

## **Explanatory Role of Truth in Understanding the Phenomena of Agreement and Disagreement**

This paper explores the explanatory role of truth in our understanding of the phenomena of disagreement and agreement. My core argument is that in virtue of truths normative nature as that which is *prima facie* (without further reasons) correct and *pro tanto* (to an extent) valuable to believe, truth has an indispensable explanatory role in our understanding of the phenomena of disagreement and agreement. One reason is that without the concept of truth, defining what it means to disagree or agree in the first place becomes difficult, for we commonly agree or disagree on something being *true* or *false*. Another reason is that without truths normative role as a standard of belief, explaining why disagreements are sometimes unsatisfactory or even unbearable conclusions becomes difficult. We want to resolve disagreements about serious matters, such as climate change or the utility of vaccinations, by figuring out the *truth*. Further, the motivation of wanting to resolve serious disagreements can be explained by making reference to the value of truth. Because we value true beliefs by seeking them out and aiming to cultivate them in others, we want to resolve disagreements that cause confusion on what indeed is true. Without the idea that truth is a goal of reasoning, the notion of resolving disagreements becomes muddled, for it is not clear what one should aim at believing.

It is worth emphasizing that because truth is not *necessarily* correct or valuable to believe, not all disagreements are unsatisfactory conclusions. For example, there is no value in telling harsh truths about the inevitable human suffering to children, and we need not use our limited resources to learn exceedingly complex yet trivial mathematical truths. Analogously, we want to resolve disagreements only when this is worth the trouble, and the truths in relation to which we disagree bear value. Interestingly, this argument bears significance for explaining the seeming variability on the nature of disagreement across different domains of discourse. Indeed, there seems to be significant variability on the degree of *motivation* for wanting to resolve disagreements on both levels of discourse domains and individual beliefs. In the domain of physics, for example, one might disagree on whether human actions have effect on the phenomena of climate change. In the domain of personal taste, parties might disagree on whether sushi is tastier than dumplings. As evident, the first disagreement involves higher motivational force for being resolved, one reason being the objective nature of physical truths. Second, there is variability on the motivation of wanting to resolving disagreements in the context of individual domains. In the domain of ethics, we might disagree on whether murdering innocent people is wrong or whether eating meat is wrong. Again, the first disagreement exhibits greater motivational pull for being resolved. Interestingly enough, both of these cases need not be taken as a sign that the nature of disagreement varies across or in the context of domains. Rather, the variability in the motivational pull can be accounted for by making reference to the value of the specific truths that are disagreed upon.