not impervious to problems either. The correspondence theory works well with straightforward propositions about independent entities where a reference between words and the world can be established, for example, the rabbit is on the couch or the book is on the table. Here, the entity that corresponds to the belief can be found outside the belief. These examples show that truth is a relationship holding between a belief and its corresponding reality, and it is this relationship that is the essence of the correspondence account.

The correspondence theory runs into trouble when no such corresponding entity can be found outside of a true belief, or when no such relationship can be established. Multiple examples in this essay showed that a proposition can be true in light of a fact about the nature of things being a certain way such as the example of water freezing at 32 degrees Fahrenheit or in virtue of a fact about events, such as some Englishmen went to Switzerland in 1947, rather than by virtue of a relationship holding between these propositions and something concrete in the world.

The truth of moral statements and judgments of beauty also pose a challenge to the correspondence notion of truth. These too are a set of propositions where no corresponding entities are present, yet they are widely accepted as true, for example, theft is immoral, slavery is inhumane, or the sunset is beautiful. In an effort to address these concerns, proponents of the correspondence theory can either deny that such truths exist, or simply argue that these statements are a matter of personal opinion.

[3] A detailed analysis of pragmatism is beyond the scope of this paper.

[4] See Salim Ibrahim (2024) for more details on pragmatism.

The elusive nature of the correspondence relation between a proposition and its corresponding entity, is also another challenge which critics say detract from the value of the correspondence notion of truth. The intuitive position on the nature of this relation is that of identity or resemblance. We noticed that if the relation is one of identity, then a true proposition and its corresponding entity should be identical, which cannot be because a proposition is a linguistic unit, whereas a corresponding entity is normally not. The corresponding entity might be a material object, an event, a fact, or an abstraction like an emotion. Thus, a proposition and its corresponding entity are normally two different things. However, propositions like, there is a slogan written on the wall, could challenge the idea that a true proposition and its corresponding entity cannot be identical due to the two being apparently two different things. Here, the proposition is a linguistic construct, so is its corresponding reality.

If the relationship is one of resemblance, then a true proposition and its corresponding entity should be different for the concept of resemblance obtains only when two things share similarities, but also somehow differ. In this case, the resemblance between a proposition and its corresponding entity can only be relative, resembling each other to a greater or lesser degree. And this leads to degrees of correspondence, and thereby degrees of truth, which cannot be because truth is an absolute notion. Moreover, it would be implausible for a proposition and its corresponding entity to be different, and yet for the proposition to still be true.

The correspondence theory also fails to account for the truth of abstract entities, owing to their dependence for their being on other physical objects. By virtue of not being concrete entities, a corresponding relation cannot be established between a true belief and an abstraction. The example of greenness showed that abstract entities are already there whether or not we recognize them, yet they also in a sense exist in relation to our experiences. An entity should already be there in order for us to form a true belief about it. Our faculties cannot make reality. They can only discover them. For example, our vision cannot make green or red. These colors should already be there in order for us to experience them. This so-called independent existence of abstract entities like colors or shapes as part of the nature of other physical objects, and also in relation to our perceptions, remains inexplicable.

Thus, neither the correspondence nor the coherence theory gives a definitive account of the nature of truth that adequately addresses the truth of both dependent and independent entities. While the coherence theory remains an ideal we can only aspire to achieve, the correspondence theory accounts for the truth of independent entities only, however inadequately, owing to the elusive nature of the relationship between the two corresponding factors. Despite its being largely in line with common sense and ordinary language uses, the correspondence theory is not impervious to substantive problems, which detract from the value and viability of the theory.

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