Truth and Dialogue

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I wish to consider a number of abstract issues regarding truth and dialogue. Philosophy is a critical inquiry into the fundamental ideas and principles of human thought and action. We live now in times when there is a possibly unprecedented need for inter–cultural dialogue about just such matters. It might have been thought that in actual practice philosophy would be fully dedicated to such a project. Unfortunately, there are philosophical doctrines that are incompatible with the possibility of dialogue. An example is the doctrine of faith as a kind of access to truth that is inaccessible to rational probing. Another is the notion that the truth value of a belief is *relative* to the criteria that *happen* to be operative in a culture or society or an even lesser group in the sense that it cannot be legitimately called into question by any observer belonging to another group. In this discussion I shall suggest that certain theories about the concept of truth itself are antagonistic to dialogue, and that a judicious and dialogue-friendly theory of truth must align theory with the conditions of human thought and practice.

Take first the question of faith. I shall treat of this here only briefly. According to some conceptions of faith, one can come into possession of some truths about quite large issues, such as the origin of the entire universe, through non-cognitive efforts or circumstances. Once in that condition of mind, one becomes certain of the propositions at issue "by faith." An instance would be a sudden conversion to a religious faith. This type of acquisition of knowledge is claimed to protect the given subject from all rational scrutiny. That is, the subject gains the right to consider it legitimate to ward off any attempt at rational criticism with some such protestation as, "This is a matter of faith, not argument, and I won't be drawn into an argument."

Imagine, then, a scenario in which one group armed with beliefs vouchsafed by *faith* encounters another group similarly equipped but with a contrary faith. One great problem that is going to complicate such a situation is that people entertaining such beliefs tend to be urgently driven to disseminate their beliefs to all and sundry. Their method of persuasion, however, is usually through exhortation and sometimes through threats and warnings. In the imagined confrontation one can only anticipate ill-will or even violence.

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This anticipation manifests despair about dialogue. The reason why dialogue is unlikely is that neither party has any perceived need for it. Dialogue is useful only if both principals grant the possibility of a change in their positions as a result of a rational exchange of ideas. This implies that both parties are fallible with respect to the relevant issues. But they cannot admit this, since their positions, as they perceive them, are not vulnerable to critique. In short, then, they see themselves as infallible in the given context. When infallible groups disagree, it would be good if they could hold their peace; but the chances are that they will break it. In the conflicts that have had unspeakable consequences of death and destruction in the contemporary world, the issues are not usually directly or officially couched in terms of competing infallibilities, but the veil is often only skin deep.

In the present sense, then, faith is a real adversity to humankind. Note, however, that these remarks are about *faith* only in the sense specified above. This word has a variety of meanings, in some of which it may, indeed, refer to a noble habit of mind, such as in "faith in justice for all." To be noted also is the fact that unhappiness about faith in the offending sense does not imply that one must *always* have the ability to give a ratiocinative justification for one's beliefs.

Consider a deductive system, say a model propositional calculus. Myriads of theorems can be proved in it. But its axioms or rules – I think that axioms and rules are equivalent, though I cannot argue it here – cannot be proved within it. One might try to prove them or adduce considerations in their favor outside the system by truth tables or by some intuitive considerations, but eventually there will be principles presupposed beyond which proof cannot go.

Such end points of justification are, however, provisional, and have to be avowed as such in a spirit of fallibilism: It is always conceivable that some relevant consideration has eluded one. Therefore, if an interlocutor should raise questions regarding a declared end point, one will have to be willing to examine the arguments or considerations proffered. Thus the present writer believes the principle of Non-contradiction to be one such end point, but he does not dismiss dialetheism *out of hand*. It should be clear that end points need not be stations of irrationality. It may be rational to stop where it seems we cannot go further, but the door (of dialogue) must be kept open in case we can go further after all. Moreover, if an end point is rational, it can be explained, and if it can be explained, then it can be said to be warranted.

I shall come back to the relation between fallibilism and dialogue; but let us, before then, try to open a door to dialogue that relativism, to which we made a reference in our opening paragraph, by nature closes or tries to close. Relativism (with respect to cognition) argues as follows. The truth-value of a proposition can only be determined on the basis of a given set of standards. But such standards vary from group to group. Therefore, no proposition can be said to be true universally. With this disappears any prospect of intercultural dialogue or dialogue among even smaller groups.

Relativism is notoriously open to criticism. I shall only urge here an objection oriented towards dialogue. It is simply that the relativist's second premise is false: Cognitive standards do not vary from group to group in the relevant sense. The species-wide similarity of constitution and the common ability to perceive an external world and learn from our experience of it provide us humans with all the methodological bases we need for learning one another's language and entering upon dialogue in search of knowledge, peace and other good things. The principles and standards involved can, of course, be misapplied. That is one cause of the variety of opinions in different cultures as well as in identical cultures.

Moreover, as in science, a superstructure of sophisticated methodologies can develop undreamt of by many, including even some masters of humane learning. That is one cause of the uneven distribution of knowledge. All these may shape divergent approaches to the acquisition of knowledge among groups and even in the thinking of the same person over time. But this diversity is what dialogue thrives on. You don't even have the possibility of dialogue if you don't have any divergence of understandings and approaches. What the relativist sees as a disabling proliferation of methods turns out, then, to be an enabling situation.

With dialogue thus regained, it should be easy to understand that it does not presuppose just diversity. A set of divergent beliefs cannot all be true. So, some of them must be false. But the erroneous ones may be due to my mistake or yours. Accordingly, we have to acknowledge our fallibility as a precondition of dialogue.

By confessing our fallibility, we also show a predisposition towards rational inquiry or discussion. If our habit has been to base our beliefs on rational inquiry, we would be aware that errors may occur in a variety of ways. We may, contrary to our best intentions, misperceive an object. Or we may be caught up in a fallacious inference or an unsound analysis. Of course, if we can go wrong in these modes of thinking, we can also go right.

We have alluded to sensible perception, inference and analysis. We might also mention memory and synthesis as allied phases in the fixation of belief. All these are resources of rational inquiry and hence also of dialogue. If we have used such resources carefully, intelligently and industriously, we have done all that can be expected of a human being. We will return to this thought later.

Meanwhile, let us be clear about what dialogue is. Dialogue is trying to settle disagreement by the method of *rational* discussion. Not every way of settling a disagreement, therefore, is dialogue, even if it is peaceful. Thus, if the principals agree to settle an issue by killing an animal and studying its entrails, that may be a way of peacefully resolving an issue, but not the way of dialogue. Also trying to consolidate friendship through the exchange of praises and pleasantries is not dialogue either. Even less is the exchange of abuses a form of dialogue.

It must be understood, furthermore, that dialogue does not guarantee the resolution of all issues. However, it carries prospects of further discussion. More importantly, it can facilitate consensus despite the survival of some kinds of disagreements.

Three kinds of issues often face groups trying to decide what to do. There are questions of what can be done (and its consequences), what ought to be done and what is to be done. The first kind of question is factual, the second normative, the third pragmatic (using this word in a non-technical sense). Disagreements regarding the first and second can remain after a lengthy dialogue. Yet, by dint of compromise, agreement can be reached as to what is to be done.

Regarding what is or can be the case, no compromise is possible: *X* is *Y* or *X* is not *Y* (or perhaps *X* or *Y* is fuzzy), and that is an end of the matter. I cannot, for example, say that, despite this, I am willing to compromise and say that although *X* is *Y*, it is not *Y*. I can, of course, say that *X* is *Y* but I am willing to concede that I may be wrong and *X* may, in fact, not be *Y*. This is applicable to the normative case too, though the admission of fallibility here can, in some cases, be quite agonizing.

In the pragmatic scenario things are significantly different. Let the number *one* represent what would be done, if I had my way, and *two* what would be done, if you had your way. Given that there has been a rational discussion in which our differing positions have been given a full and respectful hearing, we might each, without changing our minds about the factual or normative issues, modify our initial positions so that we each agree that the action represented by *one and a half* is what is to be done.

Indeed, I might agree that your proposal, i.e. the one represented by *two* is what is to be done. I might do this, for example, if I am fully convinced, among other things, that a similar concession on your part is a foreseeable possibility.

In both cases what is at hand is consensus, and the method, by which it was obtained, dialogue. If human beings could arrange so that political decision making (at both the national and international levels) was more thoroughly informed by consensus than as of now, politics might perhaps shed off some of its well earned reputation for ugliness.

From a world-historical standpoint, however, factual and normative issues have been the matters needing the most urgent attention. And here dogmatism has been the bane of human relations. Dogmatism is not just holding an opinion with excessive zeal. It is something worse; it is holding an opinion so confidently as to be inexorably unwilling to offer reasons or entertain any, pro or con, if offered. Believing "by" faith in the sense previously noted is a perfect model of dogmatism. It is not, however, the only such model. In politics, for example, people can be so carried away by enthusiasm, not to say fanaticism, that they become dedicated to the *truth* of certain doctrines without regard to any question of epistemic justification. Thereby any chance of dialogue is forestalled. A great part of the reason why the religious and moral and political disputes among nations and cultures are so intractable is traceable to this circumstance.

Consciously or unconsciously, there is, in the dogmatic outlook on truth and justification just noted, a distinction between truth and justification such that one might have truth without justification and vice versa. It is only if one can have truth without justification, rational justification, that is, that one can have any pretenses to *faith*. But it is not only in the dogmatic consciousness that the distinction in question exists; it is to be found also in various areas of ordinary discourse. Moreover, much philosophical theorizing about truth is sympathetic to it.

In philosophical terms the question is whether truth can be defined or explained in terms solely of epistemic concepts. I shall argue an affirmative answer. The claim is that truth is warranted assertibility, given an identical point of view. This recalls Dewey to whom we shall return. Warranted assertibility is what you get at the successful closure of inquiry. Terms like "justified belief" or "rational grounding" will be taken to be cognate. We shall use the word "inquiry" broadly to include even the most routine cognitive activity. The following depicts the form of my argument. Suppose

that truth cannot be defined as warranted assertibility (in the way indicated). Then a warranted belief will need some further property (or will have to stand in some further relationship) in order to yield truth. But no such circumstance can, in principle, exist. Therefore, truth must be definable or explicable in the way suggested. It is assumed here that truth can be known. Obviously, if truth cannot be known, any *epistemic* conception of truth is futile *ab initio*. Nevertheless, I shall not argue this presupposition, on the principle that not everything can be done at once.

In fleshing out my argument let us recall a point made earlier. We noted that in inquiry all we can humanly do is to use such resources as sensible perception, memory, inference, analysis and synthesis carefully and industriously. What that effort can achieve for us is nothing else than a warranted judgment. What, then, underlies the dissent on the part of non-epistemic theorist of truth? There is, at least one plausible account. According to this, the history of human cognition is littered with propositions justified in their time, but not any longer. If truth meant justified belief, it would follow that truth-value can change, which is impossible. Hence truth cannot mean justified belief.

This is a good objection against some epistemic theories of truth, but not against the present one. Truth does not just mean warranted assertibility or justified belief. The justification should be one that embodies the operative point of view or commitment of the speaker. Thus, one can remark now, in the twenty first century, that some thirteenth-century belief was justified in its time without implying that it was true in those days, since I might now not subscribe to it. Truth has, beyond justification, the element of contemporaneous commitment. This is why truth is not susceptible to any tensed transformations other than purely grammatical ones. The rationale for defining truth as warranted assertibility with the added condition of identity of point of view now emerges. In the imagined comment on (an unstated) thirteenth century belief, which was imagined to be warranted in its time but not in ours, there is an obvious disparity in point of view. And the point is that the only determinative point of view in the matter of truth or, in this case, falsity, is that of the contemporary commentator. Viewed holistically Dewey's discussions of truth are sensitive to the identity condition, but there is a lack of explicit statement, and this has facilitated misunderstanding.

Having taken the opportunity of the objection just considered to clarify our particular kind of epistemic conception of truth, we will proceed to illustrate the impossibility of defining truth in terms of any concepts tran-

scending the resources of human inquiry. We will take an extremely simple example. Suppose someone, let us call him Albert, becomes curious about the color of the table in a certain room. He goes to the room, takes a look and finds that it is brown. Another person Kofi comes along, smitten with the same curiosity. By this time I myself have gone to the room and checked. Knowing this, he asks me, and I tell him that the color is brown. But he is not sure whether he should believe me, because somebody has just whispered to him that I was drunk when I did the checking. So he is now wondering whether the statement that I made to him viz. "The table is brown" is true.

Now, what can the present quest for truth consist in? Note, first, that it cannot consist in his looking for a property of a belief or judgment or statement, of his own, for he does not yet have a belief of his own regarding the color of the table. What he has at this stage is a doubt, a question or a problem. He does, indeed, have access to my belief that the table is brown, but that constitutes a problem for him, not a belief. He may also possibly have a tentative notion or hypothesis that the table might be black from a hint thrown up by his informant. His question, then, in full, becomes, "Is the table in the room brown or is it, perhaps, black?" Our friend Kofi now enters the room and finds that the table is indeed brown. So he comes back and announces that my statement that the table is brown is true. The notion, idea, hypothesis, that the table is brown is the one that has proved successful.

Compare now the cognitive situations of the two men. Albert started with a curiosity of his own regarding the color of the table in the room. When he went there and made an inspection he had a result which was described as finding that the table is brown, not as finding out that the statement that the table is brown is true. When you make a finding in an inquiry sparked off by your own curiosity it is unidiomatic to present your result in the form of "'P' is true." You just say (or think to yourself) "P." But, of course, if the need for truth-value commentary should arise, you would be in a position to oblige. At work here is the principle, "If P then 'P' is true." Nevertheless, the fact that "is true" need not figure in the original report of your result suggests that the noble sentiment that truth is the object of inquiry should not be taken with an unimaginative literalness. In literal prose, the object of his inquiry was to find out what the color of the table was.

By contrast, truth was, equally literally, the aim of Kofi's inquiry. His inquiry was motivated by the desire to find out whether Albert's statement

was true. But he could only do this by finding out whether the table is brown. In other words there is no way of finding out whether the statement that the table is brown is true without finding out whether the table is brown. This he did, in fact, do. That is, he marshaled evidence, logic and related resources to construct the appropriate judgment, in this case, that the table is brown. In doing this he showed that establishing that "The table is brown" is true implies establishing that the table is brown and vice versa.

This is not a circuitous rehashing of Tarski's equivalence. I am calling attention to the epistemic significance of the equivalence, and I am, by the above examples, making the strong claim that there is no other way of showing that a proposition is true than showing that it can be rationally established, and that, once it is established, nothing else is needed to make out its truth. But since Tarski has been mentioned, it might be of some interest to point out here that the philosophical problem of truth, or at least one such problem, concerns the status of the second component of the Tarski equivalence "'P' is true if and only if P". My contention is that the second "P" has the status of a warrantably assertible proposition, given a uniformity of point of view.

It would not be advisable to try to escape the last suggestion by seeking to identify this "P" with the state of affairs itself that is supposed to make the proposition "P" true. In order words, if we take the following particular case of the equivalence: "'The table is brown' is true if and only if the table is brown," we should resist the temptation to identify the second occurrence of "The table is brown" with the state of affairs of the table being brown. The state of affairs itself cannot be a component of a proposition.

Merely to attend to one of the implications of the equivalence is to see that the second component is as much in the realm of the conceptual as the first. We refer here to the fact that the equivalence implies "P if and only if 'P' is true" If one needs more persuasion that this "P," which was originally the second component and is now the first, is still a conceptual construct, she might consider the following special case: "The world came into existence five minutes ago if and only if 'The world came into existence five minutes ago' is true."

Identifying the second "P" in the Tarski equivalence with reality is an effort in the fallacy of hypostasis. A more homely characterization of the mistake would be to say that the theorists concerned tend to confuse truth with what truth is about. An allied effort in hypostasis is to suggest that the component in question is identical with *fact*. Let us return to the table. When Kofi goes into the room and finds *that* the table is brown, this repre-

sents a judgment on his part. Our using the word "finds" in the remark merely indicates that we are endorsing his conclusion. So, we are all still in the domain of judgment.

But then, it begins to look like epistemic theories of truth lose connection with fact or reality. A correspondence theory, for example, is supposed to connect linguistic material with extra-linguistic reality. But a pragmatic theory, or, worse, a coherentist theory, seems to be caught up in the interrelations of its own verbalizations.

This is incorrect. When, let us say, a Deweyan pragmatist says that the statement "The table brown" is true if and only if it is warrantably assertible that the table is brown he is talking of the reference of our discourse to reality.[1] The warranted assertibility here is about the applicability of a given concept, here "brown," to an object, here a table, existing independently of the mind.

A brief comparison with a correspondence theory might be instructive. Take the following version of correspondence: A statement is true if and only if it corresponds to reality. We immediately encounter a difficulty. The finite verb that transforms an arrangement of words into a declarative sentence cannot itself correspond to anything, for it is that part of the sentence that makes the claim of correspondence. To illustrate: The *idea* that the table might be brown could be one of the hypotheses considered during the stage of inquiry. If the evidence accumulates decisively in its favor, then we would be in a position to affirm that the concept brown corresponds or applies to the table, a piece of reality. This is what, more economically, the declarative sentence "The table is brown" says. The correspondence or application of the idea is a matter of instantiation. Now, it is a concept or an idea that can be instantiated, not a sentence. And the finite verb, here "is," is what declares the instantiation; so the message of the sentence may also be said to be that the concept of brown is instantiated by the color of table. This is also just another way of saying that the concept of brownness corresponds or applies to the (color of the) table. We can now see that the correspondence theory amounts, in terms to our particular example, to saying that the claim that the concept of brownness corresponds to the table corresponds to the table, which is short of meaning. The claim of correspondence intrinsic to a declarative sentence cannot itself be coherently claimed to correspond to anything. Nothing drives pragmatism to such incoherence.

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[1] See, for example Dewey 1910, chap. 6. Dewey does not here employ the term "warranted assertibility," but he makes the point about reference to reality sharply.

Another difference between pragmatism and the correspondence theory is this. The pragmatic theory is fallibilistic while the correspondence counterpart is absolutist. Absolutism does not necessarily deny human fallibility; but it affirms the infallibility of truth itself, as it allegedly exists independently of human inquiry (whatever this might mean). Let us note too that fallibilism does not mean just that we humans are fallible, but, more, that truth is not something that has its own reality independently of inquiry.

A pragmatist can note that the implied distinction between the fallibility of human belief and the infallibility of "objective" truth leads straight to absolute skepticism. The argument is that "objective" truth is unknowable, since our best cognitive efforts are still fallible and cannot, therefore, by definition, be endowed with objective truth. Absolutism, moreover, does not discourage dogmatism, for by a twist of psychology, the notion that truth is too sublime for the human intellect can make people prone to an intense belief in desired propositions by *faith,* to the peril of dialogue.

So far, I have spoken somewhat freely of propositions, statements, beliefs, and so on, as the items susceptible of truth-value assignment. In our brown table example, we found that neither Albert nor Kofi had a belief or a judgment about the color of the table *to start with*. And this is as it should be, for we don't start an inquiry with its conclusion already in hand. Note, incidentally, that the correspondence theorists, who talk unqualifiedly of the truth or falsity of *beliefs,* seem to proceed as if we can start our inquiry with our belief and then investigate whether it is true or false, which would be a perfect example of leaping before looking. In fact, it is only after the inquiry that, if we are lucky, we may come into possession of the belief that settles the question investigated, and it is only then that we can talk of truth or falsity.

Asking what is susceptible of truth assignment, then, is the same as asking what it is that we start inquiry with. We can have a lot of help from truth-functional logic in this; but not until we have clarified some things that remain confused in that discipline. The P's and Q's of truth functional logic have been called propositional variables and have been said to be instantiated by specific propositions. Thus we are allowed to put something like "All carpenters like brown tables" for "P." We can, then, go on to construct truth functions. For example, "-P" is the negation function, and, in our chosen example, will stand for "It is not the case that all carpenters like brown tables." If we introduce another variable "Q" and put for it a specific proposition, say "The table is brown," then we can construct a compound function, say, the conditional function 'P $\rightarrow$ Q'. And this would

generally be read as "If all carpenters like brown tables, then the table is brown."

But now, hasn't something gone very wrong? A function is something incomplete or, in Frege's terminology, unsaturated. But a statement like "It is not the case that all carpenters like brown tables" is a complete thought, and cannot therefore be an accurate rendition for "-P." Neither, for the same reason, can "If all carpenters like brown tables, then the table is brown" be a rendition for "P → Q" As a function, "-P" is simply the expression that takes the value F when T is assigned to its sole variable and takes the value T when F is assigned to that lone variable. Of itself, it claims nothing.

Similarly, the function "P → Q" cannot be read (under our interpretations of the symbols) as "If all carpenters like brown tables, then the table is brown." By its form, this is a complete thought, claming that it does not happen that all carpenters like brown tables, while the table in not brown. On the other hand, all that "P → Q" indicates is that we have a relationship between P and Q which holds in all assignments of truth values to the variables except when truth is assigned to the antecedent and falsity to the consequent.

Yet text books regularly offer the wrong reading of these and related formulas. The most striking case is that of the simple function "P." This is simply the function which takes the value T when T is assigned to the variable and takes the value F when F is assigned to the same variable. So you cannot put for it the declarative sentence "The table is brown." It can only be rendered in some such manner as "The idea of the table being brown," which wears its incompleteness on its face. The statement that the table is brown can only result from the assignment of the value *truth* to the variable "P."

This is exactly how Frege saw these matters in the *Begriffsschrift*,[2] and that is the reason why he needed an assertion sign. For a simple function such as we are representing with "P" Frege provided, as a possible rendition, the participial phrase "The circumstance that unlike magnetic poles attract one another." The declarative sentence "Unlike poles attract one another" was obtained only on the assignment of the value *truth* to the propositional variable. This assignment is what the assertion sign effected.

Notice now that we have a concept of truth which is involved in the construction of judgment or belief or assertion. That is the concept of truth that emerges in the successful prosecution of inquiry. That is what enables

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[2] In Geach and Black 1960.

you to say after investigating, for example, the question of the table being brown that it *is* brown. This assignment of truth value, then, is an act of construction not just of predication; it constructs a judgment, it does not comment on it. The process is one in which we work on a participial phrase to produce a declarative sentence. That signifies the solving of a problem, the attainment of a warranted conclusion. Let us call it primary truth-value assignment, and the concept involved the primary concept of truth.

It is obvious that there must be also another kind of truth value, though closely related. When, as in one of the scenarios involving the table, an inquiry has been motivated by the desire to find out whether a statement made by somebody (or by oneself at an earlier time) is true, there is need for a comparison of judgments. But, as we saw previously, one has first to construct a judgment, and the process is exactly the same as in a primary case where I initiate inquiry based on my own curiosity. Once I have obtained a conclusion, I am in a position to compare my result with the pre-existing judgment and comment upon it. I might say, for example, "The statement that the table is brown is true." Let us call this a comparative truth-value assignment, and the truth-value involved a comparative truth value. It is obvious that a comparative truth-value assignment presupposes a primary one, but not vice versa. In other words, the statement "If 'P' is true then P" is always correct, but "If P, then 'P' is true" is not always appropriate, for there may not be a preexisting 'P' from a previous point of view to comment on. This is not taken to be contrary to Tarski's equivalence that "'P' is true if and only if P" in general. What it means is that in the actual practice of inquiry the correctness of the equivalence is contextual. It is appropriate therein only on the assumption of an encounter with a preexisting affirmation (or denial) of 'P.' But it holds in all such cases.

Return now to the question of what it is that is susceptible of truth-value assignment. The question is ambiguous. If we are talking of primary truth assignment, the recipient of truth-value assignment is something in the nature of a question or a participial phrase or an ***idea***, not a statement or assertion or sentence, and the process is one of judgment construction.

On the other hand, if we are talking of a comparative truth assignment, then the immediate object of our attention is a sentence or statement or belief or assertion proposed from a pre-existing point of view, and we are making a truth predication of it. It does not matter for our purposes here which of these names you bestow upon it; what is important is to note that under any of them, it is different from the object of primary truth-value as-

signment, and that the difference is syntactical: In the primary case it is participial, "unsaturated" while in the comparative case it is declarative, saturated.

The concept of truth, as it generally features in ordinary discourse, is of the comparative kind. Many philosophers have followed ordinary discourse in this matter not only in their ordinary conversations but also in their theoretical lucubrations. Yet, the primary concept is the more fundamental. Moreover, it is easier to see, in connection with it, that truth is essentially a matter of judgment construction, which, in turn, is, ideally, the rational pursuit of correspondence between ideas (not beliefs) and reality. It seems, then, on reflection that, after all, a unification of the correspondence and pragmatic theories may not be totally impossible. The coherence theory too may possibly cohere with both, for the coherence demanded by the theory may be nothing other than the accordance of belief formation with the cannons of rational inquiry.

Whether or not such a unification is possible, it would be good if one could be confident that philosophical theories of truth will not become impediments to dialogue. But, to say the least, it is difficult to have such confidence in any theory of truth that places truth somewhere beyond human inquiry, and therefore beyond human communication.

I might mention that my approach to the theory of truth has been conditioned by my understanding of the workings of that concept in my vernacular, which is called Akan, a language spoken in parts of Ghana and the Ivory Coast, and my acquaintance with Western theories on the matter. I have written about this in a number of places.[3] Today what has been explicit is the Western side. Thank you.

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[3] See, for example, Wiredu 1996, chap. 8: "The Concept of Truth in the Akan Language"; Wiredu 2004.

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