

Congress for Doctoral Students in Philosophy 21-23.10.2019, Tampere:

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All 23, HU: 7, JYU: 6, OU: 1, TAU: 8, TU: 1

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Towards an inclusivist and fallibilist account of eidetic variation

Edmund Husserl's eidetic methodology seeks essential insights through eidetic variation. An intuitive grasp of invariant features of a certain type of experience is allegedly obtained by starting from one instance and seeing what stays the same in running through its possible variations freely in imagination. Sowa (2007, 2010) has challenged this prevalent reading of Husserl's doctrine by claiming that instead of *discovering* invariant essences, eidetic variation serves to *falsify* presumed eidetic laws. In his view, eidetic variation provides means for testing universal statements by searching for invalidating counterexamples.

I will start by evaluating Sowa's suggestion. His account manages to accommodate both imaginary cases and empirical findings as potential material for eidetic variation. Moreover, it deals with indecisive and conflicting evidence by delineating one potential line of testing eidetic claims and assessing their validity intersubjectively. However, his account fails to clarify how eidetic insights are attained and justified intuitively in the first place, since the Popperian idea of falsification as refutation can provide only *indirect* validation. Scientificity of eidetic variation is thus based narrowly on restricting and abandoning eidetic laws, rather than a corrigible process of modifying and refining analyses.

Next, I will supplement my criticism of Sowa's account by further developing an inclusivist and fallibilist account of eidetic variation. First, I will argue that for Husserl inclusion serves several purposes. Husserl maintains that eidetic phenomenology can benefit from drawing from different kinds of sources: perceptual experience in everyday and experiential settings, work done in and by imagination in geometry, and fiction and historiography depicting lived experience. The useful functions include (1) finding suitable starting examples for eidetic variation, (2) enriching variation by pollinating (*Befruchtung*) imagination with intuitive material, and (3) providing exemplifications for retaining and illustrating eidetic results. Utilizing a wide range of resources supporting eidetic variation can, I argue, elucidate previously unnoticed or insufficiently described aspects of experience and refine phenomenological analyses. Second, I will claim that fallibilism pertaining to an inclusivist account of eidetic variation should not be limited to falsification. The negative function of refutation must be replaced with the positive functions of (4) correcting and (5) improving eidetic claims. The fallibilistic account of eidetic procedure defended in this talk facilitates an open-ended process of critical examination and gradual revising of eidetic claims.

In the end, I will substantiate my claims by looking into two potential resources for variation suggested in the contemporary discussion: real life deviations and factual variation observed in psychopathology, neurology, and developmental psychology (Parnas & Zahavi 2000; Zahavi 2017) and hypothetical variation *via* computer simulation (Froese & Gallagher 2010).

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War and the origin of contemporary sovereign power

Re-examining Carl Schmitt's wartime article from the standpoint of the history of political power

In his lecture series on power and war from 1975-1976, Michel Foucault claims that, in the modern age, the problem of rights is tied to the problem of sovereignty on two accounts: the legal obligation to obey the sovereign and the legitimate rights of the sovereign to wield power. Similarly, Achille Mbembe, following Foucault, claims that modern sovereignty can be defined “as a twofold process of *self-institution* and *self-limitation*.” This means that, on the one hand, Sovereignty constitutes itself as a legitimate institution and, on the other hand, establishes the legitimacy and the limits of this institution's use of power.

In this paper, I am following this line of philosophical analysis of the history of political power by discussing the problem of sovereign *self-limitation*. Whereas the liberal rule of law establishes the limits of sovereign power, the right to security seems to demand for an expansion of power. This apparent dilemma, as I suggest, becomes re-formulated during the First World War. In order to show this, I will critically go over the arguments presented by Carl Schmitt's in his article from the 1916, called *Dictatorship and State of Siege*. In this article, Schmitt wants to work out the space within which the military commander – appointed specifically to conquer a state of exception – can succeed in fulfilling the task that he is given. This means, that certain legal limits have to be suspended so that the military commander is not hindered in the carrying out of his purpose. Schmitt's answer to the problem of self-limitation is, as I will show, to tie the possibility of suspending the constitution to the public interest and safety. Suspension is only legitimate when it is done in the name of the people's right to security.

This, as Giorgio Agamben has argued, allows for various of highly problematic strategies in different contexts, such as the suspension of the Weimar Republic's constitution in 1933, or George W. Bush's “war on terror” as the suspension of certain civil rights. For these reasons, it is evident that Schmitt's solution is highly volatile to misuses of power and appropriation by illiberal forces. My paper thus argues that the First World War presents sovereign power with a historically novel dilemma of self-limitation, one that concerns us even today. Sovereignty at the same time is legitimized by its task to guarantee security, but it also establishes the rights of its citizens and limits itself from encroaching these rights. By discussing Schmitt's wartime ideas, I will show how the right to security poses a novel problem for modern sovereignty's ability to self-limit itself. Philosophically, my paper complements the Foucauldian tradition of analysing political power by introducing this analysis to the context of early 20th century problems of sovereign power.

Sami Sustainability Virtue and Traditional Ecological Knowledge

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This paper is a work-in-progress. It is a further elaboration of the long abstract published by EURSAFE 2019 with the title “Sami Food Practices and Traditional Ecological Knowledge”

Keywords: Environmental ethics, Sami Indigenous peoples, Sami traditional ecological knowledge, sustainability virtue.

Abstract: This paper focuses on Sami Indigenous Peoples’ food system as an example to consider for alternative solutions, which do not put stress on the planet ecosystems. Their food system is linked with Sami traditional ecological knowledge and livelihood practices, and all together they inform the Sami’s worldview. Furthermore, I suggest that Sami traditional food system represents a model of ‘sustainable food production and consumption’ to look at in order to foster a higher respect for the food we eat and diminish the current food waste. I call the Sami food system ‘sustainable’ due to their bond to the food production, harvesting and processing and to the high respect of the natural environment and the natural cycle of animals and plants. The Aristotelian virtue ethics helps to identify a Sami sustainability virtue as a practical wisdom of Sami People based on their worldview and traditional ecological knowledge.

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Landscape and limbo

In my paper I will consider Giorgio Agamben's short statements about landscape and examine them in the light of his earlier ideas about human condition as being in limbo. I suggest that limbo is an allegory of human existence whereas landscape is, in Agamben's philosophy, a human existential. Landscape is something that is "outside" of our bodies or something to which we are connected through our bodies. It is existential because we exist with landscapes, not without them. The image of limbo depicts our being with landscapes.

There is a certain relation between Agamben's concept of landscape and Heidegger's concept of world as well as between of the image of limbo and Heidegger's notion of human existence as Dasein. I will shortly examine this relation.

I also consider some contemporary definitions of landscape in the fields of philosophy and geography. What is essential in these definitions is that they are based on affectivity and involvement with our surroundings and question the domination of visual perception and aesthetic approach in the traditional concept of landscape. There are also evident common points of connection between these common concepts of landscape and Agamben's concept. I claim that landscape is the result of the world. At the same time, I claim that landscape is always already there before any world. This not a contradiction because we always exist with landscapes but the forms and possibilities we encounter in landscape are resulting from the world.

The question of computability in Kurt Gödel's functional interpretation of 1941

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Kurt Gödel's functional interpretation, first introduced in a 1958 in the journal *Dialectica*, is an interpretation of Heyting Arithmetic in terms of finite-typed functionals, i.e., functions over functions. What is philosophically interesting is that Gödel presented the functional system as a *reinterpretation* of Heyting's system to replace the informal and open-ended proof interpretation of the intuitionists. However, Gödel's interpretation of the functionals themselves assumes the concept of a computable procedure as primitive and gives no formal proof of computability. This has led some to doubt whether the informal notion of a procedure really is a great improvement over the informal notion of a proof.

We now know that Gödel invented the interpretation as early as in 1941, when he gave lectures on the topic in Yale and Princeton. In these lectures, he seems to take another standpoint, stating that a proof of computability is required. However, no such proof can be found in the lectures. Based on a cancelled passage in the Princeton manuscript, Mark van Atten has suggested that Gödel must have already considered the no-proof option in 1941, and that this year could already mark the beginning of a “sea change” in Gödel's views, leading him away from the purely formal viewpoint and into the intensional.

In my paper, I will take a closer look at the question in the light of Gödel's notes, mainly the shorthand notebooks *Arbeitshefte 7–9* and *Maximen und Philosophie IV*, which have been written between the beginning of 1941 and mid-1942. It turns out that Gödel had two distinct motivations: first, intuitionistic mathematics was a tool he thought could be useful to his mathematical aims (at the time, the consistency of analysis and the independence of the Continuum Hypothesis), and secondly, he was genuinely interested in the philosophical question of constructivity. Thus the need for a computability proof arose partly from heuristic considerations and only partly from philosophical ones. On the philosophical side, Gödel's ideas were much more diverse, and he was open to intensional and informal concepts in the foundations of mathematics and saw clarifying such concepts as an important objective.

History and the Miraculous

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I argue that there are – as it should be – a number of constraints in place in historical research. These constraints are meant to exclude arbitrary historical explanations. According to them, historians should explain traces of past events mainly with mechanisms and causes that are already known. Due to this, historical explanations that appeal to supernatural or natural but unknown forces and actors are treated with suspicion or they might even be judged to be pseudoscientific. The fact that such elements should be avoided does not mean they do not or have not existed. It merely restricts historical research within our best current knowledge. Without such constraints, historians could postulate basically any kind of explanations for their objects of study.

Occasionally, researchers working in historical sciences also have to face situations where no known mechanism could acceptably explain the trace at hand. In such cases, researchers are forced to entertain more speculative working hypotheses as their initial explanations. However, even in these cases the scientifically acceptable hypotheses are somewhat constrained. The scientific community decides which hypotheses are viable and which are not. As a rule, historical and scientific enquiry in general should begin with assumptions that most researchers find credible. This is again a restriction that is meant to prevent scholars and scientists from postulating explanations arbitrarily.

To be sure, scientific progress sometimes comes in the form of establishing new assumptions that originally were taken to be implausible. Yet, before there are sufficient reasons for accepting such assumptions, the research based on them and its results lacks justification. Otherwise, all sorts of extravagant historical claims could be claimed to be warranted. In situations where no known mechanism is at hand, researchers should proceed with caution. Even when researchers can think of only one possible explanation for a trace, this explanation could just be the best of a bad lot. Therefore, in such cases, agnosticism about the proposed mechanism is always permissible.

I also note that when historians are debating over the use of miraculous elements (whether they be natural or supernatural) in historical explanations, they frequently use problematic reasoning and argumentation. Both the promoters and deniers of such elements are often guilty of bad scientific practice. For instance, both sides are inclined to present complete narratives of how the traces were produced, even though there is insufficient evidence to back up any such specific account. In addition, both parties occasionally invoke anecdotal evidence. Researchers repeatedly resort to anecdotal evidence especially when research from other than historical fields (such as psychological research on memory, witness testimony, and hallucinations) would be relevant.

Hence, I recommend that historians – even historians that are debating pseudohistorians – should try to more carefully stick only to the justified sections of explanatory narratives. Additionally, I encourage them to take more part in interdisciplinary work. I illustrate my arguments and findings with two pseudoscientific or scientifically problematic case studies concerning the debates on ancient astronauts and the resurrection of Jesus.

Semantic Correctness and Semantic Prescriptions

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Since Saul Kripke argued that meaning is normative and not descriptive, philosophers have debated on how this normativity should be understood. In the current debate, both defenders and the opponents of the normativity thesis agree that meaning implies that expressions have conditions of correct application. However, the opponents of the normativity thesis claim that what speakers ought to do cannot be derived from correctness conditions. They support their claim with two distinct arguments. The first argument claims that correctness has non-prescriptive uses and therefore some additional reason must be provided to show that semantic correctness is prescriptive. The second argument claims, that prescriptions derived from the correctness conditions only deem true assertions semantically acceptable linguistic behaviour. Daniel Whiting has argued that these objections can be met by interpreting correctness as a higher-order property and semantic prescriptions as prima-facie prescriptions.

In this paper, I claim that Whiting's defence is unsuccessful. While Whiting's formulation manages to avoid immediate contradictions, the problem of non-assertive uses persists. More importantly, the failure to account for non-assertive uses suggest that correctness of application not merely can be non-prescriptive, but also that it should be understood as non-prescriptive. While Whiting's approach is only one way of supporting the normativity of meaning, the arguments presented are relevant to other approaches as well. If correctness conditions are non-prescriptive, then there is a gap between the meaning of an expression and how it should be used. This gap will prove to be challenging for the defenders of normativity to bridge.

Affectivity in Public Discussion: A Husserlian-Merleau-Pontian Analysis

Public discussion is often conceived as an elementary constituent of the democratic society. As the political theorists Claude Lefort and Martin Plôt have stated, it is the self-reflective tool for a democratic society. At the same time, as John Dewey has stated, constant reformation of the society is a crucial part of sustaining the democratic order, as every new generations has to recreate their democracy while the world changes. Especially now, when we are facing serious problems such as climate change and arise of radical violent movements, such renewal and reformation seems to be crucial. However, there are conflicting views concerning the probability of the acquiring of new speech, norms, habits of thought and action, etc. According to the Habermasian view, we constantly acquire something new, be it new values, information, or practices, while according to the Deweyan view, we usually are hesitant and unwilling to acquire anything new and to change our habits.

In this paper, I will present an analysis of public discussion as a tool for societal development, based on an analysis of the basic structure of habituation and meaning-sedimentation in our experiences and cultural entities in which affectivity plays a crucial role. My question here is, how does societal development as one kind of shared learning process, that is, the creation or emergence of new speech, discourse, norms, and practices, take place through public discussion from the perspective of individuals' experiences. I will argue that, based on Husserl's and Merleau-Ponty's analyses of meaning-constitution through sedimentation and affectivity in our experiences, the societal development through public discussion in this sense is strongly based on the change of our ways to articulate affects. This is based on two points: a) affectivity has a central role in meaning-constitution and in the change of the meanings, and b) the social and the societal is not separated from the individual. My analysis is not normatively prescriptive, but my aim is to provide a description of the process of societal development on both the individual and the societal level.

Towards an Access Theory of Self-Control

In this paper, I approach conceptualizing self-control from this empirically informed perspective. I ask, what theory of self-control best helps account for individual differences in it? I argue that understanding individual differences in self-control in terms of *access to behaviors* rather than inherent ability has a great deal of explanatory force. The case I have chosen to illustrate this is self-control in people with Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder, described by Barkley (1997) as “a disorder of self-control”.

Self-control is compromised in a number of psychopathological conditions ranging from Major Depressive Disorder and Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder to ADHD and addictive behavior. The symptomology of ADHD corresponds to deficits in self-control on both major accounts of self-control: individuals with ADHD have documented problems in both delayed gratification and inhibitory control (Barkley 1997).

An important aspect of self-control deficits in persons with ADHD is that the self-control that persons with ADHD demonstrate varies greatly not just from one individual to another but also diachronically within the same person, from one situation to another. A successful account of individual variance in self-control should be able to capture both that some people with ADHD, in some situations, appear to aptly perform self-control behaviors, and that persons with ADHD, generally, are at a disadvantage due to difficulties in self-control.

There are two major groups of psychological theories of self-control. The inhibitory control account (variants of which include Baumeister’s muscle model of self-control) describes self-control in terms of a single psychological faculty that can be stronger or weaker and that can be exerted at will. This account is an example of a natural kind account for self-control. This account has been criticized e.g. by Fujita (2011); Herdova (2017) has demonstrated that any natural mental kind account of self-control is unlikely to succeed.

Delayed gratification accounts of self-control in social psychology and behavioral economics (e.g., Fujita 2011, Ainslie 2001, Mischel 1970) describe self-control in terms of rationality: for such accounts, self-control is choosing the correct course of action without undue emphasis on proximate rewards. They correctly capture the heterogeneity and multiple realizability of self-control practices. These accounts are also able to accommodate externalism about self-control (cf. Levy 2011). However, there are certain cases that the delayed gratification accounts struggle to account for. These are instances of what I call “flat” self-control: instances that involve no evaluative contrast in which of the competing aims is to be preferred, but in which self-control behaviors are regardless necessary for agential efficacy. These instances help show that individual differences in self-control critically hinge on a range of behavioral practices.

Levy (2017) has argued that instead of reducing self-control to inhibition control, it ought to be portrayed as a set of skills and practices. As Mischel et al. have demonstrated, these skills are teachable. Moreover, various kinds of environmental scaffolding contribute to the exercising of these skills. Conceiving self-control as such a set of skills and practices, I present an account of self-control as a set of behaviors that is multiply realizable and environment-sensitive: the self-controlled individual is one who has access to self-control behaviors. Differences in our biology and in our environment together modulate what kinds of behaviors we can access. Similarly to how wheelchair users as a group have diminished access to mobility, but this disadvantage doesn’t pertain to individual wheelchair users who live in areas that are well-designed with, e.g., ramps and elevators, people with ADHD as a group have diminished access to self-control behaviors, but this disadvantage doesn’t pertain to individuals in circumstances that sufficiently facilitate their access to self-control. It may be that the circumstances that facilitate access to self-control for ‘neurotypical’ individuals fail to do so, at least to the same extent, for people with ADHD.

An access theory of self-control can be sketched as follows: self-control – the aligning of one’s behavior with one’s intentions and better judgment -- is fundamentally a set of practices. Differences in individual neurobiology, as well as environmental supports and constraints, modulate access to these practices. Individual differences in self-control hinge on access to self-control practices.

In comparison to delayed gratification accounts, an access theory of self-control preserves the multiple realizability and heterogeneity of self-control practices yet omits the motivational hierarchy inherent in those accounts by describing self-control on the level of behavior rather than on the level of intentionality. If an access theory of self-control is true, rather than being breakdowns of motivation, rationality, or intentionality, self-control impairments are breakdowns of *efficacy*.

Katja Lilja:

Enactivism and Phenomenology

Abstract. The book, *The Embodied Mind* (1991), written by cognitive scientist Francisco Varela, philosopher Evan Thompson and psychologist Eleanor Rosch,¹ is an important landmark for the paradigm of embodied and embedded cognition, i.e. for the so-called enactivistic approach in cognitive sciences. In *The Embodied Mind* (1991), Varela et al. develop an enactivistic approach for describing and explaining human experience and its relation to the human organism, by using the tools of cognitive sciences and neurosciences (of both cognitivist and connectionist approaches), philosophical phenomenology and Buddhist meditation techniques. The ambitious aim of the book was to bring new insights into mainstream cognitive sciences and neurosciences which at that time were based on a cognitivist-computationalist approach. Moreover, the authors wanted to give these sciences a new direction in light of phenomenological investigations on consciousness. Their attempt was to promote and develop the phenomenological approach in cognition studies, especially the formulations that we find in Maurice Merleau-Ponty's (1908–1951) philosophy, and at the same time to explore some of the basic ideas and definitions of phenomenology within the paradigm of cognitive sciences and neurosciences.

Phenomenology, when practiced in the footsteps of Edmund Husserl (1859–1938), is a transcendental philosophical enterprise (e.g. Heinämaa, Hartimo and Miettinen 2014). Neuroscience, on the other hand, is a natural science and as such an empirical enterprise. On the basis of this, it is often argued that integrating phenomenology as a method within natural scientific projects, leads to unsolvable methodological and/conceptual problems (e.g. Moran 2013, Ratcliffe 2013, De Preester 2002). The reason for this is often presented as a simple one: The subject of study is not the same in these two fields. In transcendental phenomenology, the subject of the study is pure consciousness and its structures, e.g. the ego-pole and the three-partite structure of time-consciousness (retention-presence-protention). In neuroscience, the subject of the study is psycho-neurobiological subject or the empirical consciousness as a worldly being. In other words, cognitive sciences and neuroscience investigate the human mind and consciousness as parts of the natural world, but phenomenology asks how the natural world can be given to consciousness in the first place and known as such. On the other hand, it has been argued that phenomenology needs to be naturalized, i.e. connected to the world, for a proper explanation of consciousness to be possible (Petitot, Varela, Pachoud 1999).

Nowadays, enactivism is a hypernym, which subsumes a variety of multidisciplinary approaches inside cognitive sciences. In this article, I will shortly outline the enactivistic approach as it was formulated by Varela et al. (1991). By analysing the basic assumption of enactivism – *cognition as enaction, as bringing forth the world* –, I will demonstrate its indebtedness to the philosophical phenomenology of both Husserl and Merleau-Ponty. There are many themes which could have been taken as starting points for this analysis, such as embodiment, the emphasis on lived experience or the deep continuity of life and mind, but I have chosen to proceed from the topic of the consciousness-world correlation which is central to cognitive science as well as phenomenology, even if in different ways. Because of the overlapping nature of the aforementioned themes of cognitive science, one cannot avoid referring to them all while dealing with the theoretical and methodological aims of the field. It is out of the scope of this article, however, to provide an analysis of all these themes.

To give an example of enactivistic research, I will look closer into Kevin O'Regan's and Alva Noë's sensorimotor account of vision and visual consciousness (2001, 2004) drawing attention and explicating ideas, which can be traced down to earlier analyses of 20th century phenomenology. I argue that O'Regan and Noë have adopted, in Husserlian terms, the “natural attitude,” and they use phenomenological concepts to build a new theoretical model of cognitive phenomena in living organisms, to question the dominant computational-cognitivist paradigm and its preconceptions of perception and to bring embodied action back into the world. I argue, that O'Regan's and Noë's research has introduced important novel insights into cognitive science by combining empirical research on vision and phenomenological accounts of perception.

However, I also argue, that if phenomenology is utilized only as a part of a natural scientific model of consciousness, one loses its crucial and essential transcendental dimensions. For to be able to describe how the sense of scientific objectivity is constituted, Husserl argues that one needs to “distance” oneself from all empirical practices and “bracket” all ontological prejudices by performing the phenomenological epoché. In *Ideas I*, Husserl defines the epoché as follows: “We put out of action the general positing which belongs to the essence of the natural attitude; we parenthesize everything, which that positing encompasses with respect to being” (Husserl 1982, sec. 32). From this parenthesizing and inhibitory act, one moves forward by performing series of phenomenological reductions that allow one to disclose the subjective accomplishments behind all objectivities. This is a very different project than the one that builds natural scientific models of consciousness by combining phenomenology with psychology and neuroscience.

¹ “Our concern is to open a space of possibilities in which the circulation between cognitive science and human experience can be fully appreciated and to foster the transformative possibilities of human experience in scientific culture” (Varela & al. 1991).

Paper Proposal for the 2019 Congress for Doctoral Students in Philosophy

Title:

Does Nature Have a Right to Be Restored? Developing the Rights of Nature in the Context of Ecological Restoration

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Abstract:

In this paper I will analyse the rights of nature in the context of ecological restoration. I will go straight to the crime scene where the alleged rights of nature have been violated and investigate what the context of ecological restoration could tell us about rights of nature and the nature of such rights.

I will start by defining ‘nature,’ ‘ecological restoration’ and ‘rights’ as all of these terms deserve further clarification. Especially ‘nature’ has been criticised for its complexity and elusiveness as a concept, not to mention the contested idea of considering nature as a rights holder.

Based on these findings I will develop a *rights-based approach to ecological restoration* that has rights of nature at its core. I will investigate what kind of moral claims nature has on humans, and what ecological restoration practices would look like if they incorporated rights of nature. My rights-based approach to ecological restoration is designed to account for the inequalities that have led to environmental degradation and so it attempts to address and repair, not only the physical damage caused, but also the discriminatory world-views and policies that have led to the destruction in the first place.

I will conclude by providing a brief overview of the duties and obligations that should emerge from ecological restoration. I will focus particularly on what I call the *reparative* and *preventative* obligations and argue that the authority of these obligations can and should extend beyond ecological restoration to our basic understanding of rights of nature. Thus, ecological restoration serves as an important acid test for rights of nature, as it helps to reveal what claims nature has on humans and what obligation and duties humans have as moral agents living on a shared planet.

ABSTRACT: Suffering political poverty

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In my presentation I present a conception of political poverty that could help diagnose situations in which marginalized social groups fail to act in public for one's own interests. I propose that instead of conceptualising such political passivity as a form of exclusion from a political community, it would be more fruitful to talk of political passivity as a result of suffering from a specifically political form of poverty. I show how the conception of political poverty helps us see many features of political passivity that are left unexplored by theoretical approaches that focus on dynamics of political exclusion and inclusion. The idiom of political exclusion focuses our attention on the boundaries of communities and the abstract systemic dynamics of drawing those boundaries, leaving unexplored the role played by subjective experience of feeling capable and authorised to participate in politics. Even radical democratic theory tends to take the political agency of the excluded as an unproblematic given. This assumption does not take into account the experiences of those groups and individuals for whom political participation is not felt to be a meaningful possibility.

I approach such situations through a phenomenological method that underlines how our social experience is always intertwined on a pre-reflective level with our intersubjective lifeworld. The disposition to remain passive, to abstain and withdraw can often be the result of the lack of intersubjective supports for political agency that leaves the members of marginalized groups feeling unable to engage with democratic politics. Deeply ingrained feelings of not having a credible stake in political life are often exacerbated by the lack of linguistic and other capabilities that are required for efficient political participation. However, what I am aiming towards is not to describe the lack of capabilities as such, a phenomenon well explored by capability theories of justice. What interests me is the way some social environments seem to curtail the capabilities of their residents to express themselves politically. This is not only due to a lack of material or symbolic resources, but also due to the dearth of shared meanings and horizons of possibility that would allow for experiencing oneself as a credible and authorised political agent. Instead of being a felt possibility, political engagement is then experienced as a distant and frustrating field of action that one is not authorised to take part in.

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Analysis of teleonomy and autopoiesis in Kant's *Kritik der Urteilskraft* (1790) and some of its consequences to following life sciences

In the end of the 18th century the life sciences increased in number. Georges Cuvier (1769–1832) established the comparative anatomy, which also gave the basis for palaeontology. Buffon (Georges-Louis Leclerc, 1707–1788) was, by Darwin's words, “the first author who in modern times has treated [the concept of evolution and the adaptation of the living species] in a scientific spirit.” The Swedish Carl von Linné (1707–1778) was the first to characterize the biogeochemical cycle—the circulatory progress of the inanimate and animate matter on earth.

In philosophy, Kant concentrated on the apparent purposefulness (*Zweckmässigkeit*) of living nature and the twofold nature of an organism as both a ‘natural product’ (*Naturprodukt*) and a ‘natural end’ (*Naturzweck*) in *The Critique of the Power of Judgment* (1790) and fragmentarily in his posthumous *Opus Postumum* (1804). Kant defines the principle of biological knowledge as such: “If [the laws of nature] require the idea of purposes for the comprehension of a law and of the possibility of a product of nature, then the nature is here being regarded as organic” (*Opus postumum*, 21:407). However, for Kant, the finalistic or teleological explanation does not correspond with anything in reality but is only a form of judgment which consciousness puts on to the living phenomena. Biology as a science of purposeful phenomena is not thus possible and must be left outside of the scientific thought formulated in the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781/1787), the *Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics* (1783), and the *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* (1786).

While the living nature made experimental science in the end of the 18th century to diffuse, and the experimental study of life has been in the core of philosophy since Anaximander (611–547 BC), Anaxagoras (500–428 BC), and Aristotle (384–322 BC), the apparent teleology and organicist nature of living beings needed revisions in the ideas of causality and identity, because aim, purpose and self-organization imply freedom. In a Leibnizian context, Marie-Noëlle Dumas in her *La pensée de la vie chez Leibniz* (1976, Vrin, Paris) notes, that “the study of life was inseparable from metaphysics” (p. 9). The history of philosophy, unlike the history of science, has paid relatively little attention to the breakthroughs in the study of life in the end of the 18th century. In this presentation, I 1) present and contextualize the Kantian ideas of teleonomy and autopoiesis in his philosophical system and 2) show certain examples of the range of influence in science the Kantian ideas have had.

Phenomenology of home: Husserlian perspectives

Abstract: The objective of this presentation is to offer a phenomenological analysis of the experience of home as a part of the process of ego's self-constitution. My central thesis is that the experience of being at home can be viewed as a process of ego's self-objectification in which the ego does not constitute itself merely as a psychophysical entity or as a person, but as a normatively significant member of a 'homeworld'. The homeworld thus constituted involves the ego's own values that function as a normative framework that determines proper ways of behaving within its limits. When the process of self-constitution is understood in this way, it can also be viewed as an activity of political relevance and in two related senses: (i) the ego takes its place within a shared world by positing a set of norms that are expected to bind others, and (ii) the home itself can be understood as a place whose meaning is rooted in the ego's deepest values.

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ABSTRACT: How can there be contested concepts?

One often encounters a claim according to which one or another concept is ‘contested’, and yet it is rather unclear what is meant by it. In a typical case, the concept of ‘x’ is claimed as contested on the grounds that a number of people hold conflicting opinions concerning ‘x’ which results in a disagreement. However, if it is argued that the participants to a dispute have different concepts of ‘x’ in mind, the concept of ‘x’ cannot serve as a shared object of contestation in a genuine disagreement: instead of a single concept there would now be multiple concepts. This basic observation motivates my present analysis. How can there be contested concepts?

I will present a theoretical case study of one relatively widely assumed notion of conceptual contestation. I will start by briefly discussing the nature of concepts. After that I will outline the sense of conceptual contestation that I view as somewhat widespread in various fields of social sciences and humanistic studies. This is mostly achieved by setting three qualifications for conceptual contestation. However, the qualifications put in place give rise to a problem that looks to preclude the conceptual contestation altogether. It is not perfectly clear how a single concept can be an object of contestation in the appropriate sense.

I will briefly look into a couple of notions that might help in sidestepping the problem—appealing to concept/conception distinction, and the possibility that one is dealing with a metalinguistic negotiation—but both of these fail to capture the appropriate sense of conceptual contestation that I am after. I will present an alternative view with regard to conceptual contestation, and I argue that it meets with the three qualifications that were earlier set and thus accords with the presently identified sense of conceptual contestation. In my alternative view, the concept at the center of conceptual contestation is conceived as the common, yet inchoate, object of disagreement that is not directly shared by the disputants themselves. This makes it possible to speak of ‘contested concepts’.

Corrado Piroddi:

Honneth and Bourdieu on social reproduction, social struggle, and social transformation

In this paper, I will try to underline how both Bourdieu and Honneth establish a strong connection between social reproduction, social struggles and social transformation. Regarding the issue of social struggles, the paper aims to underline how both Bourdieu and Honneth consider such type of practical activity as an inevitable element of the human societal life. For Bourdieu, in fact, struggles for the accumulation of economic, social, and cultural capitals are all struggles for the control of the symbolic means that guarantee social reproduction and the preservation of dominants' interests. For Honneth, the appearance of social struggles depends on the fact that the norms that sustain social reproduction are constitutively open to recurrent re-interpretations appealing to previously neglected needs or interests. In this regard, it will be asserted that, for both, social reproduction consists not only of mechanisms of symbolic stabilization of our social practices. Social and symbolic transformations that are related to social struggles are an important feature of social reproduction itself. In this respect, focusing on Bourdieu, the paper will try to highlight how his conception of struggle for the acquisition of symbolic capital is entangled with an antagonistic conception of the struggle for recognition, which can be depicted as a zero-sum game. Successively, it will explain how, emphasizing the reconciliatory nature of social struggles for recognition, Honneth underlines their effects at the structural level in terms of expansion and improvement of inclusiveness of social institutions.

Given that, I will also point out the respective differences. On one hand, Bourdieu tends to underline how social struggles can have an integrative nature, transforming the social space in favor of a dominant class, and reproducing the *status quo*. Then, I will highlight how Honneth, on the other hand, privileges a progressive idea of the social struggle, which is mainly seen by him as a mean of social amelioration. According to this perspective, dominated groups can turn values and norms, which are socially accepted and institutionalized, against dominant elites, pursuing their emancipatory interest as a dominated class.

Finally, the paper will highlight which preconditions Bourdieu and Honneth identify for explaining social transformation. In this respect, it will be asserted that there is the opportunity to integrate Honneth's account with Bourdieu's one. In fact, Honneth stresses only the weight of social suffering in describing the causes of the emergence of social conflicts. Instead, Bourdieu points out the structural conditions that can generate a situation of social struggle, without disregarding the importance of human expectations of social recognition.

Keywords: Bourdieu, Honneth, social ontology, critical theory, social struggle, social transformation.

Limit-experiences and the affective self

Abstract. In the following the “subjective character” of experiential episodes known as liminal phenomena is explored with the help of professor Dan Zahavi’s concept of the “minimal self” and with detailed inquiry into the concepts of attention and immersion. This particular area of experiential life is interesting and fruitful for our study into the phenomena of the self, because these peculiar episodes help us challenge some views of self-awareness and develop some current ideas about the phenomenological character of the self. The objective of this thesis is to clarify the following concepts:

- unawareness, inattention, unconscious
- differences between awareness and attention
- liminal phenomena and liminality in self-awareness

In the following I will argue first that Zahavi’s concepts of minimal self and for-me-ness neglect interesting and crucial aspects of selfhood manifest in the subjective character of liminal phenomena. This is because Zahavi maintains that all experiences lived through have the character of for-me-ness. I argue, that liminal phenomena, such as “highway hypnosis”, dreamless sleep, waking up and hypnagogic jerks, (i) are lived through temporally and tactilely in their own peculiar ways, but (ii) these phenomena do not easily comply with the Zahavian concept of for-me-ness.

However, I also suggest that Zahavi’s concepts of minimal self and for-me-ness can be further developed to cover also such liminal phenomena. I argue that a careful analysis of the vague and uneasy disruptions of self-givenness of sense, characteristic of the above mentioned liminal phenomena (highway hypnosis, hypnic jerks and sleep), shows that even such “experiences” not usually considered as directly given are experienced as being mine in their own specific ways.

Technical objects as Medium for Transindividuality – Simondon and the Possibilities of Technology

Gilbert Simondon (1924–1989), a French philosopher of technology and science, has gained increasing attention in recent years. Simondon provides robust theory of formation and evolution of technical objects alongside humans' dynamic being. Thus, to Simondon, technical objects form complex networks of human activity, cognition, affects, as well as physical and biological processes, and are always interaction with their milieu. In addition, technical object is a crystallized human gesture and cognition. However, they are never completely in the control of their creators: they have certain degree of "openness", i.e. they are open to outside information.

Simondon conceptualized living being as constantly developing process that should be understood in its genesis and operation, that is, in its *individuation*. As a part of individuation, human beings invent technical objects that create conditions to overcome incompatibilities and problems of environments. Simondon calls this a relationship "in which human beings communicate through what they invent" (Simondon 2017, 252). To state this differently, humans realize potentialities which allow them to overcome problems *that are too problematic for them as individuals*. They also share their individual potentials, and, thus, transindividual relationship is "a coupling between the inventive and organizational capacities of several subjects" (Simondon 2017, 258). Technics and technology are mediating [medium; *le support*] this transindividuality, and the possibilities of this collective is at least partly depended on the possibilities of mediating technology.

However, humans can be alienated from technical objects and their operation. As these objects constantly modify and are created by "human condition", their mode of being creates magical or mythical thinking. For example, Simondon suggests that complete automatons, like robots, are mythical figures constructed by anthropomorphistic thought that grants something to a constellation of automatic functions that it does not have.

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Abstract

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This paper examines the concept of double sensation, which plays a central role in Merleau-Ponty's late philosophy. Merleau-Ponty considers the double sensation to be ontologically fundamental, and by so doing opposes Sartre who views the double sensation as a contingent feature of our embodiment (Moran 2010, Sartre 2003 [1943]). I will point out the ontological significance of double sensation focusing in Merleau-Ponty's last, unfinished work *Le visible et l'invisible* (1964) in particular. I will argue that the phenomenological analysis of double sensation that Merleau-Ponty presents in *Le visible* is crucial for his thinking of the ontological dimension of flesh (*chair*). In my interpretation, the experience of double sensation is essentially pre-reflective in nature, as it is based on our body's capacity to perform "a sort of reflection" ("*une sorte de réflexion*") (VI, 141-2, 249 [184, 297]; S, 271). I challenge Fiona Hughes' interpretation of double sensation in Merleau-Ponty's late philosophy, as she does not emphasize it as a pre-reflective operation of the body-subject but focuses on the reflective level of the experience.

While double sensation might not be restricted to the sense of touch, I will here focus on the tactile aspects exclusively. In this light, I define double sensation as the phenomenon of two parts of the body touching each other in such a way that it remains unclear as to which one is touching and which one is touched. For example, when I press the palms of my hands together, a double sensation pre-reflectively emerges in my lived body (*corps propre*).

Meaning Still not Normative: On Assessment and Guidance

For over three decades now a debate has sprawled concerning the thesis, most commonly attributed to Saul Kripke's 1982 reading of Ludwig Wittgenstein, that "meaning is essentially normative". One of the major clash points in the multifaceted controversy concerns the validity of the so called "Simple Argument" as titled by Kathrin Glüer and Åsa Wikforss. The Simple Argument's main contention is that, first, for an expression to have meaning or conceptual content, the expression must have correctness conditions of application. In other words, it must be possible to apply the meaningful expression incorrectly. Second, from this premise it *directly* follows that certain normative consequences (what may/ought (not) to be done with the expressions) govern the applications of the meaningful expressions. Meaning is thus normative in that any foundationalist semantic theory that seeks to describe the conditions in virtue of which expressions come to be meaningful must explain this primordial "guidance aspect" of meaning. Kripke's argument is that since no fact about the speaker or even a community of speakers can do this, the normativity condition puts a severe restriction for any viable foundationalist semantic theory.

Kripkenstein's arguments continue to stir vibrant debate rooted in two basic responses to the Simple Argument. Normativists accept the premise and the conclusion of the argument and adapt their semantic theories accordingly, most characteristically by arguing for the foundationalist claim that expressions are determined as meaningful by underlying norms of some kind. Anti-normativists usually accept the first premise that meaningful expressions (or in case of a related argument with mental content, beliefs) necessarily have correctness conditions yet deny that the normative consequences would follow *directly* from this. Rather they see that some mediation is required for the normative consequences to follow, typically by the subject's pro-attitudes toward using her applications correctly, or else that the normativity stems not from meaning per se but from social, rational, or other sources. Furthermore, anti-normativists also usually deny that meaningful expressions necessarily having correctness conditions of application would directly lead to any substantial foundationalist commitments about the nature of meaning. Instead they interpret "correctness conditions" neutrally as classifying expressions into two semantic classes, where it is the theoretician's choice which semantic classification she regards as primordial (e.g. truth and falsehood instead of norms).

One powerful argument by the anti-normativists employs the distinction between constitutive and regulative norms. If meaning-determining norms are interpreted as norms constituting meaning, roughly in the same sense that rules of chess constitute chess, then these same norms cannot have regulative consequences. By analogy: rules of chess determine what it is to castle in a game, but from this alone it does not follow that any player has a reason to castle in a given game. Likewise, the argument goes, if "green" meaning green means that "green" applies correctly only to green objects, then it does not follow that subjects proficient with the word "green" have a reason to apply the word only to green objects. So if meaning-constitutive norms cannot enter into practical syllogisms (lacking mediation by suitable pro-attitudes), then meaning is not normative in the sense that would pose a primordial theoretical restriction to semantic foundationalist theories.

Recently a novel approach to settle the conflict between the two sides has been brought to light favouring the normativist side. The solution, independently advanced by Matthias Kiesselbach (2014) and Ulf Hlobil (2015), holds that crucial anti-normativist objections to the Simple Argument can be countered since they have ignored an important, alternative reading of the key term “normative”. The novel approach suggests that the correct reading is not “guidance” but “assessability”, meaning that even though discursive subjects are not always guided in their actions by the meaning-determining norms, if they can be appropriately assessed as being subject to the said norms, they are equally bound by them. The novel solution targets especially those anti-normativist arguments that utilize the distinction between constitutive and regulative norms.

In this paper I claim that the arguments of the novel proposal against the Argument from Constitution fail. The reason why they fail is that the proponents of the argument must either show how merely being able to produce meaningful expressions obliges one to abide to the correctness conditions constituting the meaningfulness of the expressions (which is beyond the argument’s scope), or concede that the normative attitudes of holding a subject obliged to abide to the correctness conditions are themselves correct only if the subject has a pro-attitude toward following the meaning-constituting norms (which is unproblematic to the anti-normativist). Moreover, the paper argues that criticism of the novel approach has wider implications for certain normativist positions, including Robert Brandom’s theory of meaning.

Title of the presentation: **The Quest for Nietzsche's Metaphysics of Becoming**

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Abstract:

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) was against much, if not all, of the tradition of western philosophy that had preceded them. Because of this, Nietzsche attempts to both present new philosophical ideas and find a new way of expressing said with their infamous aphoristic style. This novelty of expression is at least partly to blame for the difficulty that scholars have had in understanding the argued novelty of Nietzsche's ideas. Thus, the categorization of Nietzsche's philosophy under the traditional headings like epistemology or metaphysics has proven challenging.

Against this background of struggling to understand Nietzsche, I shall present my own interpretation of Nietzsche's metaphysics. This I will do in close conversation with other contemporary interpreters of Nietzsche. I will, firstly, make my case for the relevance of metaphysics to Nietzsche, by arguing against such readings that would have Nietzsche either be metaphysically uninteresting or committed to some kind of antimetaphysics. I argue that Nietzsche's metaphysics is to be understood through the opposition of the concepts of being and becoming. Of these, being refers to world understood through static concepts and enduring forms, whereas becoming refers to the world beyond our conceptions of it, one that is a formless flux of chaos.

Nietzsche's own radical position is that of a denial of being. What, however, many interpretations get wrong is that for Nietzsche this denial is not the end of philosophy but a means for the acknowledgement of becoming. To get a more exact understanding of what Nietzsche means by this becoming beyond being, I propose that for Nietzsche all being is to be understood as the being of something as something. The denial of this would seem to be metaphysical nihilism, but I argue that, for Nietzsche, becoming is to be understood as, in a way, between something and nothing. That is, the world as becoming is neither nothing (as metaphysical nihilism) nor something (as traditional metaphysics). Strictly speaking, becoming "is" not, but only becomes. This is my interpretation Nietzsche's metaphysics of becoming that I will try my very best to explicate in both my paper and my presentation in a way that can be understood and that makes somekind of sense.

In Defense of Egalitarianism about Moral Knowledge

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This paper defends egalitarianism about moral knowledge. The first part of this paper argues that egalitarianism is implicitly assumed in some of our responsibility judgments, and the second part defends egalitarianism against recent criticism.

Egalitarianism is the thesis that every (normal, intelligent, adult) human being has – at least in principle - an equal access to moral knowledge. Why defend such a controversial thesis? Because, I argue, it's implicitly assumed in some of our responsibility attributions. It's a widely recognized principle that blameless non-moral ignorance excuses wrongdoing. However, it's a much more controversial question as to what extent moral ignorance excuses. Consider two cases:

- (1) Ben doesn't know that a particular joke is sexist and therefore offending.
- (2) Ben doesn't know that that something constitutes a harm is a pro tanto reason against doing it.

Suppose that Ben tells the particular sexist joke, therefore offending his female colleagues. After being confronted by his colleagues, he offers the first as an excuse. It's conceivable, at least in some cases, that he's truly and blamelessly ignorant of the joke's implicit sexism, and his colleagues could accept it as an excuse. But suppose that he offers the second as an explanation and claims to be genuinely ignorant of the moral relevance of harming others. It's doubtful that his colleagues would admit it as an excuse. Some cases of moral ignorance seem so bad that even the possibility of blameless ignorance is ruled out: the ignorance *itself* seems to speak against the person (cf. Harman 2011, Mason 2015). There is an asymmetry here, but it's not between moral and non-moral knowledge *tout court*. Rather, it's between core moral principles on the one hand, and particular cases and non-moral knowledge on the other. This asymmetry would be neatly explained by *egalitarianism about knowledge of core moral principles*.

Egalitarianism would also explain why there seems to be something fishy about moral deference. It has been argued that expressivism and sentimentalism have a natural explanation for why moral deference seems weird (Fletcher 2017). However, as McGrath (forthcoming) points out, nothing in these solutions really depend on the metaethical framework. Rather, it's egalitarianism that's doing the heavy lifting: if every person is in an equal position to access moral truths, it would indeed be pointless to defer to others. Applying the lessons from the previous section, an egalitarian would agree that deference is rational in some cases, but not in others: indeed, all of the most compelling cases presented in the literature to defend moral deference are judgments about particular cases and applications of thick concepts (e.g. Enoch 2014, Sliwa 2012, Wiland 2017). An egalitarian could agree, yet maintain that to defer to others on core moral principles is problematic.

The problem that egalitarianism must face is that it may seem too idealistic, considering the prevalence of disagreement over moral issues. This problem can be averted by idealizing the conditions when knowledge can be obtained. However, McGrath (forthcoming) argues that this solution threatens to dissolve the purported asymmetry between moral and non-moral deference, the very thing that egalitarianism was supposed to explain. But, splitting the domain of moral knowledge allows the egalitarian to claim that the rationality of deference depends on both parties accepting the same core moral principles, while deference itself concerns particular cases. Crucially this vindicates an asymmetry between moral and non-moral deference: the rationality of deferring to your tax accountant is not dependent on your preceding knowledge of core accounting principles.

Dasein, identity, morality, and ideology

In this paper I outline the technological essence of identities. My aim here is to work from Martin Heidegger's beautifully simple existential axiom, that we are thrown into the world, to other kinds of ontologies and moral ontologies upon which we ground our identities. I then show that identities are abstract, technological devices that are in a dialectical relation to ideology, as it is defined in critical theory, which in turn relates to our understanding of being, as well as moral ontologies. This paper serves also as a base for the first part of my dissertation, where I go from existential-ontological philosophy towards ideology criticism.

In our being-in-the-world, we constantly situate ourselves in relation to moral goods. These 'goods' are different to us in different situations, where we assume identities to orient ourselves towards these 'goods'. Our identities are tied to moral ontologies which we cannot explicate. However, analysing identities will formally indicate to us the moral ontologies under which we operate, and are useful in tracing the route towards whence these moral ontologies originate.

I conceptualise identities as abstract technologies, separate from any 'integral self', that we use as a means to reveal and interpret our being. Identities are that mediating technology which is missing in any ontological connection between us and moral goods. They constitute that lived history through which we understand our being as thrown *Dasein* in this world. Additionally, identities here are specifically a phenomenon of our epoch.

Finally, I tie identities and ontologies, and moral ontologies into a critical theory understanding of ideology. Ideologies become naturalised in such a manner that the ideas furthered in any ideology seem to bear ontological weight, which they in fact do not have. Identities, as revelatory technologies, may show us how this contingency exists.