

Objectivity as a Regulative Ideal

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Abstract

Objectivity can be configured in two interrelated ways: one is by looking at objectivity as a time-specific and contingent category, the other is by considering it as a regulative ideal. This latter notion may be labelled as objective-ness. As an ideal, objectivity stands for the mind's continuous desire for more a comprehensive account of reality/ies. For the former notion of objectivity, the stress is on the historical conditions at work with what it means to be objective. Consequently, this notion of objectivity, as a guiding principle in research, may be described as a term that admits the possibility of change or modification.

Abstract Key Words: Certainty, Historicity, Objectivity, Pragmatism, Regulative Ideal

Introduction

When one speaks of objectivity, its usual understanding includes a reliable degree of certainty. This means that when facts are engendered and rendered, the proposed truth has to reach a stable sense of agreeability and soundness. Agreeability, in this regard, refers to the logical exemplification of noted and accepted rules and methods of research. Soundness, meanwhile, takes into account the logical correlation between insights and the gathered data. Since the notions of certainty, agreeability and soundness can be suspect of arbitrary decisions, the question arises if it is really possible to reach certainty or objectivity in the social sciences. Given that the object of investigation in social science is the ever changing world of human affairs, one can surmise that socially construed and proposed facts are permeated by personal value-judgements. If this is the case, should there be a need to substantially worry that facts proposed coming from the lens of a social scientist are not fixed and certain? This paper holds that the presence of individual leanings does not necessarily amount to being less or not objective. In point of fact, objectivity as a concept has undergone transitions in meaning. This historical phenomenon is a reminder that a change of perspective on what it means to be certain or

objective has to be expected. We shall call this the historically conditioned notion of objectivity. But the novelty of this paper, however, lies in its attempt to demonstrate that objectivity can be configured in another way: objectivity as a regulative ideal – a paradoxically indefinite, archetypal yet pragmatic notion of certainty.

How can we philosophically substantiate the foregoing stance? To elucidate such claim, we need to zoom into two topics, namely: objectivity and the pragmatic criterion of truth. For the discussion on objectivity, we shall use Galison's treatment of the term.¹ The reconstruction of the meaning of the word will help us cognise how the term objectivity assumed different meanings in the course of history. This part of the article aims to show that objectivity, as a concept, has undergone certain modifications. Objectivity, therefore, may be construed as a historical concept. The next topic, the pragmatic criterion of truth,² functions as the theory of meaning which shall act as a location where we can demonstrate the meaning of a regulative ideal. In this section, we shall propose that one form of objectivity in the social sciences is objective-ness – constitutively formed by the desire to propose facts and propositions that exemplify certitude. Elevated as an ideal or a form, objectivity of such a kind can serve as a structuring mechanism that helps condition the mindset of the social scientist to always safeguard the objectivity of his conclusions.

With the aforementioned interrelated trains of thought, the present article, therefore, raises this query: How can objectivity as a regulative ideal in the social sciences condition the historical notion of being objective?

Objectivity and Its Transitions: Galison

Mechanical and Interpreted Images

From the early 1920's up to the late part of the 20th century, Galison observed that there are at least two transitions in the meaning of the term objectivity – the mechanical and the interpreted. The initial sense of objectivity highlights the autonomy of an object from the one who is conducting the study, while the second sense takes into account the active role of the researcher in the investigation. While the former notion of objectivity excludes the influence of the researcher in the presentation of facts, the latter holds that it is the researcher's mind and question that determines the kind of phenomenon in nature that can possibly unfold in the course of an investigation.

So, how did Galison tease out such notions of objectivity? The notion of a mechanical image of objectivity is based on Galison's observation of the conduct of research in the domain of the physical, medical and biological sciences. Here is an example of one his observations: based on a 1920 documentary/filming research of Lowell in collaboration with Carl Otto



Lampland, these two physicists captured the lines of the planetary surface of Mars on film. From such a film, Lowell proclaimed that, "at last the canals spoke for their own reality." An interesting point in this example, Galison underscores, is the kind of picture of Mars that they had. It was so blurred, gray and small that reproduction of the captured film was almost close to impossible. Irrespective of the picture's ambiguity, Lowell, however, considered the autographic value of the picture a priority. He even stressed that if the pictures were *retouched*, the results would consequently be less objective, since the picture shall be stained and reconfigured by the person's ideas and biases. With the primacy accorded to the autonomy of an object of study, the stance against any form of subjective intervention (like a retouch) represents the classic charge against personal intrusion. Objectivity, in this regard, holds that there is a clean-cut boundary between the subjective/personal world and the objective/nature realm. As exemplified in Lowell's position, despite accuracy, clarity and reproducibility, mechanical objectivity always came as a priority. Similar to photography, photographs – in their early inception, were highly regarded as effective and efficient means to avoid the dreaded domain of retouching or interpretation. Photography, in such a milieu, was considered faithful in representing the original in nature without human intervention. This kind of objectivity from the vantage point of the photograph can be likened to the machine ideal. The machine, being bias-free and transparent, serves as the instrument of cataloguing original representation in the absence of human interpretation. The emphasis on neutrality and transparency also became the ideal for the moral discipline of the scientist themselves. This explains why the fitting slogan for this type of thinking, says Galison is, "where genius and art were, there, self-restraint and procedure shall be."³

But within the first phase of the twentieth century, Galison observes that the meaning of pictorial objectivity took a different turn. This shift, for him, can be summarised as the call for interpretation. For this new approach, its slogan is: "at the end of procedure begins judgement."⁴ This turn to interpretation also changed the moral character of the scientist-author. This includes a change from the moral virtue of self-restraining pictorial practices to the moral virtues of self-involved judgement. The turn to judgement offered a new stance in representation. This stance sets aside the objectivist's ideals of absolute self-restraint, and considers the subjective side as a necessary part of scientific interpretation. For instance, in analysing an object or a text, the researcher's familiarity or expertise of the object of study is the most valuable instrument in the representation of nature. This kind of insight can only emerge from the sensibilities of a trained expert. An individual who has gathered enough experiences can provide him with knowledgeable and authoritative sense in analysing situations or cases in his field of study. This makes the bias of

mechanical objectivity insufficient. For the late part of 20th century, what is important and needed is judgement and interpretation. It is this understanding and preference that shaped and eventually determined the new meaning of objectivity. The value conferred upon creative assessment presupposes that objectivity can only be accomplished through an eye or a way of seeing that has been trained and matured out of experience.⁵

In conclusion, the genealogical treatment of the character of mechanical image and interpreted image shows that objectivity is a concept that happens within the purview of history. This means that each of the two meanings of objectivity is historical making objectivity a time-specific and contingent category.

Objectivity, Appeal and Presuppositions

What does the distinction between mechanical objectivity and objectivity as interpretation further suggest? What kind of appeal or power of attraction is present or available in each of the two notions of objectivity? Why did the transition between mechanical and interpreted meanings of objectivity take place?⁶ If we examine the characteristics of mechanical image and interpreted image, we can discover that such descriptions were made possible not simply because they happened within a specific historical milieu. The two images also thrived because of the kind of appeal or fascination that each of the two images was capable of projecting and sustaining. This is why the notion of an appeal can be one reason why for a certain period of time, an image is accepted as the ideal paradigm in the representation of reality. What then is the appeal that is inherent in mechanical image and in interpreted image?

In mechanical-objective image,⁷ its appeal may be based on its stress on non-intervention. For this type of representation, value is given to something untouched – to something that remains unmodified by human creativity and imagination. Since this type of image gives prominence to the bareness of the physical side of nature, one maybe allowed saying that such a stress can be described as an attempt to romanticise the autonomy of nature. This means that nature, being a world of its own, is constituted by a kind of organized complexity. This may include physical details, contours, colours, and so forth, that can only be properly teased out and appreciated by consciously distancing one-self from how things naturally function. For the mechanical-objective image, therefore, the appeal rests on the recognition of the peculiarity of the natural order and principles governing things and entities. We are of the opinion that it is this romantic notion of nature that acts as a buffer and constraint to the possibility of human intervention. Thus, the observer does not permit himself to imagine, modify or contribute an interpretation. He is guided by this ideal: let nature unfold and reveal itself independent of any form of



intervention.

The significance attributed to the object of investigation, however, is mitigated in the case of an interpreted notion of objectivity. This means that the object of the study is no longer considered as the only basis of inference. The researcher himself and the question that he brings into an investigation already come into play. More specifically, it is the mind of the researcher that infuses a determinative role in the process of truth-making. This is also the viable reason why the interpreted notion of objectivity is attractive with its emphasis on human intervention. The appeal, therefore, of an interpreted notion of objectivity lies in the inclusion and liberation of the individual's other faculties. Instead of merely waiting for the truth of things to unfold, the researcher can already prepare questions with which the object of investigation maybe forced to respond.⁸ Moreover, instead of putting too much stress on the eyes or the visual component of knowing, the faculty of imagination and the faculty of estimation are invoked.⁹ Being areas of possibilities, such faculties warrant and dispose the individual to look beyond the domain of the tangibles or directly perceptible forms of reality. This capacity for construction beyond what the physical world can propose is the gift that the interpreted notion of objectivity brings. In the case of imagination, for instance, the researcher can now appreciate and apply his capacity to harmonise various realms of cognition which may include the abstract, physical, emotional or sensual sensibilities.¹⁰ The researcher becomes part of the process of investigation, so to speak. In so doing, both the observer and the processes in reality are influenced and reckoned as overlapping or interfacing domains.

While the appeal of each image partly explains some reasons why individuals place their commitments to one of the two types of representation, there is another important point in historical reconstruction that deserves attention: the articulation of presuppositions operative in mechanical objectivity and interpreted objectivity. The articulation of such presuppositions is pursued, since it might be enlightening to identify and understand other causal principles that make the claim of each image tenable.¹¹ In mechanical objective image, for instance, its possible pre-supposition is the dichotomy between man and nature. Since mechanical image proposes self-restraint on the side of the researcher, the study must be an attempt to carefully maintain such a distance. Otherwise, the study and its results maybe put into question – perceived as unreliable, distorted and unscientific. This understanding of reality as a presupposition also means that in mechanical objectivity, the dichotomy between man and nature is a stance which stays unquestioned. This is because if the researcher doubts the veracity of such a gap, he then may consider the notion of mechanical objectivity already problematic. Why is there a dichotomy between man and nature? This is a question that the proponents of the

mechanical image cannot ask. Thus, the foregoing discussion allows as inferring that the mechanical image holds as long the perceived gap between man and nature is observed, preserved or maintained.

For an interpreted image of reality, its possible presupposition is the dynamic relation between the researcher and the object of study. This relation is based on the researcher's understanding that thinking processes are importantly influenced and coloured by the kind of method that he employs and the type of thinking or thought that he brings into the investigation. By highlighting what the researcher puts forth on the table, the bias of the interpreted image seems to swing in favour of the role of the person and not the object of investigation. We are not proposing that in the present relation, nature is reduced to the mind and method of the researcher, however. Nature proceeds and unfolds but does so in a manner that will always remain partially elusive to the research process. In this way, we can even suggest that it is actually the inexplicable side of nature that guarantees its autonomy. Had it been the case that nature is fully decipherable, then it may be superfluous to think of an object of investigation, since any so-called object will be totally usurped into the categories of the thinker. Thus, for the interpreted image of objectivity, the researcher needs to admit that human cognition of the empirical world – as a thinking process, functions within the ambit of finite truth-claims.

With the foregoing discussions on image and presupposition, we have demonstrated the operative appeal and presuppositions in the two forms of objectivity. This makes the image, appeal and presupposition conditions of possibilities for the two divergent standards of representation and objectivity. For instance, the mechanical image rests on the assumption that there is a clear-cut and neat separation between man and nature. The interpreted image, on the other hand, admits that it is the overlap between man and nature that makes it possible for man to eventually cognise how nature unfolds and operates. With these points in mind, objectivity, as a concept, clearly has undergone connotative transitions. The important implication of this insight is that our ideals of what is certain, agreeable and sound maybe heavily coloured by our image of certitude and objectivity. Thus, we are of the opinion that Galison's account of objectivity and images points to the changing ideals of representation and certainty. The meaning of objectivity – of what is considered as the standard and measure of reliability, is not spared from the phenomenon of flux and alteration. What is the next notion of certainty and objectivity? When another standard of objectivity unfolds, we can expect that it will also be conditioned by man's different understanding of himself and the world.



The Pragmatic Criterion of Truth

Why choose the pragmatic criterion of truth as the location of our discussion of objectivity as a regulative ideal? This seems to be the immediate question of somebody who has this reliable understanding of the truth-claims of the truth-criterion. Why is it an expected query? In broad sketches, an action or thought is labelled pragmatic when it results to favourable or constructive consequences. In logical terminologies, the consequent is the condition of possibility of the antecedent. As long as the effects are good, then the decision, thought or action should also be considered good and reliable. What then is a regulative ideal? Our own cognition tells us that a regulative ideal acts a principle of thinking. More to the point, it refers to thoughts or beliefs that provide a sense of purposiveness to concrete or actual activities. As an ideal, it has a constitutive capacity to provide a kind of order or direction to what one is doing. And in relation to objectivity, objective-ness may serve as its regulative ideal. This means that as one tries to live-up to a specific notion of objectivity, there remains openness to a notion of objectivity that is different in kind and higher in degree. Why do researchers aspire for an intelligibly precise account of the world and of himself? Our thesis is that it is partially because of objective-ness – a regulative ideal that in-forms our actions to always try to discover and present the best way of representing the relation between human kind and nature.

The Case of the Invisible Gardener

In John Wisdom's article, entitled *Gods*,¹² he presents a story of two explorers who discovered a clearing in a thick and dense jungle. They saw flowers and ornamental plants in that place as if telling them that there is a gardener who regularly maintains it. The more inquisitive explorer remarked that there must be gardener who maintains the clearing. With an initial inspection, however, no trace of a human gardener can be sensed. One explorer proposed the idea that the gardener of the clearing might be invisible. To prove that it is not the case, both explorers posted some wires and planted a few sets of alarm around the clearing. To their dismay, no tangible gardener came into the scene. The absence of an actual gardener prompted one explorer to suggest that indeed the clearing is maintained by an invisible gardener. The other explorer opined that it is still possible that there is an actual gardener but his presence cannot be detected by the alarm, since he leaves no possible tractable trace behind.

With the foregoing story in mind, this question unfolds, 'What is the difference between an imaginary gardener and a visible or tangible one?'¹³ William James, in his *Pragmatism's Conception of Truth*, proposes the pragmatic criterion of truth to possibly solve the mystery behind the well-

maintained clearing. He suggests that if the notion of the invisible gardener will provide meaning and significant difference in the life of a person, then believing that it is the invisible gardener who takes care of the beautiful clearing may be accepted. If, on the other hand, the idea of an invisible gardener will make no difference or will make the life of the inquiring individual problematic, then, the notion of an invisible gardener should not be appropriated. On this consideration, the pragmatic criterion of truth will only hold if it has the capacity to engender good and practical consequences in the life of a person. Otherwise, a belief or statement is judged as pragmatically false and ineffective. As William James underscores, "The truth of an idea is not a stagnant property that is inherent in it. Truth happens to an idea. It becomes true, is made true by events."¹⁴

At this point, one can apparently notice that the criterion is plagued and confronted by an obvious difficulty. A criticism in point is the possibility of vicious relativism. This flaw is even made apparent by the ambiguity in the intension and extension of the term 'practical consequences'.¹⁵ This is because an individual's notion of practicality is subject to change over time. More to the point, what a person considers practical for the present situation may be perceived as impractical in the future. An example is in order: one may say that it is good and practical to clear a considerably huge area in a forest for the purposes of farming and agriculture. Given the immediate benefits, the farmer can say that pragmatically considered using a huge part of the forest for planting crops and raising animals is good. But after a few years, torrential rain may happen. Eventually, the tilled clearing maybe washed out. Is it still good and practical that a significant portion of the forest was converted into farm lots? This is where the pragmatic criterion of truth can fail. Moreover, the stress given to the consequences of an action or decision is also problematic. One cannot entirely determine if the ramifications of an action can be a good cause of another event.

The Pragmatic Truth and the Regulative Ideal

Despite the aforementioned difficulties, the pragmatic criterion of truth still has its merit – it can function as a location where we can discuss the notion of a regulative ideal. To substantiate this claim let us have another look at the criticisms charged against the criterion. If we zoom into the perceived weaknesses of the pragmatic criterion of truth, one can observe that such criticisms magnify the failure of the criterion to deal with the issue on stability or consistency. This is the main point of vicious relativism. A keener look at this accusation, however, shall reveal that such criticisms are spoken in the language of effects. This makes the discussion on truth and meaning confined to the domain of outcomes or effects.



However, there is another aspect in the pragmatic criterion of truth that is yet to be stressed and underscored – its regulative side. What is the meaning of this claim? Using the story of the invisible gardener, it can be said that the belief in the reality of an invisible gardener may help the believer to come into terms with the phenomenon of the beautiful clearing in the forest. The acceptance of the belief, in this regard, conditions the actions and behaviour of the believing explorer. To elucidate, the belief has this capacity to structure the disposition and attitude of an individual towards the garden. It is the belief in the presence of the invisible gardener that sustains the explorer's relation with the garden. If the pragmatic criterion of truth is reckoned from this vantage point, one cannot easily dismiss the belief and relation of the belief to the life of an individual as problematic. This is because one has to take into account the possibility that the acceptance of the reality of the invisible gardener does not happen overtime. This is where vicious relativism fails. This means that one cannot immediately measure the efficacy of a belief in a person's life. It may also be the case that a person's assent required careful reflection and stringent analysis. This makes the decision to accept a belief more meaningful and closer to the heart of the person believing. This probably explains why when such a belief is challenged the immediate reaction is to defend it. The stress on consequences is partially biased in favour of the tangible effects. How about the intangible effects?

The pragmatic criterion, therefore, can be seen in two ways: from the lens of process and/or consequences. When the latter perspective is highlighted, the criterion may be compared to a fuel that sustains the operations of a machine. It lubricates and provides a structuring order to affairs and activities. The merit of this aspect in the pragmatic criterion of truth is that one may not be tied-up with or reduced to the estimable consequences of the accepted belief or statement. We are of the opinion that pragmatism is not to be narrowly reduced to implications. Thus, the saving grace of the pragmatic criterion may be sought in its capacity to regulate and sustain the process of believing that an idea, belief or statement holds true and is meaningful.

Objectivity as a Regulative Ideal

The epistemological stance that the world can be known, that we have the capacity to know it and that we can distinguish if we have known or we have failed to comprehend something constitutes the important presupposition of objectivity considered as a regulative ideal. Following the regressive approach to thinking,¹⁶ such an assumption provides an important ground upon which this notion of objectivity is based. And as we shall later discover, the descriptions that we shall attribute to objectivity as a regulative ideal all revolve within the compass of the afore-mentioned presupposition.

As a regulative ideal, objectivity stands for man's aspiration for clarity and for the desire to better understand the world he is living in. This means that objectivity as objective-ness reflects man's intention to transcend and cognitively confront complexities latent in various realities. A close look at the archaeology of human understanding shall even reveal that man has always been inspired to find a way to achieve an organised sense of unfolding complexities. We can see this effort in the big shifts in the thinking ethos from the rational-cosmic ancient/classical Greek philosophical thinking, to the faith and reason drama in the Medieval mind-set, to the anthropocentric love-affair in Modernity, and now, to the primacy afforded to the latent powers of negation in post-modernity. These transitions in thought somehow point to the human need and aspiration to grasp reality – fuelled by the subterranean dream to finally unlock the mysteries in man, nature and the cosmos. In our understanding, this unending drive or quest for meaning and truth has functioned as an archetypal motivation. It has regulated and provided a kind of spirit to the activities of the human mind. Hence, the search for “the black cat in a dark room which is not really there”¹⁷ has always fulfilled its regulative role.

Given that objectivity as a regulative ideal plays host to man's ambition to know, this notion of objectivity may also be interpreted as man's anticipation for the not yet. There is always something more to be known. There are other and better ways of knowing. A new discovery perhaps on the nature of the human mind awaits us. These anticipatory lines are telling of man's limitations and the presence of this pragmatic desire to cognise – the strength of his mind. Objectivity as a regulative ideal, therefore, is both self-appropriating and self-emptying. It aspires for the gradual broadening of the thinking horizon. In this respect, stress is placed on the human capacity for cognition or appropriation. As the same time, the processes involved in the quest for being historically objective reveals the limitations of human capacities. On this consideration, the human mind admits that its capacities have limits; and it is through such a reality that an individual must realize that he also need to empty himself to learn more.

Conclusion

To encapsulate the meaning of the two forms of objectivity – as historically conditioned and as a regulative ideal, here is an analogy that we have considered fit to summarise our discussions in this paper: the analogy of the hand and sand.

The **first** element in the analogy is the sand, which stands for the object of investigation; while the **second** element is the hand, which represents the mind of the researcher or the one who conducts the study. As the researcher attempts to grasp the sand, it can be noticed that he shall try to tighten his hold



of what remains of it. This is actually reflective of the mind's attempt to delimit the object of the study – a reminder that the mind can only deal or understand the parts and not the whole. The hand, meanwhile, represents the mind of the researcher. A close inspection of the nature of the hand may make us realise that what can be known (of the sand/of the object of investigation) builds on the strengths, and confined by the limitations of the mind that seeks to contain it.¹⁸ In other words, what can be known of the sand significantly depends on the access that mind has to its object of investigation.

With the analogy as our background, the mechanical notion of objectivity can be described as a way of thinking that confines its concern to the sand – to the object of investigation. When objectivity is seen from this perspective, the operative assumption is that the sand is an autonomous reality. It has an independent nature which has to be safeguarded and protected from the intrusion of human reason and imagination. For the interpreted notion of objectivity however, the primacy afforded to the sand as an autonomous entity is reconfigured from the grasp of the hand or the lens of the mind that performs the research. To be more precise, interpreted objectivity understands that the cognition of the object of study significantly depends on, hence conditioned by the kind of hand or mind used in the conduct of the investigation.

Provided with the two forms of objectivity, we may infer that both notions are historical – as time dependent or contingent categories. And it is with these notions that we are led to the **third** element in the analogy of the hand and sand – historicity. This dimension means that our notion of objectivity is constitutively disposed to change given every individual's unique access to the kind of forces at work in reality/ies. The **fourth** and final element in the analogy of the hand and sand is the regulative ideal. This aspect acts as a representation of man's never ending quest for better forms of comprehension. Objectivity, given our desire for better and more complete accounts of ourselves and nature, is regulative since it confirms and maintains man's anticipation and desire for higher and novel forms of thinking. Hence, we propose that for every effort to become historically objective, we also affirm our desire to coincide with objective-ness – a manifestation of our longing for better ways of knowing.

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Endnotes

¹ Peter Galison, "Judgement Against Objectivity," *Picturing Science, Producing Art*, eds. Caroline Jones, Peter Galison & Amy Slaton (New York: Routledge, 1998), 327.

² William James, "Pragmatism's Conception of Truth," in *The Works of William James, Pragmatism*, eds. Fredson Bowers & Ignas Skrupkelis (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975).

³ Galison, "Judgement Against Objectivity," 328. This stance also coincides in Galison's distinction between the theorist and an experimenter in his *Image and Logic*. Galison, *Image and Logic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 132.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 330.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 334.

⁶ This notion on reconstruction is adapted from R.G. Collingwood's discussion on reconstruction in *The Idea of History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1946). More specifically, he mentions that historical reconstruction involves the articulation of an event's habitat or the domain of relations that allowed such an event to take shape. In these relations, pre-suppositions or underlying principles exist that provide the basic foundation for historical events to take place.

⁷ This type of image shares similarities to Burm's discussion of one form of faithfulness in "Wishing Realism to Be True," *The Many Problems of Realism*, ed. Paul Cortois (Netherlands: Tilburg University Press, 1995), 247. In particular, the initial sense of faithfulness, in such article refers to a representation of reality that places the emphasis on what can be exactly represented which in most cases is limited to something concrete, measured or quantified. This type of representation, as he opines, has been a dominant



image in modern science.

⁸ In Philosophy, the stress on the determinative role of the inquirer is labeled as the Baconian Approach affirming Francis Bacon's contribution in the study of knowledge and truth-making.

⁹ This maybe reflective of what Galison proposes as a "Trading Zone" for truth. Galison, *Image and Logic*, 803.

¹⁰ This type of representation shares similarities to Burm's meaning of another form of faithfulness. In particular, this form of representation aims to be more inclusive of contingencies, reasons, or contexts that cannot be literally or physically represented or accounted for. Burms, "Wishing Realism to Be True," *The Many Problems of Realism*, ed. Paul Cortois, 247. But in my analysis, Burm's insight on faithfulness two has an element, which differentiates it from Galison's judgement and interpretation. This element is the absence of stress on the efficacy of representation. This is hinged on the appeal of the second notion of faithfulness wherein it does not aim to address or fulfil a specific goal or end.

¹¹ The notion on presupposition is adopted from R.G. Collingwood's discussion on absolute presuppositions in his *An Essay on Philosophical Method* (London: Oxford University Press, 1933), 160. In particular, Collingwood points out that every field of study is limited and tenable only within the boundaries of its absolute presuppositions.

¹² This is appropriated from Andresito Acuna's account of such a story in his *Philosophical Analysis*. Andresito E. Acuna, *Philosophical Analysis* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Department of Philosophy, 1998).

¹³ *Ibid.*, 129.

¹⁴ James, "Pragmatism's Conception of Truth," 97.

¹⁵ Acuna, *Philosophical Analysis*, 129-130.

¹⁶ Raymundo R. Pavo, "Categories of Thinking: Regressive, Progressive and Digressive Thinking" *PHAVISMINDA Journal* 8 (May, 2009): 89-90.

¹⁷ This statement is appropriated from a classical proposition in philosophy: "Philosophy is like a blind man looking for a black cat in a dark room which is not there." The blind man, with his sensitivity to details, is paradoxically considered as the one who leads the way in the enterprise of philosophizing.

¹⁸ This analogy was introduced by Fr. Heinz Kuluks. SVD, a philosophy professor in the University of San Carlos. In this article, however, the third and fourth elements of the analogy are our own contributions in magnifying what the analogy of the hand and sand can possibly stand for.