

EXISTENCE, COGNITION, ACTION: KANT'S LEGACY FOR THE 21st CENTURY

Book of Abstracts



BELGRADE

March 1st-3rd 2023



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Online



University of Belgrade, Faculty of Philosophy
Department of Philosophy. Institute of Philosophy

PREFACE

With the upcoming tricentennial of Kant's birth in 2024, the time is right to look at the Kant's legacy in and relevance for the 21st century philosophy. That Kant's philosophy has maintained interest of scholars ever since its inception is sufficiently clear. However, the question of just how exactly and to what extent Kant is important in today's philosophy bears repeated revisit and continuous exploration.

A three-day online conference, organized by the Institute of Philosophy and the Faculty of Philosophy (Belgrade University), aims to pursue the question of whether and how Kant can help us advance debates in a number of contemporary issues. Whereas numerous criticisms of Kant's positions in early analytic philosophy (Moore's, Russell's and C.I. Lewis's, to name several notable instances) had suggested, at least initially, his declining influence and perhaps even an outright obsolescence, there is a reason why we continue coming back to Kant. Namely, the rich thematic texture of Kant's writings and his bold systematic innovations of staggering proportions merit our enduring interactions with all aspects of his thought.

In recent years, there has been a renewed interest in the ways in which Kant's philosophy can contribute to contemporary debates in metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of science, philosophy of mind, ethics, and political philosophy. While the latter two areas have been continuously explored from Kantian perspective and are still of exceptional importance within discussions of normative ethics, meta-ethics or applied ethics, as well as in political philosophy in the form of debates about Republicanism, international relations and more, the possibilities for reintegrating Kant within contemporary discussions in metaphysics, epistemology or philosophy of science have only recently come into sharper focus.

The possibilities for exploring Kant's potential significance for today's debates are numerous. The listed clusters of topics point to a far wider range of themes where Kant's philosophy merits constructive or critical reconsideration. Some of the topics explored at this conference are connected to, but are in no way exhausted by, the following list:

- The status of space and time
- Contemporary debates in cognitive science
- Relation between the mental and the physical
- The metaphysical nature of the subjective and the objective
- Themes from political philosophy and normative theory
- Theories of action
- Conceptualism and nonconceptualism
- Realism and anti-realism
- Kant and contemporary psychology
- Kant and pragmatists

CONTENT

| | |
|---|----|
| Luigi Caranti (University of Catania) | |
| Kant's Criticism of Democracy | 9 |
| Christian J. Onof (Birkbeck College, London) | |
| Incongruent Counterparts and Transcendental Idealism | 9 |
| Vanja Subotić (University of Belgrade) | |
| Reassessing the Relevance of Kant for Modern Physical Cosmology | 12 |
| Maja Ferenc Kuća (University of Zadar) | |
| Kant's Influence on Philosophy of Science | 15 |
| Jordan C. Myers (University of Houston) | |
| Critiquing the Kingdom of Ends | 18 |
| David Landy (San Francisco State University) | |
| Kantian Arguments against Brandom's Leibnizian Conceptualism | 20 |
| Karlo Gardavski (University of Zagreb) | |
| Brandom's (Neo)pragmatist Reading of Kant: Normative Intentionality ... | 22 |
| Thomas Land (University of Victoria) | |
| Perceptual Experience and Necessary Concepts | 24 |
| Jessica Leech (King's College London) | |
| Objective, Subjective, Neither | 25 |
| Steven Gouveia (CEFH - Portuguese Catholic University) | |
| Can the Kantian Brain Explain Consciousness? | 25 |
| Jesse Loi (Ohio State University) | |
| A Concrete Kantian Reductio Proof | 27 |
| Andrew Stephenson (University of Southampton) | |
| Kant and Kripke: Rethinking Necessity and the A Priori | 30 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Andrew Chignell (Princeton University) | |
| Kant on Hope, Despair, and Difference-Making | 32 |
| Nathan Bice (Columbia University) | |
| The Value of Kant's Concept of an Object for Realists and Idealists Alike .. | 32 |
| Robert J. Hartman (Ohio Northern University) | |
| Moral Luck in Kantian Moral Philosophy | 35 |
| Ahmet Gönüllü (Bilkent University) | |
| Kantian Justification and Explanation for Group Actions | 38 |
| Dietmar Heidemann (University of Luxembourg) | |
| Kant's invention of realism | 40 |
| Gabriele Gava (University of Turin) | |
| Kant on Conviction and Persuasion | 41 |
| Iris Vidmar Jovanović (University of Rijeka) | |
| Kant's Theory of Poetic Expression and Contemporary Philosophy of Poetry | 42 |
| Ilaria Ferrara (Italian Institute for Philosophical Studies of Naples) | |
| The Science of Beauty: Perception of Form, Emotion, and Creation Between Kant and Neuro-Aesthetics | 44 |
| Lukas Nehlsen (University of Cologne) | |
| Kantian Conceptualism, the Rule-Following Paradox and Schematism | 47 |
| John B. Best (Eastern Illinois University) | |
| Kant's Prefiguring of Top-Down and Bottom-Up Processing | 49 |
| Jonas Held (University of Leipzig) | |
| Kant on Judgment and Belief | 52 |
| Avery Goldman (DePaul University) | |
| Kant's Principle of Sufficient Reason, Revisited | 54 |
| Michael Lewin (Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University) | |
| Kant on Philosophy as Conceptual Analysis | 56 |

Luigi Caranti

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KANT'S CRITICISM OF DEMOCRACY

Bio: Luigi Caranti is a professor of political philosophy at the Università di Catania. He worked as researcher in various international institutions including the School of International and Public Affairs of Columbia University and the Philipps-Universität – Marburg. His studies mainly concern the philosophy of Kant. Caranti has provided contributions on the theoretical, practical, aesthetic and political dimensions of Kant's thought. Recently, his interests focus on the theory of human rights, democratic peace theory, and the scientific and philosophical debate concerning the causes of world poverty.

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INCONGRUENT COUNTERPARTS AND TRANSCENDENTAL IDEALISM

Abstract:

The lasting contribution that Kant has made to our understanding of space can be measured by the amount of literature that his arguments from incongruent counterparts have generated both within Kant scholarship and contemporary analytic philosophy of space (e.g. Nerlich 2009). Much of the interest of contemporary philosophy has focussed upon Kant's 1768 *Regions of Space* argument. There, Kant examines in what the difference between counterparts consists, and concludes that it requires reference to an absolute space. The debate between relationism and absolutism (or substantivalism) which has its origin in

Leibniz-Clarke exchange on the nature of space, continues in contemporary philosophy. There has also been recent interest in Kant's 1770 Dissertation claim about the intuitive nature of the representation of space insofar as it has unexpected epistemological consequences. By contrast Kant's use of incongruent counterparts to ground transcendental idealism (TI) in 1770 and 1783, while the focus of some important Kant scholarship (Buroker, van Cleve), has largely been ignored in contemporary philosophy. In this paper I argue that the contemporary discussion that arises from the epistemological consequences of Kant's 1770 argument, has metaphysical consequences, namely the truth of TI.

Why use incongruent counterparts and the 1770 argument In the Transcendental Aesthetic, Kant argues that space is a form of sensibility characterizing the representation of objects external to us. Even if his arguments are valid, it is not clear that he can further infer that it is only such a form, so that it or an isomorphic structure is not also a feature of things in themselves. The alternative strategy must be to show directly that things-in-themselves cannot be spatial(-temporal). Kant's 1768 argument had shown that incongruence properties do not supervene logically upon the counterparts' non-relational properties. They are 'mediated' (Nerlich 2009) by the nature of space, specifically, its dimensionality and orientability. In 1770, Kant argues, following Leibniz, that if these properties were conceptual, they would thus supervene. He concludes that they are intuitive properties requiring an a priori intuition of space. Rather than examine Kant's argument itself, I focus upon the contemporary discussion it gave rise to.

The contemporary discussion around the epistemology of counterparts Jonathan Bennett (1970; 1991) captures the focus of this debate in his formulation of the 'Kantian Hypothesis' as 'the claim that an explanation of the meanings of "right" and "left" requires showing'. He argues that it appears impossible to inform such an Alphan (from planet Alpha) who is confused about 'left' and 'right' of their mistake by any means that 'rigorously exclude all (...) references to particulars'. But in fact, the 1956 experimental proof that the principle of the Conservation of Parity in physics is infringed, does provide us with a way: the idea is that, if this experiment is reproduced, the Alphan will be able to discover their mistake. Indeed, the experimenter need only wrap their hand around the electromagnet used in the experiment so that the fingers point in the direction of electron flow. If the thumb points in the direction of maximum electron emission from the decay of Cobalt-60, it is a left hand. As Martin Curd (1984; 1991) and William Harper (1991) point out, it is still necessary for the experiment to be carried out and for the Alphan to have a representation of its outcome, i.e. an intuition. While this

provides support for Kant's 1770 claim, it also has metaphysical consequences that I wish to explore.

An argument for TI

I shall argue that if orientation properties can only be grasped in this way, these are merely properties of some possible cognitive subject's experience, not properties of things independently of possible cognition. Indeed, 'left' and 'right' are not just conventional labels as can be seen by considering Alice going through the looking-glass. In the mirror world, all the relations are the same, including those of the outcome of the experiment to my body. These and any other "standard" natural properties are therefore insufficient as criteria of identity of the actual world: they leave us with an indeterminate actual world (it is both worlds on either side of the mirror). It is only by including the experience (intuition) of a possible observer that a difference appears since they will know which side of the looking-glass produces a result consistent with the outcome expected from the instructions sent to the Alphan.

Since these properties of incongruence are widespread (most objects are not fully symmetric) and have causal implications, all objective natural properties ultimately refer to a possible observer, and are not properties of things-in-themselves independently of such possible experience. I consider two objections. First, on the grounds of a claim of natural supervenience of consciousness upon physical/functional properties (independently of possible experience of course), it might seem that the observer sees no change in the mirror world since all such properties are the same. But this leads us to an asymmetry which is not acceptable. As a result, this supervenience claim has to be revised by changing the supervenience base. Second, it might be argued that the indeterminacy flagged above is harmless insofar as there is no fact of the matter about which is the actual world. This would be motivated by a relationist understanding of space. That such a relationist theory is viable is however questionable following Kant's 1768 argument (which I cannot discuss here). But further, the Cobalt-60 decay experiment clearly identifies a preferential side for electron emission: a relationist would have to account for this in a physical law. But, as the epistemology of counterparts shows, a preferential side cannot be referred to without reference to a particular which, by definition, is excluded in a law of nature.

Overall, Kant's 1768 and 1770 arguments based upon incongruent counterparts provide, together with the contemporary epistemological debate about our knowledge of 'left' and 'right' in the light of the Cobalt-60 experiment, the

material for a grounding of the claim that objectivity is the domain of possible experience and thereby, the truth of Transcendental Idealism.

Bio: Christian Onof is Honorary Research Fellow in the Department of Philosophy at Birkbeck College (London), and Reader in the faculty of Engineering at Imperial College London. His philosophical interests are the philosophy of Kant, the nature of consciousness and existentialism. He has published on these topics in *Philosophical Review*, *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, *Kantian Review*, *Kant Studien*, *Kant Yearbook*, *Studi Kantiani*, *Journal of Mind and Behavior*. He is co-founder of the journal *Episteme* (Cambridge University Press) and Area Editor for 18th and 19th Century German Philosophy at the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy.

Vanja Subotić

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REASSESSING THE RELEVANCE OF KANT FOR MODERN PHYSICAL COSMOLOGY

Abstract:

Kant's philosophy of physics has recently seen the light of day among philosophers concerned with the methodological problems of modern physical cosmology, such as the practice of extrapolating physical laws backwards in time. Extrapolating the laws of local physics to the universe has been assimilated by the (now-mainstream) Big Bang framework (Alpher, Bethe, Gamow 1948), despite sometimes being branded methodologically dubious (cf. Balashov 2002; Narlikar 2018; Smolin 2013). This framework represents the universe's peculiar spacetime geometry as being homogenous and isotropic. While homogeneity requires that, at time t , every spatial point looks the same, isotropy conditionally holds when there are no preferred spatial directions (cf. Ellis 2007, 2014; Smeenk 2012). Altogether, these tenets are traditionally labelled as the cosmological principle, i.e., a mathematically defined global principle upon which the description of spatial uniformity of all parts of the universe is based. Moreover, it is this principle that justifies cosmologists in their extrapolation of the laws of local physics.

Smeenk & Bénétreau-Dupin (2017) articulate and defend a Kantian response to the issue of reconciling universal laws with their local applicability. This response commits them to reject intrinsically cosmological laws, as proposed by

Unger & Smolin (2015). The crux of their argument revolves around Kant's claims in the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*: (i) that the universe as a whole cannot be a possible object of experience, as shown in the Antinomies; and (ii) that the application of laws to a particular subsystem of the universe is provisional, but the laws in question do follow from pure concepts of understanding combined with the empirical concept of matter. Claims (i) and (ii) are invoked by Smeenk & Bénétreau-Dupin against attempts to define global properties of spacetime without invoking the application of local physics. On their account, "although such properties can be defined, they are empirically inaccessible in a clear sense" (2017, 358).

However, as Lee Smolin (2013, 99) notes, "there is only one universe, and one case does not yield sufficient evidence to justify the claim that a particular law of nature applies". Therefore, Smolin would argue that cosmologists and philosophers of cosmology mistakenly rely on methods that are especially suitable to the study of various phenomena describable by local physics but which are frankly inadequate when applied to the universe in its entirety. To refute Smolin, Smeenk & Bénétreau-Dupin urge that a proper cosmology must include both a "pure" part (constituted by necessary a priori laws) and an empirical part. The latter requirement is owing to "the application of the understanding, without contribution from sensibility, cannot yield knowledge" (Smeenk & Bénétreau-Dupin 2017, 364). Thus, Kant's criticism of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century rational cosmology in the *Critique of Pure Reason* is still relevant for contemporary cosmology. Indeed, insofar as this branch of science purports to proclaim global properties of spacetime, as established through observation, transcendental illusion always looms.

Additionally, Smeenk & Bénétreau-Dupin invoke epistemological restrictions to point out that global properties are beyond empirical reach, even though they are mathematically well-defined in the mainstream Big Bang framework. Given that they are beyond empirical reach, global properties cannot be regarded as falling under Kant's empirical concept of matter, which represents a constitutive part of natural laws along with the pure concept of understanding. A fortiori, no distinct cosmological law can be formulated in cosmology. Ergo, Smolin is wrong in assuming that cosmology should proceed on different methodological grounds.

My issue with Smeenk & Bénétreau-Dupin's Kantian stance regarding the applicability of local laws to the universe rests upon the different points drawn from Kant's Critical writings. These authors disregard that Kant is, throughout the Critical period, concerned with the limits of our cognitive abilities rather than the

limits of the causal domain. It thus seems that a proper Kantian stance would assume that the laws of mechanics are constituted by experience and grounded in nature, not vice versa. Besides the pure concept of understanding, which comes from a subject, the empirical concept of matter is primarily made observable through the sensory faculties of the very same agent. Similarly, in his *Opus postumum*, Kant assessed the possibility of physics as a science, his main argument being that, in order to systematize physics, it is necessary to subsume empirical observations under the constitutive a priori principle, which in turn direct our empirical investigations. Therefore, it is feasible to argue that the laws of mechanics, which deliver unifying and potentially refined descriptions, as Smeenk & Bénétreau-Dupin acknowledge, are altogether subjectively prescribed. On my account, thus, the extrapolation of local laws stems from our cognitive *modus operandi*, which is, in turn, constrained by possible experience.

Nonetheless, even though I argue that Smeenk & Bénétreau-Dupin essentially miss the target, I do think one could make sense of Kant being relevant for methodological debates in modern physical cosmology such as the extrapolation of local laws to the universe. Such an extrapolation was Kant's key strategy in the *Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens* from 1755, besides his strong commitment to the uniformity of the universe. *Prima facie*, this is akin to the cosmological principle, which undergirds the Big Bang framework. Nonetheless, on closer reading, I think that one could interpret Pre-Critical Kant as cleaving closer to the Steady State Theory, a framework that was a bitter rival to the Big Bang framework in the twentieth century (Bondi & Gold 1948; Hoyle 1948).

The universe in Kant's *Universal Natural History and the Theory of Heavens* is infinite both spatially and temporally, despite having a beginning in time. Similarly, the proponents of Steady State Theory rejected the idea of an evolving universe from a hot, dense state in favour of an idea involving structural properties of the universe, which had always existed and would continue to exist forever, meaning that there was no beginning in time, nor that there would ever be an end of time. Thus, in their view, the universe is, on a large-scale, uniform in space and time. Such an assumption constitutes the perfect cosmological principle. One could thus re-assess the debate between proponents of both Big Bang and Steady State Theory, i.e., between methodological consequences of the cosmological principle and the perfect cosmological principle in Kantian terms thereby constructing an original historical epistemological framework for understanding the development of modern physical cosmology and its present state to which Smeenk & Bénétreau-Dupin aspire.

Bio: Vanja Subotić is a research assistant at the Institute of Philosophy, University of Belgrade. Her primary areas of research are the philosophy of linguistics and cognitive science. Vanja is attempting to explain the nature of our linguistic competence through the methodological analysis of state-of-the-art deep learning models implementing NLP techniques. She has co-authored papers which appeared, among other prominent journals, in *Review of Philosophy and Psychology* and, most recently, *Journal of Value Inquiry*.

Maja Ferenc Kuća

University of Zadar

KANT'S INFLUENCE ON PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF JUDGMENT

Abstract:

The goal is to find in Kant a link in the problems and questions that he placed at the center of his philosophy of natural science and to see if they can serve as a good insight into recent times (cf. Cohen, 1994: 142). Researching literature from the philosophy of science of recent and not so recent editions, I would say that many of them do not attach importance to Kant. But Kant's importance comes from his general approach to natural science and the role of the subject.

In the context of subject who determines the nature of the object by enabling it to understand the structure, it is further important in the context of science in the modern sense to take a look at Kant's theory of judgment, namely, the concept of reflective judgment in the third Critique. What most amazes, and at the same time fascinates and becomes very influential in Kant's theory of judgment is his classification of judgment with regard to types of logical form and semantic types. In the first Critique, Kant's fundamental preoccupation is how is it possible for judgments, which are not logically true or even contradictory, to relate a priori to their object? The answer lies in claim that it is human understanding that ascribes a priori laws to nature and thereby makes objects possible in human knowledge (cf. Fricke, 1990: 45/46). Therefore, human experience cannot be a good carrier for the foundation of such objectivity (general validity). That means that a transcendental subject is not sufficient for the knowledge of objectivity, what we need for knowledge of nature. Such a gap can be overcome by reflective judgment, because it assigns us the task of constantly improving our knowledge

of nature so that we can reach the systematic unity of nature (cf. Fricke, 1990: 57-61). Kant claims that it must be some a priori principle that can be defined in many ways, but we can claim one thing in all possible explanations of the a priori, and that is that the a priori principle contains universality and necessity. The question that will pervade the third Critique is precisely on the trail of this: does the power of judgment supply itself with (any) a priori principle? Butts claims that judgment guided a priori by the principle of perfection, becomes the essential power of unifying all components of consciousness and that it is important in the context of science because it provides a conceptual framework for unifying the conditions of knowledge with the system of nature (cf. Butts, 1990: 13).

So, in the third Critique, Kant raises the judgment to a higher level. Namely, judgment ceases to be a name for combined operations and becomes a faculty that is directed by fundamental a priori principle that is inherent only to itself. The questions that arise are: how is it possible to form a new concept without a priori principles; how a new term is formed in the first place, and - are there judgments that neither begin nor end with a certain term? Such questions most often appear in aesthetic judgments. The fact that brings me to the question of the relevance of judgment is that it, like understanding in general, is not only a question of the humanities, but that it can, and must play a significant role as an important element of the natural sciences and their explanations. Since Kuhn, the forerunner of relativism in the philosophy of science, most of the objections against the consistency of realism in the theory of science fall into the water because the role of the judging subject is not taken into account (cf. Zovko, 2019: 3), and it is precisely that role which is essential for the systematic constitution of a reliable interpretations of scientific theories.

Probably the more eminent connoisseurs of Kant's philosophy would say that in Kant's aesthetics the concept of reflective judgment does not appear in terms of the requirements for empirical scientific research, which points to the conclusion that Kant's speech on the concept of judgment ended with the second Critique, but that is just one reason more why it is important to deal with, or research Kant's third Critique and to understand it in connection with biological teleology as an aspect of a unified philosophical project. Why Kant and not another cognitive or practical theory of judgment? Three reasons. First one, because Kant's theory of judgment takes the innate faculty of judgment central to the cognitive capacity of the rational human mind. Secondly, it insists on the semantic, logical, psychological, epistemic, and practical priority of the propositional content of judgment. Thirdly, systematically embeds judgment in the metaphysics of transcendental idealism. Reflective judgment, therefore, is offered in the

philosophy of science as an acceptable alternative because it seeks new forms of explanation and scientific paradigms, which is necessary to overcome the problem of theory ladenness.

Previous explanations have proven themselves partially unsuccessful in some important segments, with the exception of Lakatos' heuristic model, which is good because it claims that the primary task of the philosophy of science is the rational reconstruction of knowledge. The explication of already existing scientific constructions and the judgment on the acceptance of a scientific theory is made by the scientific elite. For this reason, the task of philosophy of science would be to reconcile the general criteria of methodology with the judgment of the scientific community. The way reflective judgment works is to supplement a deficient mechanistic explanation of the world. It has the task of spreading knowledge, which can improve the scientifically recognized content of scientific knowledge. Since reflective judgment is not tied to theories and rules, which significantly differs it from the current scientific methodology, it is worth to investigate it.

Bio: Maja Ferenec Kuća (born in 1991) completed her studies in Philosophy at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb in June 2016, defending her master thesis on the topic "Epistemology with Regard to Skepticism." She has taught philosophy, logic, ethics, and Croatian language and literature in high school and realised she wanted be more in science. Then in September 2019, she joined the Croatian Science Foundation research project "Relevance of Hermeneutical Judgment," directed by prof. dr. sc. Jure Zovko, currently president of International Academy for the Philosophy of Sciences and full time professor at the University of Zadar. She is an assistant at the University of Zadar, Department of Philosophy, where she is pursuing her doctoral thesis about scientific judgment. Her main interests are epistemology, philosophy of science, ethics, politics and animal rights.

Jordan C. Myers

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CRITIQUING THE KINGDOM OF ENDS

Abstract:

Christine Korsgaard adheres to a Kantian position on moral responsibility; through this commitment, she believes we are compelled to always and totally hold individuals morally responsible. I examine Korsgaard's thesis in her 1992 paper and 1996 book, both by the name *Creating the Kingdom of Ends*, and explicate what she has become logically committed to. Korsgaard first maintained that others must view themselves as moral agents as we view ourselves. Then she argued that regardless of deterministic causes, moral actions are still those of their agents. She postulated that we do not hold people responsible because of the reactions it would cause in them – not for consequentialist reasons – but rather because it is something we do as we see each other as moral agents. So then, if we cannot help but view ourselves as responsible moral agents, and we grant that others view themselves this way, we must always view others in the light we view ourselves, and thus we must always hold others responsible. Even though there are explanatory stories about how we developed, since they do not apply to our subjective deliberations, and because those deliberations are shared by all rational beings, there is no ground to excuse or waive the responsibility of others. She herself says as much explicitly, but then shies away from this conclusion in other sections of her work, for reasons I believe are correct, but incompatible with her more formal argument.

After this analysis, I critique her thesis on its own grounds by offering two direct criticisms, one from a subjective standpoint and the other from a third-person account. I then introduce P.F. Strawson's essay "Freedom and Resentment" to inject a different perspective on moral responsibility. Strawson postulates that we take two different types of attitudes towards others: reactive attitudes and objective attitudes. Reactive attitudes are those we take when seeing another person as agentic and as an appropriate target of our reactions; "... of such things as gratitude, resentment, forgiveness, love, and hurt feelings." Objective attitudes require the suspension of this interpersonal involvement, taking the person in question and degrading her from an agentic individual with whom we may have a relationship and transforming her into an object of deliberation, something in the situation to be accounted for deterministically. Strawson merely claims that sometimes we do take the reactive attitude and that other times we do take the

objective attitude. But he is not clear on what criteria should determine which attitude we take in what circumstances. In fact, this is a deliberate choice on Strawson's part; he says that someone like myself has been all too busy overintellectualizing the problem. The act of holding responsible, on his account, "... neither calls for nor permits, an external 'rational' justification." Korsgaard makes it quite clear that taking the objective attitude is always impermissible, but Strawson's view is more difficult to parse. He explicitly states we simply cannot give up the reactive attitude altogether because it is too engrained in us, and that even if, theoretically, determinism was true, this would not bear on the practical question of reactivity. Strawson's language of reactive attitudes is useful in understanding Korsgaard's commitment, but I argue that he holds an ineffectual descriptive view where a powerful, normative one is needed.

Finally, I end the critique of Korsgaard's absolutist views on agency and develop three cases in which I believe it is morally permissible to suspend Strawson's reactive attitude or Korsgaard's obligatory responsibility. The first case is when I take the objective attitude towards myself in moments of active deliberation or reflection. Here I view myself in the past or future as a determined thing to be examined or taken into account. The second case of moral permissibility occurs when I suspend my reactive attitudes towards someone who will not or cannot engage interpersonally in a way that warrants reactive attitudes. This person has degraded my relations with her to the point of non-collaboration, and has thus brought the objective attitude on herself. The third case is one where causally deterministic circumstances demand the objective attitude, cases in which a key variable negates even Korsgaard's grounds for practical responsibility. This third case is also the only in which I argue the reactive attitude would be immoral to uphold; in other words, Korsgaard's responsibility in this third case would be normatively impermissible. I find great value in what Korsgaard and Strawson assert, but push for a change in Korsgaard's absolutism and a bolder stance than Strawson's. Holding people in our lives responsible is central to interpersonal relationships, but it is not morally responsible for us to default to the reactive attitude.

Bio: Jordan Myers attends the Masters of Philosophy program at the University of Houston ('22-'24)! He is a full time graduate student and teaching assistant. His philosophical interests include topics of freedom, agency, and responsibility. His other areas of interest are metaethics and applied ethics, moral psychology, social epistemology, and have recently been exploring existentialism and political philosophy. He previously majored in mechanical engineering and worked for three years in the engineering field. He also hosts a philosophy podcast, titled "Plato's Cave".

David Landy

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KANTIAN ARGUMENTS AGAINST BRANDOM'S LEIBNIZIAN CONCEPTUALISM

Abstract:

This paper will work through the following lines of thought. Kant offers what I take to be a sound argument against a Leibnizian, purely conceptual, account of representation. Concepts are essentially general representations, and so necessarily, any conceptual representation, no matter how detailed, can possibly have multiple instances. Thus, a purely conceptual representation cannot secure determinate singular representation of objects of possible experience. No matter how elaborate a purely conceptual description of an object one gives, that description might apply to more than one such object. To secure determinate representation, then, Kant concludes, one must represent such objects as occupying a location in space and time relative to oneself. For example, I represent this coffee cup rather than a qualitatively identical one, by representing it as 'this coffee cup one meter in front of me right now'.

Of course, we might wonder what the meaning of such a complex demonstrative phrase is, and when we do, there is reason to think that the answer that we give will be in terms of certain concepts. That is, I have argued elsewhere that Kant holds that concepts are inferential rules. If one knows all of the judgments that imply 'S is P', and all of the judgments that are implied by 'S is P', and all of the judgments that are incompatible with 'S is P', then one knows thereby knows the meaning, or the conceptual content, of 'S is P'. So, one can know the meaning of 'this coffee cup one meter in front of me is full' by knowing its inferential role. In fact, in an effort to substantiate just this sort of thesis, Robert Brandom has made great strides in accounting for the inferential role of huge swaths of our language, including those of singular terms generally, and such complex demonstrative phrases more specifically. He casts singular terms as those subsentential parts of language that support symmetrical inferential licenses. E.g., if the inference from, 'The actor that plays Neo in The Matrix is the greatest actor of all time', to,

'The actor that plays Alex Wyler in the The Lake House is the greatest actor of all time',
is valid, then so is the inference from,

‘The actor that plays Alex Wyler in the The Lake House is the greatest actor of all time’,

to,

‘The actor that plays Neo in The Matrix is the greatest actor of all time’.

What distinguishes complex demonstrative phrases from singular terms more generally, Brandom adds, is that they additionally ground anaphoric reference chains. E.g. the demonstrative phrase, ‘this actor’ can serve as the first link in an anaphoric chain such as, ‘This actor is great. He was great in The Matrix. He was great in The Lake House. He’s been great in everything in which I’ve ever seen him!’ Thus, the meaning of a demonstrative phrase can be given by exhibiting or describing the inferential role that such a term plays in the language of which it is a part.

If, however, the meaning of even complex demonstrative phrases is inferentially articulable, and so purely conceptual, then what plays the extra-conceptual role required by Kant’s anti-Leibnizian argument? Wilfrid Sellars has suggested that this role is played by what he calls the picturing function of language and thought. I.e. not only are language and thought analyzable conceptually, but they also essentially consist of natural linguistic or mental objects standing in determinate spatiotemporal relations to the objects they represent. And it is by standing in such natural relations to their objects that such representations come to be determinate singular representation of them. I.e. what object I represent when I judge, ‘This coffee cup one meter in front of me right now is full’ is determined by what object actually is one meter in front of me right now. That language pictures the world, though, is not part of the meaning of these terms, but is rather an essential part of their use. Thus, a purely conceptual, Leibnizian or Brandomian, account of thought is untenable because it does not take this use into account, and cannot secure determinate singular representations of objects of possible experience.

Why, though, is securing such representation an essential aspect of human representational systems? Returning to Kant, we find yet another argument that I take to be sound. The very purpose of such representational systems is as the necessary means to representing oneself as the single subject of experience persisting through time. The analytic unity of apperception presupposes the synthetic unity of apperception, which is just the determinate singular representation of objects of possible experience. Were we to employ a purely conceptual representational system, we would not represent this or that object determinately, and since it is by representing objects that we represent ourselves, we would not represent ourselves determinately either! Using a purely conceptual description

of the world, one could represent a subject of some experiences, but not oneself as the single subject of one's own experiences. Since Kant takes this latter representation to be analytic, a Leibnizian or Brandomian account of representation, is an impossibility for creatures like us.

Bio: David Landy is a professor in the Department of Philosophy at San Francisco State University, and the author of *Kant's Inferentialism and Hume's Science of Human Nature*. In addition to Hume and Kant, he has research interests in the work of Wilfrid Sellars, Lady Mary Shepherd, and topics in the philosophy of mind and language. His publications include the following papers: "Is Shepherd a Bundle Theorist?", "Shepherd on Meaning, Reference, and Perception", "Shepherd on Hume's Argument for the Possibility of Uncaused Existence", and "Kant's Better-than-Terrible Argument in the Anticipations of Perception."

Karlo Gardavski

University of Zagreb

BRANDOM'S (NEO)PRAGMATIST READING OF KANT: NORMATIVE INTENTIONALITY

Abstract:

Within the presentation, the aim is to present Robert Brandom's reading of Kant, and thus highlight Kant's influence on contemporary philosophy, especially on the philosophy that Brandom develops in the direction of (neo)pragmatism and philosophy of language. The influence is wider than what we have stated, but within the paper we will exclusively focus on Brandom's understanding of Kant and its importance for Brandom's inferential project whose main issue is the question of rationality, meaning, and normativity (philosophy of language). Brandom reads and interprets Kant in a pragmatic manner. Namely, the central point of this reinterpretation is Kant's concept of synthetic power of reason understood in the form of the power of judgment. According to Brandom, judgments are always guided by some kind of norms. Therefore, the object of our judgment is always evaluated with respect to the norms within our discursive practice. The reason why Brandom reinterprets Kant lies in the idea that Kant's teachings can be used to explain human rationality in a new pragmatic paradigm. Normativity is the basis from which Brandom understands rationality as a discursive practice. The rationality advocated by Brandom requires mastery of the conceptual

content and norms implicit in discursive practices. Brandom credits Kant with the fact that Kant is the first who makes a demarcation by understanding the concept of a norm, thus creating the concept of what it means to be a rational being or a being that follows norms, i.e. has a conceptual activity through which we adopt and act through norms.

For Brandom, it is the norms that should explain the propositional content that is hidden within the intentions of the speakers of certain language communities. That is, to have an insight into the intention of a certain participant of a language game (in this case, a discursive one) means to have an insight into the implicit structure of norms that is hidden within intentional action and to articulate or explain it in the form of a network of inferences. Intentionality, as Brandom understands it, refers to the content to which the speakers of a certain language commit themselves by playing the game of giving and asking for reasons. Thus they opt for a certain number of norms that are part of public activity.

In his inferential project, Brandom understands the importance of logic and logical vocabulary, but interprets it pragmatically. Namely, the two most important problems of Brandom's philosophy are the question of meaning and truth. Brandom believes that both concepts can be articulated in the form of a network of inferences. What distinguishes Brandom from the tradition (including Kant) is that he rejects the formal rigidity of logic. Namely, Brandom believes that articulating meaning and reality is possible, if logic becomes an expressive tool, which does not have a pre-given set of axioms and categories by means of which reality is classified. Logic (or theory in general) should be at the service of practice, or semantics should be at the service of pragmatics. The central place of Brandom's logical vocabulary is material implication, which is the basis for the articulation of norms within language practice, or, in other words, it is the logical operator that makes explicit what is implicit within linguistic practice. Material implication should be our main interpretative tool. Language is too colorful and contingent to be limited to only a few categories. In Brandom's case, the choice of categories to determine meaning will depend on how we understand language practice. Material inference enables us to model the meaning of linguistic entities and the plurality of theories about meaning.

The opinions of Brandom and Kant differ on the issue of the articulation of norms as indicators of correctness and meaning, which automatically means that they also differ in relation to logic. Brandom recognizes Kant as a central place from which we can understand what makes certain beings rational – and that is the power of judging. To be a rational being is to judge / make judgments, or to be able to have an intentional content to which you commit yourself to and

which is expressed in the form of a norm (normative intentionality). Norms and intentionality are always an integral part of language practice. Learning norms, their further recognition, further use and change are always within the public sphere. Normativity for Brandom is a social matter, but one that can be articulated through discursive practice, the game of giving and asking reasons in language practice. Discursive practices are always articulated by drawing a network of inferences that should explain the norms within the conceptual content. For a more detailed insight into what is hidden within the discursive practice, Brandom introduces a deontic vocabulary through which he further wants to draw attention to the networks of inference, which are actually networks of intersubjective evaluation of norms (i.e. evaluations of language practices for which certain speakers of a certain language are committed).

Bio: Karlo Gardavski is a Phd student of Philosophy at the Faculty of humanities and social sciences, University of Zagreb. His doctoral work focuses on the research of contemporary epistemology (with special reference to the late Wittgenstein, Michael Williams and Robert Brandom). His research interests are Analytic Philosophy, Pragmatism, Neopragmatism, Logic, Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Mind, Epistemology and Cognitive science .

Thomas Land

University of Victoria

PERCEPTUAL EXPERIENCE AND NECESSARY CONCEPTS

Bio: Thomas joined the department in 2018. Before coming to UVic, Thomas taught at Ryerson University in Toronto and, prior to that, was a postdoc at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. Thomas's current research concerns various aspects of Kant's theoretical philosophy. In particular, he is interested in the role of concepts in Kant's theory of perception, his thesis that self-consciousness is fundamental to rationality, and the idea that there may be certain concepts that a thinker possesses simply in virtue of being a thinker. Thomas has published papers in journals such as the Canadian Journal of Philosophy, Journal for the History of Philosophy, Philosophical Topics, and Kantian Review, as well as a number of edited collections. For a detailed list of Dr. Land's recent publications, please also see our "What We're Writing" page.

Jessica Leech

King's College London

OBJECTIVE, SUBJECTIVE, NEITHER

Bio: Jessica joined the KCL department in September 2016. She has previously been a lecturer at the University of Sheffield, and a Junior Research Fellow at King's College, Cambridge. She did her doctorate jointly at the University of Sheffield and the University of Geneva (as part of the "Theory of Essence" research project based at the Eidos Centre for Metaphysics at the University of Geneva), supervised by Fabrice Correia and Bob Hale. Research interests and PhD supervision Metaphysics and logic of modality Metaphysics Kant Philosophical Logic. Jessica's research interests, contemporary and historical, centre around the topic of modality. She is interested in contemporary issues in the metaphysics of modality, such as the notion of essence, and the relationships between different kinds of necessity. She is also interested in exploring what Kant had to say about modality, and issues arising from that. She is currently working on a book which attempts to draw out Kant's views on modality, and apply them to contemporary issues in the metaphysics of modality.

Steven Gouveia

CEFH – Portuguese Catholic University

CAN THE KANTIAN BRAIN EXPLAIN CONSCIOUSNESS?

Abstract:

The Predictive Processing Theory of the Mind is a recent theory developed by philosophers, cognitive scientists and neuroscientists about the nature and function of the brain and its role to create the conscious mind that we human, and some non-human animals, have. This approach has several other ways of being

described: the Bayesian brain, the predictive coding, active inference, and a few others (cf. Friston, 2005; Clark, 2013; Hohwy, 2013).

What is relevant is that all of those descriptions describe one core and same idea about the brain: that the brain is a prediction machine with the function of creating predictions or hypotheses about the causes of our sensory signals, on one hand, and challenging those models of the world by incorporating the errors of the previous models into new models, on the other hand. Its main goal is to incessantly make predictions about the upcoming sensory data based on its best current models of the causes of those data.

Although this theory seems recent, some argue that it has its root in the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. See, for example, the claim by Andy Clark on how some aspects of PP paradigm seems to have an “almost Kantian feel” (Clark, 2013: 196) or the claim by Jakob Hohwy that “there is certainly a distinct Kantian element” about the Predictive Processing Theory (cf. Hohwy, 2013: 5).

Following this, we should notice how revolutionary PP is for the study of the relationship between the mind and the world by turning “a traditional picture of perception on its head” (Clark, 2015: 51). In the opposite direction, PP theorists argue that we should reverse the way we conceive the cortical hierarchy from a down-top approach to a top-down approach.

The Kantian idea of reversing the traditional approach to the mind is considered, regarding the mind/brain relationship, what Copernicus did regarding the Earth/Sun, a Copernican revolution that “assume that objects must conform to our cognition” (Kant, 1998/1787: sec. B xvi), that is, that the perceptual experience of the world is influenced by our cognitive system that generates models of those perceptions in the first instance.

As claimed by Clark, PP is considered “a genuine departure from many of our previous ways of thinking about perception, cognition, and the human cognitive architecture” (Clark, 2013:187). More relevant than this Copernican turn, the great novelty of the PP Theory is its ambitious goal of being a Theory of Everything about the mental: this theory – and its specific principles and specificities – wants to explain every aspect of our mental life and experience, including consciousness.

The main focus of this talk is on whether Predictive Processing can properly explain consciousness. Consciousness can be characterized by content, level/state, and form. Based on various lines of empirical data, we argue that PP can well account for the content of consciousness. In contrast, PP remains insufficient when it comes to the level/state and especially the form of consciousness including the subjective experience of the contents of consciousness as characterized

by various phenomenal features. Hence, we conclude that PP remains limited in explaining the association of content with consciousness. Therefore, PP needs to be complemented by a wider and different framework which, as based on the recent temporo-spatial theory of consciousness (TTC), may be spatiotemporal.

Bio: Steven S. Gouveia pursued his Ph.D. thesis at the University of Minho (Braga, Portugal), under the supervision of Professor Manuel Curado and Professor Georg Northoff. His primary focus is on the relationship between Neuroscience and Philosophy. Particularly, he is working on the methodological issue: what kind of methodology should we apply to study the various concepts and phenomena of the philosophy of mind? Four approaches are analyzed in detail: (a) isolationist approach, (b) neurophenomenology, (c) reductive neurophilosophy and (d) non-reductive neurophilosophy. The next step is to understand how two concepts (from philosophy, “qualia”, and from neuroscience, “information”) are defined by each approach. Finally, he will compare those definitions with the empirical data of the brain’s sciences to find out which is more plausible. He is a visiting researcher at the “Minds, Brain Imaging and Neuroethics” project at the Royal Institute of Mental Health, University of Ottawa (Canada). He also conducts his research with the “Lisbon Mind & Reasoning group”, NOVA University of Lisbon and with the “Mind, Language and Action Group” at the Institute of Philosophy of the University of Porto.

Jesse Loi

Ohio State University

A CONCRETE KANTIAN REDUCTIO PROOF

Abstract:

Kant’s commitment to construction in intuition in geometry has been thoroughly discussed and described in the literature (Shabel 2002, Carson 1997, Goodwin 2018). He says in the Discipline that the chain of inferences in a proof “is always guided by intuition” (A717/B745). Kant’s emphasis on intuition in mathematical reasoning has garnered criticism, both historically (in Russell 1903) and in more contemporary work (see Mancosu 1999). Scholars have agreed that Kant’s philosophy of mathematics has not boded well in light of new mathematical developments, though such criticisms against Kant are anachronistic. Kant’s emphasis on intuition has often put him on the wrong side of both current events

of Kant's day and later historic events after his time. In response to whiggish readings of Kant as too committed to intuition, Sutherland (2020) re-reads Kant's philosophy of calculus to give a more nuanced interpretation of Kant with respect to intuition and his philosophy of mathematics. I hope to continue in this more general project of re-interpreting Kant's commitment to intuition in his philosophy of mathematics. I will be focusing on Kant's understanding of *reductio* proof. Goodwin (2018) has laid out a general problem with Kant's notion of *reductio* proof. If Kant requires that all objects of a mathematical proof be instantiated in intuition, a tension arises in *reductio* proof, which presupposes an impossible object. But we are committed to employing our geometric objects in intuition in a proof. This requirement to instantiate objects in intuition is at odds with assuming an impossible object. This tension is especially problematic given Kant's claims in the *Discipline in Proofs*, where Kant allows *reductio* proof in mathematics but not philosophy. A *reductio* proof proceeds by assuming that there exists an object and then arguing from that object to a contradiction. For example, Euclid I.6 argues if a triangle has a pair of equal angles, then it also has corresponding equal sides. The proof of this assumes instead that the corresponding sides are unequal and argues to a contradiction. Other than Goodwin's 2018 work, little has been written on the role of intuition in proofs by contradiction¹. While Kant never gives a concrete *reductio* demonstration, scholars of Euclid (Netz 1999, Manders 1995) have offered readings of Euclid's *reductio* proof. Given Euclid's influence on Kant, it would be natural to attribute a similar view to Kant. Goodwin (2018) even suggests that Kant could be amenable to a type of *reductio* proof reminiscent of Manders' (1995) reconstruction of Euclid. I argue Goodwin's solution as well as other solutions which follow in Euclid's footsteps are not strong enough to resolve the tension presented above. While many of Kant's theses can be rejected in an attempt to make room for *reductio* proof, I argue that one Kantian thesis that must be rejected is that thesis that all steps in a mathematical proof must be done in intuition. I offer an account of Kantian *reductio* proof that makes sense of impossible mathematical objects by weakening the role of intuition in mathematical reasoning. I weaken the Kantian commitment that all steps of a mathematical proof are done in intuition into the weaker thesis that says that intuition must play a role in at least some steps in the mathematical demonstration. By weakening the commitment to intuition, I allow there to be some stages of reasoning where we do not consider our mathematical object in intuition. We can therefore consider impossible mathematical objects without being blocked by intuition. Intuition would normally make it so that "every false step becomes visible" (A735/B763) and prevent us from assuming the *reductio* hypothesis.

However, in our current case, intuition no longer needs to block our reductio hypothesis. If we are allowed to reason using only concepts without resorting to intuition, then we can replicate the moves done in a Euclidean reductio proof. In keeping with the Kantian 1 Friedman has briefly denied any role of intuition in showing us impossibilities, saying that “Nevertheless, pure intuition does not somehow ‘show’ us the impossibility [of a biangle] - whatever this might mean. Rather, it is impossible simply because it conflicts with Euclid’s axiomatization of geometry” (Friedman 1990, footnote 50, my emphasis). Sherry (1998) also briefly offers a view similar to Netz. spirit, our proof must eventually show how the incompatibility of the mathematical object with the conditions of space. Kant explicitly relates the two notions when he says, Thus in the concept of a figure that is enclosed between two straight lines there is no [logical] contradiction... rather the impossibility rests not on the concept in itself, but on its construction in space, i.e., on the conditions of space and its determinations... (B268, my emphasis).

The goal of a reductio proof is to show which conditions of space are incompatible with the assumed mathematical object. Our reasoning about space can be done separately from reasoning about the geometric object in question. I then propose our reasoning about the conditions of space is what makes use of intuition while our reasoning about the geometric object need not make use of intuition. I call the former the diagrammatic half of the proof and the later the discursive half of the proof. Our two subproofs then go on to reach conclusions that are jointly contradictory. This split proof structure I have described above might appear ad hoc, but it still does resemble what the original Euclidean proofs included. Consider Euclid I.6 once more. I.6 argues from the reductio hypothesis that the triangles DBC and ACB are congruent. However, the proof also concludes that DBC is always a strict part of ACB. We have then shown that the part is equal to the whole, which violates one of Euclid’s common notions. Our claim that DBC was a strict part of ACB did not rely at all on the reductio hypothesis, and instead merely relied on our inspection of the spatial relations which appear in the diagram. To clarify, Kant does not think that we need a proof to show that the biangle does not exist. He thinks we know this immediately. However, this passage is still useful for thinking about proofs by contradiction. My two-proof explanation of reductio weakens a Kantian commitment in exchange for having a plausible way for Kant to be able to explain reductio proof. In offering this reading of reductio proof, I have also offered a re-reading of Kant’s commitment to intuition which is slightly weaker. However, this weaker reading of Kant is in line

with the overall project set forth by Sutherland to give a more nuanced reading of Kant's use of intuition in mathematics.

Bio: Jesse Loi is primarily interested in Kant's mathematical influences, particularly from Lambert. Kant's first Critique received much of its mathematical basis from Lambert, so a study of Lambert's work will better allow us to understand Kant's critical philosophy. His Other fields of interest include moral psychology, particularly the question of why morally small actions, like cutting others in line, make us angry.

Andrew Stephenson

University of Southampton

KANT AND KRIPKE: RETHINKING NECESSITY AND THE A PRIORI

Abstract:

This talk reassesses the relation between Kant and Kripke on the relation between necessity and the a priori. Kripke famously argues against what he takes to be the traditional view, very roughly, that a statement is necessary if and only if it is a priori, where what it means for a statement to be necessary is that it is true and could not have been false and what it means for a statement to be a priori is that it is knowable independently of experience. Call such a view, suitably refined and clarified, the Coextension Thesis. Kripke and many others attribute the Coextension Thesis to Kant, thus Kripke and many others take Kripkean arguments against the Coextension Thesis to tell against Kant. I argue that this is a mistake. Kant does not endorse the Coextension Thesis that Kripke and many others attribute to him. He does endorse two quite different theses concerning the relation between necessity and the a priori, as he conceives them. One is a matter of definition and the other is a very substantial philosophical thesis indeed—to establish it is the aim of the entire Critique of Pure Reason. But Kripkean arguments against the Coextension Thesis tell against neither of Kant's theses, as they involve crucially different conceptions of necessity and the a priori. This superficial lack of disagreement masks deep disagreements, but these result from divergent views regarding matters such as realism, modal epistemology, and philosophical methodology; views which Kant does a lot, and Kripke very little, to argue for. The talk has two parts. In the first part I consider Kant's conception of the a priori by attending to his oft-neglected distinction (e.g.

in the B-Introduction) between the a priori in general and the absolutely a priori in particular. I argue that neither can be straightforwardly equated with Kripke's (and Frege's etc.) purely epistemic conception of the a priori. This provides a new argument for a more metaphysical reading of Kant's conception of the a priori as that which involves knowledge of something from its determining ontological grounds. This traditional metaphysical conception of the a priori is intimately connected to the modern epistemic conception, but only via the substantial premise that experience as such can provide us only with knowledge of something from its effects. Applying it to the case at hand makes better sense of what Kant says about the distinction between the a priori in general and the absolutely a priori in particular and it undermines the standard evidence in favour of attributing the Coextension Thesis to Kant. In the second part I turn to Kant's conception of necessity and consider whether he nevertheless does hold some quite different form of coextension thesis for some notion of necessity and his own partly metaphysical notion of the a priori. I focus on Kant's conception of formal necessity, as that which is wholly grounded in the forms of experience alone. Kant does hold a restricted and quite different form of coextension thesis for this kind of necessity and the work on the a priori from Part 1 helps to bring out his argument for such a view, which is quite different from either of the arguments considered by Kripke. Kant thinks that all and only formal necessities are a priori (in both epistemic and metaphysical senses) because he thinks we can have rational insight into the complete real essence of only our own rational capacities. Moreover, such a view is still untouched by Kripkean arguments against the Coextension Thesis, in a nutshell because truth in all formally possible (i.e. experienceable) worlds is required by but insufficient for formal necessity. Thus if Hesperus is Phosphorus or Water is H₂O then it can be true in all formally possible worlds that Hesperus is Phosphorus or that Water is H₂O without it being wholly grounded in the forms of experience alone that Hesperus is Phosphorus or that water is H₂O. Kant would think of Kripke's famous cases as epistemically a posteriori (though metaphysically a priori) and formally contingent. Formal necessity, like all of Kant's conceptions of necessity, based as they are in the notion of determining ontological grounds, is hyperintensional.

I conclude by noting some radically un-Kripkean consequences of Kant's view for the logic, metaphysics, and epistemology of modality and sketching how these points could transform contemporary debates. Arguably Kant's primary influence on contemporary debates in modal metaphysics and modal epistemology has been as a stalking horse for the incautious conflation of necessity and the a priori. Such a view radically underestimates Kant's view and its continuing relevance.

Bio: Andrew is a Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Southampton. His work focuses on Kant and related topics in contemporary Philosophy of Mind, Epistemology, Metaphysics, Logic, and Artificial Intelligence and Machine-Learning. He is particularly interested in the nature of mental activity, mental representation, and imagination, in the context of relation between anti-realism and transcendental idealism, and in modality and the epistemology of modality.

Andrew Chignell

Princeton University

KANT ON HOPE, DESPAIR, AND DIFFERENCE-MAKING

Bio: Andrew Chignell has been a professor in the University Center for Human Values at Princeton since 2019, with appointments in the Religion and Philosophy departments. From 2020 to 2023, he serves as the president of the North American Kant Society. He is also one of the directors of the new Princeton Project in Philosophy and Religion. From 2004 to 2016, he was assistant and then associate professor at Cornell's Susan Linn Sage School of Philosophy, with affiliations in German Studies and Religious Studies. And from 2016 to 2017 he was a professor in the University of Pennsylvania Philosophy department. His research focuses mostly on Immanuel Kant and other early modern philosophers, as well as on philosophy of religion, the ethics of belief, and certain issues in aesthetics and moral psychology (especially hope and despair). I am also developing a scholarly-activist interest in food ethics. Over the years he has authored a large number of influential papers discussing a wide range of aspects of Kant's works.

Nathan Bice

Columbia University

THE VALUE OF KANT'S CONCEPT OF AN OBJECT FOR REALISTS AND IDEALISTS ALIKE

Abstract:

Many contemporary debates in metaphysics hinge on the nature of objects: which objects exist, which "objects" don't, etc. We can make progress in many of these debates by stepping back and considering why it is so useful to see the world as made up of objects in the first place. This connects these metaphysical

debates to topics in epistemology and the philosophy of mind. I argue that Kant's concept of an object provides the foundations of a plausible answer to this question.

Kant's concept of an object is essential to his overall project in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. For example, at (A51/B75) he says a pure concept "contains solely the form of the thought of an object as such." Also, at (B128) Kant says that before proceeding with the Transcendental Deduction he will "explicate the categories: they are concepts of an object as such whereby that object's intuition is regarded as determined in terms of one of the logical functions in judging." To Given the centrality of the categories to Kant's overall project, and given that the categories themselves are explicated in terms of concepts of an object as such, it is clear that Kant's concept of an object is of central importance to his account.

And what is this concept? Kant characterizes it in more detail in a few places. Firstly, at (A104-5) Kant says that in order for cognitions to refer to an object, "they must have that unity in which the concept of an object consists." Then, at (B137) Kant says that "an object is that in whose concept the manifold of a given intuition is united."

Finally, I think his clearest characterization in the *Critique of Pure Reason* is at (A197/B242-3): "Suppose that we inquire what new character is given to our [re]presentations by the reference to an object, and what is the dignity that they thereby attain. We then find that this reference does nothing beyond making necessary the [re]presentations' being combined in a certain way and being subjected to a rule; and we find, conversely, that only through the necessity of a certain order in the time relation of our [re]presentations is objective signification conferred on them."

Hence, the point of the concept of an object for Kant is to force a certain necessary synthetic unity among representations in accordance with particular rules. For example, I am presently perceiving my laptop as both black and rectangular, and it is natural to say that my perceptual representation consists in part of two representations that have been united as of a single object. So, it is clear this concept is important for Kant, but why should it be important to us? Let's step back and consider a more basic question: why is it so useful to see the world as made up of objects in the first place? I claim that an essential aspect of the cognitive value of our concept of an object is that it gives us a way of linking various actual and possible representations in accordance with particular rules, representations linked as being of the same thing.

For example, suppose I'm perceiving an object as a cube. This perception is linked to various expectations of mine regarding how that object will appear

from various other angles. For one, I expect that as I move closer to it, my conscious visual perception of it will take up more of my visual field. If I notice that you are also looking at this cube from a different angle, then I have a general idea of what sort of visual perception you are having, at least relative to various presuppositions about you and your mind. Suppose my actual perception wasn't linked with possible perceptions, both yours and mine, in accordance with particular rules corresponding to their being perceptions of the same thing. If so, what reasons would I have for expecting my current visual experience to have anything in common with my visual experience as I move around, or your visual experience to have anything in common with mine?

These considerations are independent of debates between Realists and Idealists. Any plausible version of Idealism, including Kant's own Transcendental Idealism, makes a distinction between a particular representation had at a particular time by a particular subject and an object capable of being represented at multiple times by multiple subjects. Anyway, we can capture this concept of an object a bit more formally via spaces of possible representations structured in accordance with particular rules. This characterization is available to us because our contemporary notion of a space is far more general than Kant's own. Returning to our cube example, we can capture this aspect of the content of my present visual perceptual experience via a space of possible visual perceptual representations, with each point in the space corresponding to a possible perception of that cube from a particular position and orientation in physical space. The positions of points relative to each other correspond to what my experience would have been like if I were looking at the cube from that position rather than this one (or will be like once I move there, assuming various things about the environment stay the same), which is itself determined via various rules which structure the space. This further determines what some aspects of your experience are like if you are currently looking at the cube from that position rather than this one, at least relative to various presuppositions about you.

The Idealist can go further. An Idealist is free to say that this is all there is to objects (or at least to objects of experience, depending on the Idealist). Objects simply are spaces of possible (mental) representations structured in accordance with particular rules. An Idealist can even say more specifically that objects are spaces of possible conscious experiences. So, we have seen the value of Kant's concept of an object for making sense of why it is so useful to see the world as made up of objects, and even for giving 2For simplicity, let's fix the orientation throughout the representational space as corresponding to a person looking directly at the object in a natural way from the associated position in physical space.

Idealists a way of saying what objects are that straightforwardly grounds them on the mental. I believe that this account can help resolve various contemporary puzzles in metaphysics and philosophy of mind. Hence, here we have yet another example of Kant's relevance to the contemporary philosophical landscape.

Bio: Nathan Bice completed a PhD in Philosophy at Columbia University. his dissertation is about the structure of thought. Following Gottlob Frege, he defines a thought as the sort of content relevant to determining whether an assertion is true or false. The historical component of his dissertation involves interpreting Frege's actual views on the structure of thought. He argues that Frege did not think that a thought has a unique decomposition into its component senses, but rather the same thought can be decomposed into senses in a variety of distinct ways.

Robert J. Hartman

Ohio Northern University

MORAL LUCK IN KANTIAN MORAL PHILOSOPHY

Abstract:

The received view in the moral luck literature, and elsewhere, is that Immanuel Kant's moral philosophy rules out the possibility of moral luck—that is, it rules out the possibility of factors outside of a person's control positively affecting how much praise or blame she deserves (Nagel 1979; 1986; Walker 1991: 22; Williams 1981; 1985). "Kant's moral philosophy is one of grandest attempts in Western philosophy to banish any form of luck from the realm of morality" (Vaida 2014: 124); "the Kantian [moral] position is presented as entirely incompatible with the possibility of luck" (Athanassoulis 2005: 100).

But I argue that there is a plausible interpretation according to which Kant allows luck in circumstance and constitution to positively affect how much praise or blame a person deserves.

Definitions

Moral luck occurs when factors outside of an agent's control positively affect the degree of praise or blame that she deserves. Circumstantial moral luck occurs when it is outside of the agent's control whether she faces a morally significant challenge or opportunity, and that challenge or opportunity positively affects her praiseworthiness or blameworthiness.

Constitutive moral luck occurs when an agent's dispositions or capacities are possessed due to factors outside of her control, and they positively affect her praiseworthiness or blameworthiness for a trait or an action.

Negative Argument

A major motivation for the received view that Kant denies all moral luck is that transcendental freedom is unconditioned in such a way that no free agent is disadvantaged by bad circumstantial or constitutive luck. See Kant (1998: A555/B583). This passage suggests that Kant denies the possibility of circumstantial and constitutive moral luck, because circumstantial and constitutive luck appear to be unable to affect the exercise of noumenal free agency, which implies that there are no partial or full excuses from, for example, a bad upbringing or difficult circumstances.

A more modest interpretation is that free agents are unconditioned in the sense that they are always able to do the right thing no matter how they might be inclined; circumstantial and constitutive factors outside an agent's control do not undermine her ability to fulfill her duty.

Positive Argument

Kant asserts that certain kinds of lucky circumstantial and constitutive factors can make it more or less difficult to do the right thing, and, as a result, they can affect the degree of a person's praiseworthiness or blameworthiness:

Subjectively, the degree to which an action can be imputed (*imputabilitas*) has to be assessed by the magnitude of the obstacles that had to be overcome. - The greater the natural obstacles (of sensibility) and the less the moral obstacle (of duty), so much the more merit is to be accounted for a good deed, as when, for example, at considerable self-sacrifice I rescue a complete stranger from great distress.

On the other hand, the less the natural obstacles and the greater the obstacle from grounds of duty, so much the more is a transgression to be imputed (as culpable). - Hence the state of mind of the subject, whether he committed the deed in a state of agitation or with cool deliberation, makes a difference in imputation ... (1996c: 6:228; italics in original)

Kant is plausibly endorsing the commonsense idea that all other things being equal, the more difficult it is to do the right thing, the more praiseworthy a person is for doing it, and the easier it is to do the right, the more blameworthy a person is for violating duty. And since luck in circumstance and constitution do often affect the degree of difficulty for various actions, Kant often allows circumstantial and constitutive luck to make a difference to how much praise and blame a person deserves.

There are three reasons that support this idea. First, features of the phenomenal world are grounded in features of the noumenal world on this interpretation, and so certain features of the phenomenal world give us a window, albeit an imperfect window, into features of the noumenal world.

Second, if noumenal free choices cannot be made more or less difficult by circumstantial and constitutive luck, the passages on difficulty and degrees of praiseworthiness and blameworthiness would be descriptions of morality without possible application; but since it is more plausible to suppose that Kant means them to have possible application, it is more plausible to think that Kant allows noumenal free choices to be more or less difficult due to circumstantial and constitutive luck.

Third, Kant's own contentions about the importance of a civil society and moral education highlight ways in which circumstantial and constitutive luck affect how difficult it is to do the right thing, which is something that we should expect an account of transcendental freedom to explain. In particular, a civil society checks unlawful impulses that would otherwise dampen respect for the moral law (1996d: 8:375n); that is, being born into a civil society itself fosters development of respect for the moral law, and it thereby increases the pull of the moral incentive, which makes it easier to act for duty from duty. And the right kind of moral education also makes it easier to do one's duty. For example, Kant recommends that children should not grow up luxuriously, because it makes fulfilling duty harder in cases in which fulfilling duty stands in opposition to personal comfort: "But if all of their whims are fulfilled in early youth, their heart and their morals are thereby spoiled" (2007: 9:460). Furthermore, Kant recommends providing examples of good people to increase respect for the moral law (1996b 6:48). Conclusion

I have argued that there is a plausible interpretation according to which Kant embraces various kinds of circumstantial and constitutive moral luck. In concert with recent papers that Kant's moral philosophy does not rule out resultant moral luck (see Hartman 2019; Moran 2019), there is good reason to challenge the received view that Kant's moral philosophy obviously rules out the possibility of circumstantial and constitutive moral luck. This result should provide contemporary Kantian philosophers an occasion to re-check their reasons about why they deny circumstantial and constitutive moral luck.

Bio: Robert Hartman joined Ohio Northern University in Fall 2022. He has published two books and more than twenty articles in professional journals and books. He has given more than sixty research presentations in eight countries. He currently serves with the coaches for ONU's Ethics Bowl team and is on the steering committee for the PPE major (Philosophy, Politics, and Economics). Before

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Ahmet Gönüllü

Bilkent University

KANTIAN JUSTIFICATION AND EXPLANATION FOR GROUP ACTIONS

Abstract:

This paper examines the phenomena of group action from a Kantian perspective. The main question that I address in the paper is hence whether group actions can be justified and explained by means of Kant's concept of a maxim.

Richard McCarty argues that practical reasoning as a maxim should justify and explain the action through practical syllogism and an incentive within the maxim (2009). Call the feature represented by practical syllogism and an incentive the justificatory and explanatory feature, namely the JEF.

Group actions might not be justified and explained in the way McCarty proposes. For there is one obvious difference between individual and group actions: while one of them is performed by a single individual, e.g., you, another is performed by at least two individuals, e.g., you and me. Based on this, one might argue that a group action cannot be justified and explained the way an individual action can be because the maxim for the former belongs to at least two individuals whereas the maxim for the latter belongs to one.

If the aim is to understand group actions from a Kantian perspective, we must overcome the argument presented above. Kant gives an account of action in general, no matter whether the action in question is performed by an individual or a group. In the *Groundwork*, under the term deed and omission, he describes action as follows: "...it is a practical idea to bring about that which does not exist but what can become actual through our deeds and omissions and what we are to bring about in accord with precisely this idea," (p. 54/4:436). Our deeds as well as omissions bring about what does not exist in accord with a practical idea, i.e., a maxim.

We can then propose the following definition of action: what is brought about in the actual world in accord with a maxim through deeds or omissions is an ac-

tion. Since Kant does not give us a specific definition of group action, this definition of action should be acceptable for group actions as well. This is in fact a plausible suggestion as a group action also what is brought about in the actual world through (our) deeds or (our) omissions in accord with (our) maxims. Therefore, I argue group actions should be justified and explained the way individual actions can be.

Kant proposes that the character of an action is determined by what a human being has as the adoption of maxims by free choice (1998, p. 46-8/6:21-2). This suggests an action's character depends on the individual's free choice of the adoption of a maxim. In the *Groundwork* again, he describes a maxim as the subjective principle for action that involves the practical rule being determined by reason based on the individual conditions, e.g., ignorance or inclination (2002, p. 37/4:420-1). The upshot here is that there are two limits for an individual to act: reason and individual conditions. In the light of this, the following might be said: by being determined by free choice, the process of constructing a maxim into an action is in harmony with the amalgamation of reason and individual conditions. The process in question is what I call deliberation. In a similar vein, a maxim to perform an action is the product of individual deliberation over the same action.

One might say groups lack the above-mentioned deliberation. This can be an objection from a methodological individualist who argues that social phenomena generated by individual agents and thus explained individualistically (Watkins 1952). List and Spiekermann call the methodological individualist view "supervenience individualism" because, as they argue, social facts, e.g., groups, supervene on facts about individual agents according to this view (2013). I assume this view is true. Therefore, instead of seeking for another Kantian explanation on group actions from the holist point of view (MacArthur 2019), which holds that groups qua agents have group maxims in their own right, I offer a Kantian view to construe how group actions can be justified and explained by individualistic means. For this purpose, I argue that that notwithstanding a technical difference, viz. the JEF-group requires individual interactions while the JEF-individual does not, the JEF-group is the same as the Kantian JEF-individual because both action types are the same.

Raimo Tuomela extensively discusses group ethos. For the members of a group, ethos is the group's constitutive goals, values, standards, beliefs, and practices that make the members perform an action together (2007). Individuals can become members of a group only if they agree on the ethos. This restructures individual deliberations because their individual conditions are changed by the ethos. In the event of restructured deliberations, the group can perform an ac-

tion when the restructured deliberations are collectivised in the sense that each member has a maxim to perform the group action ultimately.

Deliberations are collectivised because the group ethos provides members with intersecting components in their maxims such as the goal of the group action. The collectivised deliberations update individual maxims into member maxims for the group action that I call first-order and second-order maxims, respectively. The JEF-group is second-order maxims that members have. It is derived from first-order maxims and contains intersecting components from the group ethos. Like the JEF-individual, the JEF-group also consists of practical syllogisms and an incentive. This is the conclusion that I aim to arrive to answer the main question. The answer is the following: group actions can be justified and explained by maxims, but by the second-order ones.

Bio: Ahmet is a PhD student who completed his MA degree in Philosophy at Erasmus University Rotterdam. Before that he completed a BA degree in Philosophy at Bilkent University, with a minor in Political Science. His primary research interests is social ontology, rights, and global justice. His research interests include also Kant and epistemology.

Dietmar Heidemann

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KANT'S INVENTION OF REALISM

Bio: Dietmar H. Heidemann is Professor of Philosophy and Chair of Department at the University of Luxembourg. Professor Heidemann's primary areas of research are Kant and German Idealism, epistemology, philosophy of mind and subjectivity, and metaphysics. He has authored highly influential books, journal articles and contributions to edited volumes. His best known works include *Kant und das Problem des metaphysischen Idealismus*, *Der Begriff des Skeptizismus: Seine systematischen Formen, die pyrrhonische Skepsis und Hegels Herausforderung*. He edited "Kant and Nonconceptual Content". Since 2009, professor Heidemann has been a publisher and an editor of the *Kant Yearbook* (2009–) and is the first chairman of the board of the *Internationale Kant-Gesellschaft*.

Gabriele Gava

University of Turin

KANT ON CONVICTION AND PERSUASION

Abstract:

Interpretations of Kant's account of the forms of "taking-to-be-true" (Fürwahrhalten) have generally focused on three such forms: opinion (Meinung), belief (Glaube) and knowledge (Wissen). A second distinction that has obtained comparatively less attention is that between conviction (Überzeugung) and persuasion (Überredung). Kant appears to use the differentiation between the subjective and objective sufficiency of a taking-to-be-true for characterizing all these forms. However, it appears impossible to account for the differences between all of them by only using that differentiation. In turn, this makes it difficult to fit all these forms in a single classification of taking-to-be-true. I propose a new approach to conviction and persuasion, which makes these problems dissolve. Conviction and persuasion are not single forms of taking-to-be-true with distinctive characteristics. It is not useful to treat them as "classes" of taking-to-be-true either. Rather, they are "operators" that determine whether a taking-to-be-true is apt or inapt, depending on whether it rests on a correct evaluation of the grounds we have.

Bio: Gabriele Gava is associate professor of theoretical philosophy at the University of Turin. His main areas of research are epistemology, modern philosophy (especially Kant), and American pragmatism (especially Charles S. Peirce). Before joining the Department of Philosophy and Educational Sciences in Turin, Gabriele was a research associate (wissenschaftlicher Mitarbeiter) at Goethe University Frankfurt, where he led two projects sponsored by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG). He was also a postdoctoral fellow of the Humboldt-Stiftung at the same institution. Gabriele earned his PhD in 2009 at the University of Pisa

and held visiting positions at various institutions (Penn state University, University of Sheffield, Autonomous University of Barcelona). In 2019, he was awarded the "Kant-Nachwuchspreis" of the Kant-Gesellschaft and the Fondazione Silvestro Marcucci. In 2013, he won the Peirce Essay Contest of the Charles S. Peirce Society.

Iris Vidmar Jovanović

University of Rijeka

KANT'S THEORY OF POETIC EXPRESSION AND CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHY OF POETRY

Abstract:

Kant's third Critique has had an immense impact on development of modern aesthetics, motivating scholars to repeatedly go back to it to explore the nature of taste, aesthetic judgment and aesthetic pleasure. Slightly less interest has been given to his views on art, and most of the scholars who engage with paragraphs §§43-54 are usually primarily concerned with Kant's account of genius. My aim here is to show that, regardless of the emphasis on genius, Kant in fact develops a substantial account of art – including art creation and art reception – which has not often been acknowledged. In particular, I set out to provide an account of Kant's theory of poetry, and to bring it in line with contemporary development of analytic philosophy of poetry, which has, since recently, been recognized as an important subdivision of analytic philosophy of literature.

Thus, this paper lies at the intersection of Kant's views about poetic expression, and some of the currently debated issues in analytic philosophy of poetry. These include questions regarding poetic value, issues of poetic language and its particular way of generating meaning, poetry's relation to abstract thought, its capacity to stir emotions and provoke visual imagery, the scope and degree of its philosophical engagement and the questions of lyrics' relation to imagination. Inspiring and intriguing as these theories are, none, to my knowledge, makes any particular use of Kant. I find this odd, given that his view on fine arts, of which he ranks poetry the highest, is immensely resourceful for addressing and solving numerous issues that arise in our contemporary thinking about poetry. Thus, my aim here is to rectify this omission in contemporary philosophy of poetry, by pointing to some of the insights Kant has to offer for our theories today.

Though Kant can hardly be said to have developed a theory of poetry, he often makes references to it in the paragraphs of his third Critique dedicated to fine arts (§43-§54). His thoughts here extend from delineation of art from other human activities and nature, to genius and artistic creation, to the relation between art and morality. Occasionally, it is not clear whether he is talking about art-creation or art-reception. However, by carefully tracing his references to poetry, I show how we can come up with a rather comprehensive view of it, which can greatly enhance our understanding and appreciation of poetry, poetic experience and poetic practices. An interesting outcome of such exploration is that several claims Kant makes with respect to genius bear a striking resemblance to some of the key aspects of creativity identified by today's cognitive scientists.

My argument rests on two lines of inquiry: one involves an interpretation of Kant's theory of artistic creation (i.e. his view of genius) and the other one incorporates an analysis of Kant's notion of aesthetic ideas. As I argue, the particular manner in which aesthetic ideas are expressed in poetry – namely, via particular, carefully composed formal arrangement of aesthetic attributes, which originates in the creative act of a genius – has strict normative consequences for our engagements with poetry and for our understanding of poetic expression. This explains three central commonplaces regularly induced in contemporary discussions of poetry: the intricacies of poetic language (i.e. the semantic density), the indivisibility of form and content, and the view that poetry cannot be paraphrased (or even translated).

In the concluding part of this paper, I use these insights in order to explore the nature of poetic experience. I argue that attending to the particular way in which representational content of aesthetic ideas triggers and structures our reflective capacities explains poetry's manner of engaging with abstractions. Thus, I argue, Kant's theory can accommodate one of the key aspects of our poetic experiences: the sense of being deeply moved not only by a poem's formal arrangements, but also by its capacity to inspire contemplation and reward us cognitively, oftentimes by addressing our philosophical concerns. In that sense, Kant's views are insightful for explicating the nature of poetic experiences and the value we award to them, as well as cultural and educational relevance of poetry. Furthermore, understanding how, on Kant's views, poetry engages with abstraction brings it in close relation to metaphysics, and helps us explain how Kant perceives of human's epistemological, ethical and metaphysical inquiries.

Bio: Iris Vidmar Jovanović is an assistant professor at the Department of Philosophy, University of Rijeka. She researches a wide range of topics in Aesthetics. She has been a

visiting scholar at Columbia University, working with Phillip Kitcher, and at University of York, working with professor Peter Lamarque. She is a member of numerous groups such as European Society for Aesthetics, Croatian Society for Analytic Philosophy, American Society for Aesthetics and more. Iris is also a lead investigator at the project Literature as a domain of ethics. She has authored over a dozen articles and book chapters, and her papers appeared in Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, among other influential publications.

Ilaria Ferrara

Italian Institute for Philosophical Studies of Naples

THE SCIENCE OF BEAUTY: PERCEPTION OF FORM, EMOTION, AND CREATION BETWEEN KANT AND NEURO-AESTHETICS

Abstract:

The paper focuses on a possible dialogue between contemporary neuro-aesthetics and the approach to aesthetic experience in the Critique of Judgment, showing the connection between some assumptions of Kantian philosophy and the contemporary theory of emotions in the neuroscientific field. This contribution will aim to enhance the theme of Kantian aesthetic feeling in the process of fruition of the aesthetic form and creation inside the contemporary debate on neurological aesthetics, which does not offer solutions but lays the foundations for advancing hypotheses and making conjectures to bridge the gap between scientific knowledge and the visual arts.

After having outlined the epistemological difficulties of the new neuroaesthetic “discipline”, based on Samir Zeki’s idea “to understand the biological basis of aesthetic experience”, I will investigate the relationship between the faculties of the mind and apprehension of the beautiful object, following the Kantian conception of an affective and psychological process underlying the judgment of taste and, from there, through a focus on contemporary studies on the brain, I will analyze those cognitive and emotional processes emerging in the artistic experience. In this sense, 1. I will try to underline the concept of neuroaesthetics as a scientific project that has been undertaken in recent years following many discoveries relating to neurobiology and studies on the brain and the aesthetic fruition of works of art; 2. I will show the relation between the Kantian faculties

of understanding and imagination in a reflective activity of judgment and the aesthetic pleasure that originates from the final synthesis that is carried out in a conscious workspace, the “global neuronal workspace”, which is a network composed mainly, but not exclusively, of networks of neurons equipped with long-range axons densely distributed in the pre-frontal; 3. I will describe some rules that are analogous to neuroaesthetics and Kant, which can frame the genesis of new representations, such as parsimony, the coherence of the parts with the whole, and emotional attraction. In this way, it will be clear that there are some principles from Gestalt psychology that are taken up by the Kantian theory of form, which attributes them to how the reflective judgment operates in its general activity, therefore both teleology and aesthetics.

Secondly, I will focus on the connection between the conception of the creation of aesthetic ideas in Critique of Judgment and the conception of a “Kinetik Art” offered by Semir Zeki, through the investigation of the organization of the visual brain and the artist, understood as an “unaware” neurologist able to create representative images within the global neural workspace. I will explain that artists are unaware neurologists as with specific techniques and without being aware of it, they study the brain and its organization, representing those constant, lasting, essential, stable characteristics of objects, surfaces, faces, and so on, allowing us to acquire knowledge about the world. Echoing Kant, Zeki states that representing perfection means depicting the immutability of a form, a task pursued by art and scientific knowledge about the world. At this point I will explain how there are other Kantian suggestions of Zeki’s theory, ideas linked to the overcoming of a passive and empiricist perspective, according to which an image of the world is imprinted on the retina, which,

once transferred to the visual cortex, comes from this received, decoded and parsed in another part of the process. To this cognitive ideal, Zeki opposes the idea that it is the retina that acts as an initial filter that starts from the eye and reaches the higher areas of the brain through an elaborate mechanism and that this idea emerges from the experiments on visual localization carried out in the 20th century and relatively recently it has been discovered that the retina is connected to a well-identified part of the brain, the primary visual cortex, or V1. I will explain, then, as it is known today that there are various visual areas in the surrounding cortex that are interconnected and specialized in processing the characteristics of the visual scene in perception. In this sense, the new experiments suggest that the cortex does not simply have the function of analyzing the visual impression on the retina but the visual image, once grasped, must be understood. Therefore, if up to a certain point it has been considered that V1 is complete from birth as if

it were already ready to receive the visual impressions formed by the retina, while the associative cortex matures in various successive stages as if its development depended on the acquisitions of the visual experience, today we interpret vision as an active process, a Kantian transcendental apperception, in which the brain chooses among all the available data and, by comparing the selected information with the stored memories, generates the visual image.

Thirdly, I will highlight the relationship between the effect of aesthetic pleasure described by Analytic of Beautiful and the theoretical consequences of the scientific evidence offered by contemporary physiological and behavioral tests, based on which it is possible to grasp the emotional mechanisms, biological and chemical inside an artistic appreciation. In this sense, my thesis is that the fundamental nucleus of a theory that places pleasure at its center and that sees it as the starting point for the development of more articulated symbolic and cognitive processes is already present in Kantian aesthetics. At this point, I will try to grasp a parallelism between the localization of human emotional areas and the genesis of pleasure in Kant, following the same model of “non-intentionality” of the aesthetic and evolutive mechanism.

In conclusion, the paper aims to re-evaluate the theme of harmony and the Kantian aesthetic form of the neuroesthetic approach to art, conceived as a simple extension of the visual brain. In this regard, Kantian pleasure does not fall within a purely scientific or physiological description of beauty but explains the possibility of an open and democratic consideration of the construction of norms and meanings.

Bio: Ilaria Ferrara is a post-doc researcher at the Istituto Italiano per gli Studi Filosofici (Italy) and Subject expert in Aesthetics at the University of Salerno. After her graduation in Philosophy at the University of Napoli “Federico II”, she obtained the title of Ph.D. at F.I.N.O. Consortium, defending a thesis entitled “Pleasure in Kant’s Philosophy. The role of pleasure between feeling, desire, and moral action”. She also has been a Ph.D. international candidate in the United States, at Gwynedd Mercy University (Philadelphia). She is currently a member of the Interuniversity Center for Ethical Studies (Cise) at the Ca’ Foscari of Venice and the Society of Neuroethics and Philosophy of Neurosciences (Sine) of Milan. Her study interests focus mainly on the aesthetics and moral philosophy of Kant and the contemporary theory of emotions. Her research has also deepened the category of the “pathological” within Kantian anthropological and juridical reflection. She is working on a book on the concept of pleasure in Kantian philosophy reconstructed starting from a dialogue with cognitive neuroscience.

Lukas Nehlsen

University of Cologne

KANTIAN CONCEPTUALISM, THE RULE-FOLLOWING PARADOX AND SCHEMATISM

Abstract:

Does the rule-following paradox pose a challenge to Kantian Conceptualism about perception? I will argue that it does indeed pose such a challenge, since understanding the content of a perception to be conceptual in a Kantian sense necessarily leads to the infinite regress of explanations that Wittgenstein pointed out as a “misunderstanding” about rule-following (Wittgenstein 1958, para. 201). I will argue that the notion of schematism is crucial in resolving this problem. Schematism is, in the Kantian framework, what the practice of obeying a rule is for Wittgenstein: The notion that, if understood correctly, allows us to dissolve the rule-following paradox.

I take Kantian Conceptualism to state that the contents of perception are conceptual in a Kantian sense, i.e., that “conceptual” in “conceptual content” must be understood by appealing to Kant’s notion of “concept”. I furthermore take a Kantian concept to be a rule or to specify a rule.

The rule-following paradox in its classical formulation by Wittgenstein is as follows:

This was our paradox: no course of action could be determined by a rule, because every course of action can be made out to accord with the rule. The answer was: if everything can be made out to accord with the rule, then it can also be made out to conflict with it. And so there would be neither accord nor conflict here. (Wittgenstein 1958, para. 201)

Wittgenstein gives this formulation of the paradox in a longer section in the *Philosophical Investigations* that is concerned with the question of how we can understand the meaning of a word, if, as he characterized it earlier, the meaning of a word can be “defined”, “for a large class of cases” in the following way: “the meaning of a word is its use in language” (Wittgenstein 1958, para. 43). The problem that he sees arising from this definition leads to the above-mentioned paradox and can also be characterized as follows: If the meaning of a word is its use in language, then how can we know before a given use which word to apply? How can all the “uses” be present in our mind “all at once” before or at the very

instant of us using or understanding a word, if the meaning is to be defined by the use itself?

This should not be too controversial of an assumption given that concepts for Kant are products of the understanding which “in general is explained as the faculty of rules” (A132/B171). He also explicitly says that in a “pure concept of the understanding” a “rule” is “given” (A135/B174).

It is common in contemporary discussions of the paradox to take this to be a paradox not only about linguistic expressions but about any mental states that have intentional content (cf. Miller and Sultanescu 2022). I think it is fair to assume that any Kantian Conceptualist about perception takes a perceptual state to have intentional content. More specifically the Kantian Conceptualist takes the content of a perception to be conceptual, i.e., he takes it to be a rule. If I perceive a dog the Kantian Conceptualist takes the content of my perception to (partly) be the concept <dog>.2 He takes this to be necessarily so for us to have the perception of a dog at all. In Kantian words he takes the concept <dog> to be necessary for the very synthesis of the perception of the dog.

Following Wittgenstein's characterization of the paradox we could ask how I can know before the synthesis has happened how to synthesise? Why do I synthesise this particular manifold of sensations into the perception of a dog and not that of a cat? The conceptualist should answer to this by appeal to some features of the concept <dog> that differ from features of the concept <cat>. She could, for example, say: The concept <dog> implies the concept <barking>, whereas the concept <cat> does not. I had a sensation of barking and thus I (or “my mind”) synthesized my sensations into the perception of a dog. She would thus have explained the correctness of the application of the concept <dog> by appeal to another concept, namely <barking>, being a sub-concept of <dog>. Now of course one could ask the same question about <barking> that one has asked about <dog>: Why is it that you have used that concept for synthesis and not for instance <meowing>? The conceptualist would be forced to appeal to further concepts and so on.

By doing this, the conceptualist gives an interpretation of the concept/rule <dog> by recourse to another rule and so on. This way of trying to solve the paradox thus leads into an infinite regress. Wittgenstein points out a misunderstanding in such a way of explaining a rule:

It can be seen that there is a misunderstanding here from the mere fact that in the course of our argument we give one interpretation after another; as if each one contented us at least for a moment, until we thought of yet another standing behind it. (Wittgenstein 1958, para. 201)

Kant, in the “Transcendental Doctrine of the Power of Judgement” within the Critique of Pure Reason (CPR) pointed out a very similar problem: “Now if it [“general logic”] wanted to show generally how one ought to subsume under these rules, i.e., distinguish whether something stands under them or not, this could not happen except once again through a rule” (A133/B172)3.

According to both Wittgenstein and Kant explaining the adequacy of a concept as a rule by appeal to other concepts necessarily leads into an infinite regress. In the paper I will give more sustenance to the argument that the conceptualist interpretation of Kant falls into this dilemma and furthermore argue that Kantian “schemata” solve this problem in much the same way Wittgenstein’s notion of “obeying a rule” does.

Bio: Lukas Nehlsen studied Philosophy, Politics and Economics at the University of Witten/Herdecke (B.A.) and did an M.A. in Philosophy at the Center for Research in Modern European Philosophy (CRMEP) at Kingston University, London. Before coming to a.r.t.e.s. he was a scholarship holder at the SchauflerLab@TUDresden. His research focuses on the Philosophy of Perception, Phenomenology, Kant and the Philosophy of AI. Beyond (Non-)Conceptualism. Kant, Merleau-Ponty and Wittgenstein on the Contents of Perception The aim of my dissertation is to argue for a new position in the Philosophy of Perception that provides a solution to the problem of conceptual vs. nonconceptual content by drawing on ideas from the works of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Ludwig Wittgenstein.

John B. Best

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KANT’S PREFIGURING OF TOP-DOWN AND BOTTOM-UP PROCESSING

Abstract:

While a consensus seems to have emerged among scholars (e.g., Brook, 1994, 2004; Swanson, 2016) suggesting that the Representational Theory of Mind (RTM) has become one of Kant’s most enduring contributions to the overarching metatheory of cognitive science, there has been less exploration or agreement about the specific role that Kant’s philosophizing has played in cognitive science, nor have there been many explicit attempts to show how Kant’s notions of representationalism have guided the course of actual research.

In this paper, I will show how one aspect of Kant's representationalism has been enacted in cognitive science. In his explanation of how sensory information interacted with conceptual representations, and how such conceptual information was in fact necessary to give any form whatsoever to sensory percepts, Kant actually prefigured a vital operational principle of cognitive science, that of the interaction of bottom-up, and top-down processes, as seen in a number of theories including topics as diverse as visual letter recognition (McClelland & Rumelhart, 1981), facial recognition (Fan et al., 2020; Woźniak & Hohwy, 2020), and speech perception (Hall & Stevens, 1959).

Although Brook (1994, 2004) has suggested that at least three guiding principles in cognitive science have been absorbed from Kant, including the recognition that both spatio-temporal processing of sensory inputs and the application of concepts were necessary for the establishment of knowledge, I argue that this principle has been particularly influential in cognitive science research, giving rise to specific discoveries and their interpretation (Dickerson, 2004).

Kant defined representations as the "inner determination of our mind in this or that relation of time" (A 197/B 242), and he stipulated several types or groups of them (Caygill, 1995; Winkler, 2010). Following his typical scheme of categorizing through bifurcation, Kant divided representations into two broad subtypes: representations without any corresponding consciousness, and representations accompanied by consciousness, which were also called perceptions. Perceptions were in turn divided into sensations ("which related solely to the subject as the modification of its state") and "objective perceptions," which were also called cognitions (A 320/B 376). Finally, objective perceptions were divided into intuitions and concepts, with an intuition (*Anschauung*) relating "immediately to the object and is single." An intuition is thus passively received (Pereboom, 1985). However, a concept relates to the object mediately by means of a feature which several things may have in common (A 320/B 377). Concepts (*Begriffe*) are not simply passively received but are associated with the activity of the cognitive faculty of the Understanding (*Verstand*) (Pereboom, 1985). According to Kant, both the intuition and the concept arise spontaneously, but only the concept is capable of synthesizing intuitions into experience, and ultimately knowledge. The application of the concept to the intuition then becomes nothing more than, in Kant's famous phrase, the "representation of a representation" (A 68/B 93).

Beginning in the last half of the 20th century, the body of research on visual letter recognition offers a particularly compelling example of Kant's philosophizing exerting a tangible influence on theory and discovery in cognitive science. Researchers initially thought that letters were recognized solely by means of each

letter's possession of a particular number of visual letter features, such as "vertical lines," "horizontal lines," "slanted lines," and so on (Gibson et al., 1963). Intuitively, the detection of a unique pattern of features activated the representation of the corresponding letter. This view was complicated however by the discovery of the Word Superiority Effect (WSE): Letters were recognized more quickly when they were presented in the context of a word, rather than when they appeared in isolation (Reicher, 1969; Wheeler, 1970). For example, the letter "K" was recognized more quickly when it appeared in the word "WORK," than when it was presented in isolation. The discovery of the WSE was counterintuitive because it suggested that perceivers recognized a word more quickly than they did the letters that comprised it.

The WSE has been explained by the Interactive Activation (IA) model (McClelland & Rumelhart, 1981; Rumelhart & McClelland, 1982). The model's basic assumption is that the processing of information during reading is carried by a set of at least three hierarchical levels of representations. The lowest level corresponds to the features of the letters. When individual features are detected, the representations of all the letters "above" them that contain that feature are immediately activated. At the level of the letter representation, the incoming activation of all its features is summated, which causes a particular letter's representation to have a higher state of activation than any of the other letters that might be present in the visual array. Simultaneously, the activation of each letter's representation is fed forward to the highest representational level, namely, all the words in the person's lexicon that contain that letter. Activation from the word's representation is fed back to the letter's representation, which raises its activation above a pre-set threshold level, and the letter is recognized.

Kant's notion of non-conceptual representations of the parts of an object as sensations or intuitions corresponds to bottom-up processing: the conversion of sensory signals into an interpretable neural code. And his idea that the application of conceptual representations (i.e, knowledge-bearing representations) is necessary to refine and sharpen the sensory code corresponds to top-down processing: when the letter occurs in the context of a word, the "concept" of the word is activated to guide the sensory processes, which results in the unity in consciousness we become aware of when we see the letters of a word, and not just a collection of lines.

Finally, I will also explore the temporal relationship of bottom-up and top-down processes with regard to Kant's theorizing. Kant had intuition (or sensory processing) and the *Begriffe* (conceptual knowledge) arising spontaneously, thus leaving open the possibility of a particular sequence for those operations,

although Kant did not specify one. As the interactive model of McClelland & Rumelhart (1981) suggests however, it may be a mistake to attempt to prioritize either process, when its constituents actually occur simultaneously via the brain's feed-forward, and feed-back neural loops.

Bio: John B. Best is a professor emeritus at the Eastern Illinois University. In 2004, he was named "Recipient of EIU's 2004 Distinguished Faculty Award". On that occasion, William Addison, professor and chair of Eastern's Department of Psychology, said the following about Best's role as a scholar. "John is recognized on a national level for his research on reasoning and problem solving," Addison wrote. "In addition to his numerous publications and presentations, John wrote a widely respected textbook in cognitive psychology - his area of expertise. It was adopted for psychology courses at some of the most renowned colleges and universities in the country (e.g. Harvard University, Yale University, Indiana University).

Jonas Held

University of Leipzig

KANT ON JUDGMENT AND BELIEF

Abstract:

One of the most basic concepts in contemporary epistemology and philosophy of mind is the concept of belief. Belief is said to be a propositional attitude. A propositional attitude consists of two distinct parts, a mental attitude and a propositional content the attitude is directed at. Kant's basic notion, however, is the notion of judgment. If we want to relate Kant to contemporary epistemology it is important to ask how his notion of judgment relates to the contemporary notion of belief. In my talk I will discuss this question. I will start with the difference between judgment and belief as it is drawn in contemporary philosophy of mind and epistemology (a). In a second step, I will criticize a recent attempt to relate Kant's notion of judgment to the contemporary notion of belief (b). Finally, I will argue that Kant's pre-Fregean notion of judgment differs essentially from the contemporary notions of judgment and belief because Kant does not accept the so-called force-content distinction (c).

(a) In contemporary philosophy of mind and epistemology a judgment is said to be an occurrent mental act that happens at a certain point in time whereas a belief is said to be a mental state. The relation between judgment and belief is

then often spelled out in causal terms: judgment is the formation of a belief. I will show that Kant does neither take a judgment to be necessary an occurrent mental act that happens at a certain moment in time, nor a belief forming process of any kind. I will show this on the basis of an interpretation of the passage in the Critique of Pure Reason where Kant characterizes judgments as “functions of unity among our representations” (CPR, B 94). For Kant, the act of judgment is primarily the act of combining – or unifying – representation, for example a subject-term and a predicate-term in the case of the categorical judgment (or other judgments in the case of the hypothetical and the disjunctive judgment). So, for Kant, judgment is not – or not simply – an act in the sense of assenting to a propositional content, but an act of combining representations.

(b) Andrew Chignell argues that for Kant, a judgment “is strictly speaking a logical concept” referring “to the logical object or content of an assent”. If Kant loosely speaks of the making of a judgment, what he really means, Chignell argues, is the forming of assent. The contemporary notion of belief is then said to be a species of the psychological notion of assent. Chignell not only misses the core idea that judgment first of all is an act of combining representations. But he does also not relate Kant’s notion of assent to the notion of assertion as it appears in the table of judgment under the heading of modality. I will show that Chignell’s interpretation cannot deal with the fact that assertion for Kant is not a merely psychological concept but itself part of the logical form of a judgment. So contrary to Chignell, I will argue that for Kant, the notion of judgment is not ambiguous. Take the categorical judgment “The table is red” as an example. For Kant, the unity of this judgment is understood on the basis of the predicative activity of combining the subject-term “table” with the predicate-term “red”. And at least in the case of an assertoric judgment, the two terms are combined in such a way that the judging subject takes the predicate “red” to apply to the subject “table”. So, the judging subject asserts, that the table is red. As I will show in more detail in my talk, this shows that according to Kant, we cannot simply distinguish between the psychological act of assent (or assertion) and the content of a judgment.

(c) In the last part of my talk, I will argue that for Kant, the act of judging is not external to the content of the judgment, but rather constitutive for it. This interpretation brings Kant close to contemporary philosopher who criticize the pre-dominant Fregean picture of belief and judgment and its problematic distinction between psychological attitude and propositional content. Propositional contents, for Kant, are not just there, ready to grasp and judge. The unity and structure of these judgments rather depends on the act of judging understood as

a combinatory activity. I will end my talk by defending Kant from an obvious objection against such an account of judgment. With respect to the example above, the objection says the following: If combining the subject-term “table” with the predicate-term “red” in the judgment “The table is red” is, at the very same time, to assert that the table is red, how is it then possible to simply grasp the content “The table is red” without asserting it? I will argue that Kant’s notion of a problematic judgment is the solution for this problem. In a problematic judgment, the judging subject merely problematically combines to representations into the unity of a judgment. So, also in this case, the structure and the unity of the content of the judgment is not independent of the activity of judging. For Kant, there are no such things as mere propositional contents that can be merely entertained without being judged. But in the case of the problematic judgment, the judging subject does not yet commit itself to the truth of the judgment. So, contrary to the contemporary notion of judgment and belief, not every judgment, for Kant, is an act of taking something to be true. Because in problematic judgments, the subject merely represents something as possibly, but not actually true.

Bio: Jonas Held studied philosophy, history and sociology at the University of Basel and the Free University of Berlin. In 2016 he completed his doctorate on the subject of “reasoning” in Basel. In 2011, he spent a semester as a visiting fellow at Harvard University during his PhD. Since 2016 he has been a research associate and since January 2019 a research assistant at the Chair of Theoretical Philosophy at the University of Leipzig. His research focuses on the areas of philosophy of mind, philosophy of logic, epistemology and philosophy of language. He is particularly interested in connecting systematic questions from these areas with the philosophy of Immanuel Kant and Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Avery Goldman

DePaul University

KANT'S PRINCIPLE OF SUFFICIENT REASON, REVISITED

Abstract:

“Can we have a local PSR [principle of sufficient reason] without a global one?” Alexander Pruss answers his rhetorical question in the negative. To defend the role of the principle of sufficient reason in any limited context implies a claim beyond this demarcation, a “global” or universal claim regarding whatever the

universe of the “local” claim might be. In so doing, Pruss not only offers an argument against empiricist claims to mere local probability, but seemingly also a challenge to Kant’s defense of the principle of sufficient reason in the Critique of Pure Reason. For Kant, claims to have offered the long sought for proof to this principle in the Analogies of Experience, offering a proof of causal explanation within the limited phenomenal sphere (B246/A201). Objects of experience conform to the principle of sufficient reason but whether the totality of nature itself, the Pruss-ian “global,” conforms to the causal law, Kant is, at least in this section in the Transcendental Analytic, silent.

In this paper I will investigate Kant’s defense of the principle of sufficient reason in the Critique of Pure Reason. While Kant explains that his argument for causality in the second Analogy offers the long-awaited proof of this principle, what I will show is that Kantian causality, and so the second Analogy of Experience it affords, is connected by Kant to the cosmological idea functioning as a regulative principle. In this way Kant’s “local” argument for the principle of sufficient reason will be shown to function, as Pruss requires, within the “global,” which is to say, for Kant, noumenal realm.

To investigate such a regulative principle, I will first turn to the Antinomies of Pure Reason where Kant first introduces the regulative role that the cosmological idea, the world, plays in relation to the mechanistic explanation of nature. I will then turn to the Appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic where, in the long discussion that follows the presentation of the four Antinomies in the Transcendental Dialectic of the Critique of Pure Reason, after explaining how the phenomenal account of causality makes possible noumenal freedom, and so the solution to the third Antinomy, Kant introduces the regulative principle [Prinzip] of the cosmological idea. The endless causal regress that up until this point has been explained merely in terms of the understanding’s category of causality, and the principle [Grundsatz] that follows from it, is here connected to a regulative principle [Prinzip] born of reason’s cosmological idea. The mechanistic regress is regulated by the idea of the world as infinite, dictating, Kant explains, that “no empirical boundary would hold as an absolute boundary” (A509/B537). The regulative principle born of the cosmological idea deems the empirical work of understanding unending without claiming that nature is so constituted; such a regulative function permits the possibility of freedom alongside unending phenomenal nature, the solution to the Third Antinomy (A516/B544).

Kant returns to the regulative role of the cosmological idea in the appendix to the Transcendental Dialectic of the Critique of Pure Reason. In the second section of this elusive appendix Kant argues that cosmological idea of world, that of

an infinite nature, directs the way we “proceed” in our investigation of nature. We “proceed as if the series were in itself infinite” (A685/B713) even though nature presents itself to our understanding as finite. Doing so, viewing nature as infinite, regulating our inquiries by means of the cosmological idea, makes possible, apart from the unending empirical pursuit of nature, its absolute beginning “outside” the series of causes (A685/B713). The regulative role of reason’s cosmological idea demarcates mechanistic nature, making possible human freedom apart from it, and deeming Kant’s defense of the principle of sufficient reason to be a product of both understanding’s concept (causality) and reason’s idea (cosmology).

Kant’s “principle of sufficient reason,” his transformation of Leibniz’s *nihil est sine ratione*, nothing is without reason, is not limited to the understanding [Verstand] and the causal law of the second Analogy. This is to say that Kant’s transcendental defense of causality does not succumb to the charge of a mere local principle, of the sort that Pruss criticizes; and yet this is not for the epistemological reasons for which Pruss argues. Kant’s defense of the principle of sufficient reason extends to a global account, to the regulative pursuit of reason’s cosmological idea, in order to make possible human freedom alongside the principle of sufficient reason. Leibniz’s ratio, the Grund that Kant inherited, can be seen in the Transcendental Dialectic to have been transformed into the complexity of Kant’s Vernunft.

Bio: Avery received his PhD from Pennsylvania State University in 2001. He teaches and conducts research in the areas of Late Modern Philosophy (with an emphasis on Kant) and Phenomenology. His research has focused on questions concerning philosophical method. His book, *Kant and the Subject of Critique*, was published by Indiana University Press in 2012. He has recently published articles in *Kant-Studien*, *Continental Philosophy Review*, and *Epoché*. Before coming to DePaul Avery was a Post-Doctoral Teaching Fellow at Fordham University.

Michael Lewin

Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University

KANT ON PHILOSOPHY AS CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

Bio: Michael Lewin is the principal investigator and leader of two research groups at the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University Kaliningrad: “Metaphilosophy and its Relevance for the Philosophical Practice” (Priority 2030) and “Perspectivism as an Epistemological Program” (RSF). He is also an adjunct lecturer at the University of Wuppertal. He is working in the domain of theoretical philosophy, epistemology, and philosophy of science, with focus on metaphilosophy, perspectivism, reason and rationality, skepticism, and conceptual analysis. He was a research fellow at the University of Koblenz and Landau (project in metaphilosophy, Fritz Thyssen Foundation), academic visitor at the University of Oxford, where he worked with Timothy Williamson, and an academic guest visitor at the University of Pittsburgh, where he worked with Nicholas Rescher. He is the author of a book which has just recently been published, titled: *Metaphilosophie als einheitliche Disziplin*.

