

Congress for Doctoral Students in Philosophy 22-24.10.2018, Tampere:

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Tuukka Brunila
University of Helsinki
Centre of Excellence for Law, Identity and the European narratives
Faculty of Social Sciences
Field: Social and Moral Philosophy

Bourgeoisie against democracy: Carl Schmitt's Critique of Liberalism

In my paper, I discuss Carl Schmitt's critique of liberal democratic theory. My focus will be on the way liberalism limits democratic consequences. According to Schmitt liberal democracy as a form of constitutionalism is a state where democracy is limited in order to protect individual freedoms. I claim that this is possible by universalizing the bourgeois subject and interest. Instead of forming a political unity, the liberal system tries to integrate other groups into a universal interpretation of subjectivity, that is, "humankind as such". By this Schmitt means that there is no concrete people that the system represents, but rather the universalized individual. I argue that what enables liberalism to limit the political is this universalized individual transcending all political oppositions. I will also point out that this strategy serves bourgeois interests.

First, I will explicate the historical origins of the bourgeois as a political force. In Schmitt's view, this happens after the 1848 French revolution when the *bourgeois* state is first established. My objective is to show that the liberal system is in Schmitt's view in fact a *bourgeois* system. The Weimar constitution is according to Schmitt a posthumous realization of principles, ideals and programs that became relevant in the year 1848. They are posthumous in the sense that they become relevant to German politics only after the fall of German *Empire* after the First World War.

Second, I will discuss how the bourgeois principles are at play in the principles of parliamentary politics. I discuss how the principles of liberal parliamentarism work in favour of universalizing the bourgeois condition. I argue that these principles are used to represent liberal democratic governing as something that is universal instead of serving private interest. Lastly, I will show how these principles then come together in limiting the political as such.

Abstract for "The 2018 Congress for Doctoral Students in Philosophy"

Applicant Name: **Corinna Casi**

E-mail: corinna.casi (at) helsinki.fi

Affiliation: PhD student in Environmental Ethics at Helsinki University (Finland), Fac. of Social Sciences, Dep. of Political & Economic Studies.

Title: **Food (In)Security in the Arctic: An Environmental Ethical Perspective on the Sami and their Food Culture**

Corinna Casi

Abstract

Sami are one of the few Indigenous people in Europe. They have been organized in small communities spread all over Sapmi, the Sami land, located in the High European North. This land extends across the North of Norway, Sweden, Finland and the North West of Russian Federation.

The most traditional Sami livelihood is reindeer husbandry (Olsson 2016, 281) but in some areas, salmon fishing is as important as reindeer husbandry. Their livelihood practices are vital for Sami culture not only as means of subsistence but mainly because they form their identity as Sami Indigenous people.

When we discuss the topic of food security - or food insecurity - in the High European North among the Sami population it is important first to define what we mean for food security. Over the years there has been several definitions of the notion. The way food security is understood is paramount to determine what type of duties its enhancement will entail for individuals, communities or societies.

The term "food security" was coined after the World War II in postwar reconstruction time with the aim of making nations food secure. At the time it was more a food supply issue concerning its availability at the national and international scale (FAO 2003)¹.

In 2014 FAO together with other international organizations such as World Food Program and International Fund for Agricultural Development (2014) identified four aspects of food security: availability (e.g. quality, quantity and diversity), access (physical and economic, hence issue of allocation and affordability), stability (risks connected to climate change or natural disasters), and utilization, which is "the ability of a person to optimally or at least effectively, absorb the food they eat" (Gibson 2012).

¹ *Trade Reforms and Food Security: Conceptualizing the Linkages*, Commodity Policy and Projections Service Commodities and Trade Division (FAO) Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Rome, 2003 <http://www.fao.org/docrep/005/y4671e/y4671e06.htm> .

In this article I will argue that the value of food for humans goes beyond its nutrition qualities (Scrini 2008). Its value includes social, cultural, aesthetic and symbolic meaning through which food has a major impact on human well-being. (Siipi 2015, 194)

Further on, I will also argue that according to the FAO definition of food security dietary habits of Sami people are not simply a matter of consumerist preferences of some food over others. Their dietary choices are part of their identity and their livelihood. They belong to the sphere Gary Comstock (2013) defines as “overriding values”. Those are interests, values and beliefs vital to individual’s identity and world perspective. Sami traditional food choices are types of overriding values which “are determined by the decisions regarding the kind of life one wants to live and chose to live” (Siipi 2015, 196). As such they cannot be compromised since they are part of their identity as Sami. This is also very well explained by Jon Petter A. Stoor and his collaborators (2015) when they interviewed Sami people concerning the very high suicide rate worldwide. Suicide is considered a viable solution - even though very hard and sad for the Sami community - when a reindeer herder has lost - or he is about to lose - his herding. Within the Sami culture, to live the life as a herder is “understood as the best way to preserve Sami identity and to be able to pass the legacy on to the new generation” (Stoor et al. 2015, 3). When a Sami people lose their herding, which is their life and their identity, there is no reason to continue living. In this light, suicide is seen as something acceptable in order to elude the existential void (Stoor et al. 2015, 1, 4).

Dreams and Demons: Radical Skepticism in Descartes's First Meditation

Jan Forsman

PhD Researcher/Doctoral Student

Philosophy

Faculty of Social Sciences

University of Tampere

jan.forsman@uta.fi

We are all familiar with the dreaming and deceiver scenarios in Descartes's First Meditation: perhaps we are just dreaming and what we perceive is non-veridical, or maybe we are even under the machinations of a powerful Demon feeding us with manufactured sensory input. Typical way to read these scenarios is to hold them both as propagating a *strong version* of radical external world skepticism, where external reality might be non-existent. However, this reading raises the question of why would Descartes require both scenarios, if one is already sufficient for radical skepticism.

In the paper, I propose a new picture of the radical skepticism in the First Meditation. I read the dreaming scenario as propagating a *weak version* of the external world skepticism, where external reality might exist but we don't have a reliable access to it by the senses alone. Following this, I read the First Meditation to include two separate deceivers, the deceiving God (DG) and the deceiving Demon (DD). Of these, DG works as a scenario that propagates skepticism on the origin of our cognitive nature, suggesting that we might be created so imperfect that we never reach the truth no matter how evident our perception seems. Meanwhile, DD is not an actual skeptical scenario but an instrument of self-deception, raised to help with the mentally challenging general suspension of judgment that is required by Descartes's meditative project. At the end of the First Meditation, Descartes combines the dreaming scenario with the DD, empowering the scope of the dreaming from the weak to the strong external world skepticism: the external reality might not exist at all.

The paper is divided into three parts. In the first part, I analyze the dreaming scenario and the following painter analogy, laying out the reasons for reading them as propagating weak external world skepticism. In the second part, I discuss the scenario of DG, how it relates to the dreaming scenario and my reasoning in separating it from DD. In the third part, I tackle the DD, discussing the reason for its inclusion and how it combines with dreaming for the following meditative exercise.

Minna Hagman
University of Tampere, Faculty of Social Sciences, Philosophy
hagman.minna.m@student.uta.fi

Landscape as a dwelling place for a living being

In my paper I will argue that Giorgio Agamben's concept of landscape offers a possibility to think the relation of a living being to its environment without making a difference between human being and animal being and human world and animal environment.

I will explicate the philosophical backgrounds and motivations to my argument by firstly addressing Agamben's conception of ancient Greek biopolitics and its relation to modern biopolitics. Both of these forms of biopolitics are based on human-animal difference and tend to produce and maintain the relation between bare life and sovereign power.

Secondly, I will examine some philosophical notions related to the contemporary concept of landscape. After that I will investigate the conceptual backgrounds of Agamben's concept of landscape in Martin Heidegger's observations of human world and animal environment.

Finally, I will discuss Agamben's concept of landscape and show on what grounds it can be claimed that landscape is a dwelling place for a living being.

Abstrakti. Ihmistyö ja kapitalismin rajat

Miika Kabata, Tampereen yliopisto
miika.kabata@gmail.com

Aristoteleen ajatusleikki itseään liikuttavista työkaluista tarjoaa varhaisen koneisiin ja automaatioon liittyvän oivalluksen (Politiikka 1253b33-39). Aristoteleelle, kuten antiikin filosofeille yleisemmin, työ on välttämätön paha, joka joidenkuiden on kuitenkin suoritettava niin kauan kuin työvälineet eivät kykene itsenäisesti tuottamaan ihmisten tarvitsemia asioita.

Nykypäivänä itse itseään liikuttavista koneista on tullut arkipäivää, ellei jokapäiväisessä elämässä, niin ainakin tieteiskirjallisuudessa. Tšekkiläinen kirjailija Karel Čapek kehitti termin robotti tšekin kielen sanasta *robo*, työ. Robotti on kone, joka osaa toimia (enemmän tai vähemmän) itsenäisesti maailmassa.

Robotti on myös ihmisen palvelija. Siksi robotteihin liitetään lupaus paremmasta elämästä ja lisääntyneestä vapaa-ajasta. Niiden avulla on mahdollista vapauttaa ihmiset epämiellyttävistä, mutta välttämättömistä työtehtävistä. Robotit voivat korvata yhä monimutkaisempia ja vaativampia työtehtäviä, minkä vuoksi ei ole myöskään yllättävää, että ne herättävät toisaalta huolta teknologisesta työttömyydestä ja toimeentulon menettämisestä.

Karl Marx tarkastelee työtä monipuolisesti tarkastellen sekä työn yleisiä ylihistoriallisia määreitä että erityisiä historiallisia muotoja, joita työ saa eri yhteiskuntamuodostelmissa. *Pääomassa* Marxin erityisenä kiinnostuksen kohteena on koneiden kapitalistisen käytön vaikutus työn muotoon. Esimerkiksi koneellisessa teollisuustuotannossa ihmisestä tulee usein työn subjektin sijaan koneen jatke.

Kapitalistisessa tuotantotavassa työvoima ja tuotantovälineet on erotettu toisistaan. Tämän eron taustalla on luokkajako tuotantovälineiden omistajiin, kapitalisteihin, sekä toimeentulo- ja tuotantovälineistä erotettuihin työläisiin. Työläiset joutuvat turvaamaan toimeentulonsa myymällä työvoimaansa ja kapitalistit joutuvat kasaamaan lisää pääomia ja tavoittelemaan lisää voittoa pysyäkseen kapitalisteina.

Marx tarkastelee myös tuotannon lisääntyneen automaation yhteiskunnallisia seurauksia kapitalistiselle arvonlisäysprosessille. Työarvoteorian mukaan ihmistyö on uuden arvon ainoa lähde. Tuotantovälineiden, kuten koneiden ja raaka-aineiden, käyttö työprosessissa ainoastaan siirtää niihin sisältyvän arvon lopputuotteeseen. Työvoiman käyttö sen sijaan luo uutta arvoa. Näin ollen ihmistyö on myös tuotetun lisäarvon viimekätinen lähde.

Miten utopia täydellisesti automatisoidusta taloudesta, jossa tuotanto on täysin automatisoitu tai siirretty roboteille ja jossa ihmistyöllä ei ole mitään tuotannollista merkitystä, sopii yhteen kapitalismin kanssa? Yksinkertainen työarvoteoria vastaa, että ei mitenkään, sillä ilman ihmistyötä ei synny lisäarvoa ja ilman lisäarvoa ei ole elinkelpoista kapitalismia.

Tässä työssä tarkastellaan kriittisesti, millaisiin ongelmiin tällainen yksinkertainen työarvoteoria saattaa joutua. Tämä tarkastelu auttaa meitä ymmärtämään paremmin työn ja ei-työn rajoja ja toisaalta kapitalistisen tuotantotavan historiallisia rajoja.

ABSTRACT:
**Materialism about practical reasoning
and the normativity of meaning**

Abstracting from metanormative considerations, the debate about the normativity of meaning amounts to a disagreement about whether or not true claims about meanings of linguistic expressions logically entail claims about how one ought to act. This seems *not* to be the case, because claims about meaning are hypothetical norms that, in closer analysis, turn out to be descriptive claims, and descriptive claims cannot logically entail claims about how one ought to act. However, the very idea of the goodness of practical inferences as formal validity, on which the debate is hinged, turns out to be contestable: *any* attempt to specify reasons that, either individually or (what is a weaker claim) jointly, *logically entail* that one ought to act in particular ways is threatened by an underdetermination argument.

The main contribution of my paper is that of developing and defending an alternative approach on the goodness of language-involving practical inference and the function of claims about meaning. I do this by building on Brandom's (1994) general ideas about the goodness of inferences and the function of what he calls "logical vocabularies". The received *formalist* approach amounts to the claim that, primarily, good practical inferences are valid *generally* and that particular inferences are good derivatively, by virtue of applying a valid argument form to a particular case. By contrast, the alternative *materialist* approach to the goodness of inference amounts to the view that, primarily, practical inferences are good relative to their *particular* contexts.

Underlying these differences are two views on the *point* of providing reasons for action: while a proponent of the formalist approach thinks that reasons are given in order to rule out the *possibility* of challenges, the proponent of the materialist approach understands the point of this activity to be that of vindicating the goodness of inferences in the face of *particular* challenges. Consequently, a proponent of the materialist approach would maintain that e.g. a true descriptive claim might vindicate the goodness of a particular way of acting in the face of a *particular* challenge, although that claim does not do that in the face of *all* possible challenges. The notion of a vindication in the face of a challenge is the nearest equivalent, in the materialist framework, to the notion a sufficient normative reason for action in the formalist framework.

However, insofar as a proponent of the materialist approach maintains that claims about meaning, either individually or as a member of a set of jointly sufficient reasons, do *not* determine what language-involving actions one ought to perform, she owes an answer to the question of what *do* they do. The materialist's answer to this question is that claims about meaning can be used either to challenge the goodness of language-involving practical *inferences* (as opposed to language-involving *actions*) or to vindicate the goodness of an inference in the face of a challenge, and the latter might be successful in some cases but not in all. Again, because the notion of the vindication in the face of a challenge is the nearest equivalent, in the materialist framework, to the notion of the normativity of meaning in the formalist framework, I suggest that the materialist approach can accommodate the intuitions of both the normativists and the anti-normativists about meaning.

“This is the Hinge of your System” – Hume’s critique of Smith revisited

Aino Lahdenranta, University of Jyväskylä

Abstract

Hume and Smith both use sympathy, or coming to share others’ emotions, to explain how we judge of morals. However, their understandings of sympathy and its precise role in moral thought differ from one another. This paper deals with Hume’s critique concerning Smith’s account of moral approval in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Hume argues in a famous letter that Smith should back up his claim that sympathy with any emotion, whether pleasant or painful, is agreeable. Hume insists that the claim is empirically implausible and yet it forms the ‘Hinge’ of Smith’s whole system. Namely, Smith’s main thesis – that sympathy results in approval – seems to hinge on it.

The challenge Hume poses has been considered devastating by several scholars; in this paper, I argue that Smith has resources to counter it. I begin by presenting the outlines of Smith’s sentimental theory and his account of moral approval. In the second section, I proceed to Hume’s critique and consider Smith’s explicit answer in the *Theory’s* next edition. Smith’s reply has been accused of missing the mark; I argue that it does address the challenge but requires further elaboration. Firstly, Hume is wrong to suppose that pleasure is meant to account for approval. Secondly, Hume’s counterexamples might not qualify as Smithian sympathy, which requires sharing another’s emotional response to some particular object.

Hume could, nevertheless, press Smith on the empirical plausibility of his main thesis. In the final section, I suggest that Smith should underline his view that emotions are accompanied with an appearance of fittingness or ‘propriety’ to their object – a view adopted from Nicolas Malebranche. Against this backdrop, a connection between sympathy and approving of another person’s emotion as proper looks much more plausible. I argue that the Malebranchean feature of the emotions constitutes the true hinge of Smith’s system. Moreover, this should satisfy Hume given his own endorsement of Malebranche on the matter.

Paper Proposal for ‘The 2018 Congress for Doctoral Students in Philosophy’

Title: ‘Rewilding Humans: Moral Integrity in Ecological Restoration’

Linnea Luuppala

Social and Moral Philosophy, Department of Political and Economic Studies, University of Helsinki, Finland

Email: linnea.luuppala@helsinki.fi

In the face of serious environmental crises, such as the sixth mass extinction and climate change, it is more important than ever for humans to rethink and reconsider their relationship to the nonhuman world. Not only do we need large-scale conservation and restoration of ecosystems, we also need a significant paradigm shift in the way humans relate to the natural world.

The eminent cognitive ethologist, Marc Bekoff (2014), has urged humans to rewild their hearts in a plea for a more compassionate coexistence with the nonhuman world. I will be developing this idea of human rewilding further in the context of ecological restoration and environmental philosophy. I explore how rewilding could complement and enrich ecological restoration practices and will argue that in order for restoration and rewilding efforts to be truly successful, we must also be willing to rewild ourselves. This can be achieved by including the principle of *moral integrity* to restoration and rewilding. Moral integrity challenges the approach that all restoration goals should be ecological. It targets human moral character by focusing on the wrongness of environmental degradation, demanding individuals to scrutinise and develop their moral dispositions, and relationship with nature and nonhuman individuals in order to ensure that environmental degradation is not repeated. It will do so through three key features: recognition, retribution, and re-connection. By rewilding humans, it is possible to discover and access the world we have in *common* with the nonhuman beings.

Political Agency as Natality and Social Suffering

Joonas S. Martikainen, University of Helsinki

joonas.martikainen@helsinki.fi

Political theorists have traditionally thought of suffering as an unsuitable subject matter for theory and practice. The experience of necessity as suffering is something both too private and too common to the human condition itself to be relevant for politics. Hannah Arendt made the point forcefully: bringing suffering into the public threatens political community itself and locks us into a poisonous politics of *ressentiment* and pity. Suffering is tied to the material necessity and violence of the social sphere of our lives, antithetic to freedom as action initiated among equal peers, the stuff of politics proper.

Arendt's viewpoint still latently undergirds much of democratic theory. In my presentation I will show how a conception of social suffering as formulated by, among others, Pierre Bourdieu and Emmanuel Renault, can provide a way of making suffering relevant for democratic theory that wishes to challenge political exclusion. I will do this by focusing on the question of political agency as conditioned by, not separate from, experiences of suffering. I put forward a model of political agency as a "second-order" embodied disposition, a willingness to participate. Lack of such willingness has been shown by sociological studies to correlate heavily with low levels of income and education. Ironically, those with most to win from participation in democratic politics withdraw themselves from politics, often due to an internalised distrust in both society itself and their own abilities to do anything about the circumstances they face daily. Such frustration is often experienced as nameless feelings of malaise, frustration and powerlessness – as social suffering.

Democratic theory has been criticised for its tendency to make democratic participation a question of ontology: this is shown in the assuming of political agency of the dominated as an unproblematic given, leaving questions of the conditions of such agency unexplored. The ontological separation of politics as a sphere of freedom can often obscure the ways that this freedom rests on material and symbolic conditions that must obtain for political agency to be possible. Speaking of social suffering in democratic theory makes it possible to understand the considerable obstacles faced by those excluded from politics due to material and symbolic dispossession. At the same time it makes possible to see new possibilities that shared experiences of social suffering can open for articulation of new political identities and opening the sphere of political agency to new actors.

The main principles in Mark Bevir's method in the history of ideas

Lauri Myllymaa

Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy

University of Jyväskylä

lauri.myllymaa@jyu.fi

Abstract

The methodology of the historical research in philosophy have suffered from a lack of explicit and universal methodology. One of the research's subcategories, the history of ideas, has had quite a vivid discourse on its method and validity and possibility of historical truth at least since Arthur Oncken Lovejoy's (1873–1962) *The Great Chain of Being: A Study of the History of an Idea* (1936). In 1999, Mark Bevir contributed in this discourse by publishing *The Logic of the History of Ideas* in which he outlined a methodology for the history of ideas. He proposed a 'logic' of the history of ideas that could avoid the dangers of historical-philosophical interpretations such as the psychological and sociological reductionism and relativism. Within the 'logic', Bevir argues, philosophical systems and traditions can be studied without any redundant interpretations or assumptions.

I will present the main principles of Bevir's methodology. First of all, I will present the elemental methodological principle which manifests in the division of the research into first- and second-order disciplines. The division needs certain metaphilosophical presuppositions to be understood correctly. While the first-order method is the philosophy itself, the second-order is the research of philosophy. This implies that philosophy differs in nature from the scientific research. Secondly, Bevir's two-order method allows the research to suppose the philosophical systems to be holistic wholes, and in order to understand the different sections of a philosophical system they must be understood within the holistic context of the system itself. Secondly, I will present Bevir's hierarchical division of the elements or the facts of historical study into a belief, which is the elemental particle of historical knowledge; a web of beliefs, which means the integral philosophical systems; and traditions, which are, if I may say, the 'lines of thought' formed by the webs of belief.

One of the most important facts of Bevir's methodology is that it is dependent of philosophical schools in a lesser extent. In fact, I see it as a method suitable for all philosophies that presume that the philosophical and scientific disciplines differ in nature.

Joonas Pennanen

Persuasive definitions in socially significant disagreements (or what it takes to win the internet)

Abstract

This is an exploratory essay on persuasive definitions, and on their significance for social and political struggles. I hope to introduce what I take as a fruitful perspective for evaluating dynamics of disagreements both frivolous and of great significance for social life. The current paper is an effort to clear terrain for further work on the topic.

In the first section start by giving a general account of persuasive definitions which follows closely the original notion by C. L. Stevenson's that is presented in "Persuasive Definitions" (1938). What are persuasive definitions, and what is their proper function? Next I analyze the usage and function of persuasive definitions in disputes and disagreements in which they have a clear role. It should become clear that the notion of a persuasive definition is not a conceptual tool that fits for every purpose; one can certainly conceive types of disagreements in which these definitions are not really applicable. Finally, in an effort to evaluate the social significance of persuasive definitions, I will look into how persuasive definitions might figure in social struggles. Populism, and the populist form of politics, is used both as an example and as means to throw light on the issue. If there is a meaningful connection between the populist form of political identity-construction and the utilization of the emotive meaning of "the people", it is reasonable to think that persuasive definitions also have a more general role in sustaining, challenging, and developing social, moral, and political identities.

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Honneth, Bourdieu, and the theory of social action: a possible convergence?

Corrado Piroddi
University of Jyväskylä – University of Tampere

corrado.piroddi@yahoo.it

The main aim of the paper is to highlight the analogies and the theoretical consistency between two distinct theories of social action: Pierre Bourdieu's post-structuralist proposal and Axel Honneth's conception, which is based on the paradigm of recognition. In this regard, the paper's hypothesis is that these two approaches are fruitfully combinable.

At first sight, such theoretical perspectives seem to be rather different. In fact, Bourdieu stresses the productive role of social structures in relation to social agents' actions. For him, the trajectory of social behaviors is previously determined by objective and subjective structures that drive social agents to act coherently with norms of a specific social environment in a pre-reflective and intuitive way. On the other hand, Honneth conceives social actions primarily as an expression of interpersonal relationships of recognition among persons. Consequently, Honneth tries to show how a relevant portion of the objective side of our social reality (institutions, customs, and habits) and collective social behaviors somehow reflects particular forms of reciprocal recognition among persons that are ruled by acknowledged normative principles of action.

A second possible objection to the paper's hypothesis is the following. If we consider the role of intentionality and reflexivity in generating and guiding social actions, Honneth's and Bourdieu's perspectives seem, again, irreconcilable. Bourdieu tries to support the idea that social actions are not (or, at least, not always and solely) the outcome of a rational decision-making process of individuals. Honneth, on the contrary, seems to think that social behaviors that are generated by reciprocal recognition are products of a conscious norm-observance of the social actors.

In order to show that these two considerations are not decisive for denying the validity of the hypothesis of the paper, we will discuss Bourdieu and Honneth's theory of action focusing on the following questions: first, what are the preconditions of social action? Second, how do we learn to behave properly in the social dimension? Third, what do we learn in the process of socialization?

The answer to the first issue will underline the fact that Honneth's account does state that the possibility to enact and experience any successful forms of recognition is connected to the existence of objective and subjective conditions that are independent of intentionality and reflexivity of singular individuals. The answer to the second question will highlight that interpersonal forms of recognition and satisfaction of needs for recognition have a fundamental role in making Bourdieu's theory of action consistent, even if Bourdieu himself overlooks them. The considerations concerning the third problem will point up how both Honneth and Bourdieu endorse a non-utilitarian approach for describing the logic of social action.

Finally, the paper will try to explain, against the mentioned second objection, why both Honneth and Bourdieu may accept the idea that, in the actualization of social actions, moments of consciousness and unawareness are intertwined.

Keywords: Bourdieu, Honneth, social action, structure, recognition.

The Concept of information in the early cybernetics and in Gilbert Simondon's philosophy

The cybernetics, the study of communication, information and control, understood the concept of information mostly according to the “mathematical theory of communication” or as Shannon-Weaver model (Shannon 1948; Day 2001; Pickering 2010). One of the key elements of this formal theory was that information was an increase of *negentropy* or order and organization (as opposing the entropy) (e.g. Wiener 1962; 1985). The cybernetics had an important influence on a wide range of fields of study (biology, economics, public administration theory, organizational theory, philosophy, cognitive science, computer science, information science, robotics, AI studies etc.). Among “the French school” of cybernetics was Raymond Ruyer who criticized cybernetics but did not abandon completely their models, starting points and assumptions (Ruyer 1954). Especially he criticized basic concept of information which was not clear enough about “the distinction between the information types and the different ways that information can be processed” (Iliadis 2015, 137). Ruyer influenced another French man, Gilbert Simondon, one of the most interesting 20th century philosophers of technics and technology.

Simondon's approach was more ontological than cybernetics' or Ruyer's. To summarize, one can say that Simondon's task was to use concepts of physics, chemistry, biology, cybernetics and philosophy to understand the ontology of the formation – or *individuation* – of individual objects in the becoming/changing (*devenir*) reality. He also included in his theory the individuation of psyche and collective individuation. (Simondon 2010; 2013.) This provided Simondon a multidimensional view of the formation of individual being, whether it was living, organic, physical or technical. But individuation meant Simondon something more general: everything was a process of individuation – a perception, formation of an idea in mind, thinking, growth of a flower, politics and so on. There were individuations of different speed, of size and at different levels. Every individuation was part of bigger individuation and it was assemblage of smaller ones. In general terms, individuation was a mediation that was realized between different and polarized systems. It was a “resolution” between these systems and at the same time it answered to the problems that arose with the environment (medium; mediator; *milieu*). Individuation lead to the communication between these systems and the stabilization of these systems, and to the new individuations. There was always something *pre-individual* in the individuated individual: it did not exhaust the potentials and energy of prior individuation. At the centre of this theory, and of individuation, was information, its exchange and flow.

For Simondon, information was a complex event that worked as “ignition” and pattern of individuation. It mixed together communication, environment and medium (e.g. technology) – and at the same time information was a differentiative relation between systems. There was no formal difference between sender and receiver, at least at the fundamental level, because the communication between systems – and its inside and outside – were simultaneous. The information, for Simondon, was not increase of organization, negentropy, but a singular interruption in the process of communication or the crisis of self-regulation of system that triggers structural changes in the system. The signal, or energy, is information when it alters the system. Information exchange can amplify and create regulatory (modulatory) structures in a system. These structural changes will lead to a more higher-level organization that will resolve the problems of higher level. This whole complex event is also the “meaning” (*sens*) of the process of individuation.

This paper will discuss Simondon's concept of information. First, we will make an outline of the early cybernetics idea of the information. Secondly, we move to grasp the idea of individuation as a complex event of information. Thirdly, the paper will place Simondon's account of information among the more recent study of information (e.g. Lash 2002; Floridi 2011; Faucher 2013; Bardin 2015). The paper is part of the background research for my doctoral thesis, titled "The Society Imbued with Algorithms – What Can Gilbert Simondon Tell Us About the Ontology of Algorithms".

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The Problem of Fundamental Discursive Norms in Brandom

Jaakko Reinikainen, PhD student
University of Tampere, Finland
reinikainen.jaakko.t@student.uta.fi

In late decades Robert Brandom's *Making It Explicit* has made waves in philosophy of language with its normative and pragmatic theoretical approach to meaning. One characteristic trait of the work is inferentialism in semantics, encapsulated by the claim that "conceptual content is essentially inferentially articulated." The major argument Brandom pursues is that objective, representational conceptual content can be accounted for by joining inferentialism with an account of social, normative practice called deontic scorekeeping practice. Essentially what this means is explaining how our normative attitudes (taking something to be correct) can "institute" normative statuses (what in fact is correct).

Recently critique has been raised concerning a difference essential to the project but which is only implicitly acknowledged in MIE: a distinction between regular inferential norms and so called fundamental discursive norms (FDN). In short, FDNs are norms essential to the discursive practice as a discursive practice, whereas any regular inferential norm is contingent to the practice. Even if Brandom is able to explain the objective nature of regular inferential norms, the critics claim, he cannot do the same to FDNs, which counts as an objectionable result. By "objectivity" is in this context meant that FDN are somehow instituted by our normative attitudes without being reducible to those attitudes.

In my paper I seek an explanation of how to meet those demands while also elaborating the tension that sparks between them. Essentially the challenge as I perceive it is to conceive FDN both as immutably unconditional and as engendered by our contingent, heterogenous discursive practices. To resolve the tension I shall argue that Brandom needs to refine his account of social practice, built on the notion of so called "I-Thou" sociality, in order to accommodate a notion of more robust notion of linguistic community. In this effort inspiration from Wilfrid Sellars plays a key part.

Presentation Title: The dimensions of the ‘social’ in Johannes Althusius’ philosophy
Researcher: Jukka Ruokanen
Affiliation: Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy of the University of Jyväskylä
E-mail: jukka.i.ruokanen@jyu.fi

ABSTRACT

I propose to give a presentation at “The 2018 Congress for Doctoral Students in Philosophy” on the political philosophy of the German jurist and Calvinist philosopher Johannes Althusius (1563–1638). Specifically, I will explore what dimensions or qualities of the concept of ‘social’ can be found in Althusius’ philosophy. My aim is to carefully sort out how the English connotations of ‘social’ ‘sociality’ and ‘sociability’ map Althusius’ thinking as he theorises about the social life (Lat. *vita socialis*). The point here is that even though Althusius might not use terms identical with contemporary terms, his thinking involves understanding of ‘social’ that includes different dimension that can be fruitfully clarified with contemporary terms. For example, I will explore the way Althusius combined the earlier Aristotelian and voluntarist traditions, and question whether it is possible to draw a clear line between human natural tendency to form communities and the contract-based formation of community, as has usually been made. This entails thorough analysis of all the elements of human sociability in Althusius’ philosophy. These include at least the natural tendencies or inclinations towards human contact, emotions that support sociability in groups, material ratio i.e. need for cooperation in the satisfaction of material needs, and all the different forms of will based solutions such as the civil contracts (e.g. marriage) and public covenants (e.g. universal political community) that form the building blocks of Althusius’ political order.

The theme of the presentation is closely linked to the first article of my dissertation. The general aim of the PhD research is to analyse the interconnections of the social and political dimensions of human communal life in Althusius’ philosophy. The significance of the research is twofold. Firstly, the analysis clarifies the broader historical problematics of the concepts of ‘social’ and ‘political’ and their relationship. Essentially the question is to what extent social and political life are understood to be given by nature or God and to what extent the human will can influence them. Already based on the first article and my proposed presentation it can be seen that this tension regarding the extent the human will can affect sociability is not identical with a simple spectrum from natural and necessary sociability to contract-based and contingent (and supposedly political) sociability. In every point there is room for manoeuvre as, for example, human natural tendencies and emotions can be manipulated and, on the other hand, even the contract-based solution are many ways restricted. Secondly, the research highlights the unusualness of Althusius’ conception of political community as it is composed of associations rather than individuals. As I see it, this solution in turn is based on an understanding of the relationship of social and political that creates continuum between natural human sociability and voluntary, political sociability. This second point however won’t yet be argued in the proposed presentation.

Title of the presentation: **Buddha and the Eastern Form of Nihilism**

Presenter: Tapio Santala

Affiliation: University of Tampere

E-mail address: Santala.Tapio.A@student.uta.fi

Suggestion for commentator: Timo Klemola

Abstract:

Buddha's teachings are commonly presented as a way to cope with descriptive pessimism, the view that there is a fundamental association between life and suffering. In this connection Buddha's doctrine of selflessness is presented as a remedy to this suffering. This interpretation, however, runs against Buddha's own account that his doctrine is a middle way between the two extremes of nihilism and eternalism – an account that can already be found in Saṃyutta Nikāya, one of the oldest buddhist scriptures. This eastern form of nihilism is often thought as what in western philosophy is referred to as metaphysical nihilism, the seemingly absurd view that nothing at all exists whatsoever. Against this traditional account of Buddha's doctrine, this paper, firstly, argues that Buddha's main challenge was actually nihilism, and not descriptive pessimism as such. Furthermore, this paper argues that there is a previously unknown connection between nihilism and pessimism, and that, through this connection, the eastern form of nihilism comes closer to traditional form of nihilism, the thought that life is meaningless, than has been previously recognized.

NARRATIVE ECONOMICS IS QUANTITATIVE BEHAVIORAL MACROECONOMICS

Matti Sarkia, University of Helsinki

Abstract for Congress of the Doctoral Training Network in Philosophy, University of Tampere, October 22-24, 2018

The 2013 Nobel laureate Robert Shiller (2017, 967), in his presidential address to the American Economic Association on January 4 of 2017, called for *narrative economics*, or “the study of the spread and dynamics of popular narratives, the stories, particularly those of human interest and emotion, and how these change through time, to understand economic fluctuations”. Shiller argued that several prominent economic and political crises of the 20th and early 21st centuries, such as the 1920-21 Depression, the Great Depression of the 1930s and the Great Recession of 2007-2009, may be explained in part by “the prevalence and vividness of certain stories, not the purely economic feedback or multipliers that economists love to model”.

Shiller proposed a radical expansion of the economics toolbox by bringing economics closer to the humanities and other social sciences. However, Shiller did not advocate giving up the study of economic fundamentals or the real business cycle altogether, nor collapsing economics to literary studies and rhetoric. Rather, Shiller proposed the use of epidemiological models, such as the SIR model of disease epidemics developed by Kermack&McKendrick (1927), to study the propagation of economic narratives in a population of economic agents. Where appropriate, such quantitative methods were to be supplemented by historical and contemporary case studies, methods in the digital humanities, and policy analysis.

This paper assesses the scope and resources of the research program of narrative economics that Shiller envisages. The prospects of narrative economics might be initially described as follows: narrative economics promises to expand the scope and resources of economic science by bringing entirely new types and sources of data into the purview of economic investigation. By tapping into such novel resources that economists have not hitherto explored, narrative economics seems to be in a position to uncover previously unidentified mechanisms for a wide range of economic phenomena, including asset price formation, the fluctuations of the business cycle, and the development of economic and political institutions. Thus narrative economics may complement the already established research fields of financial economics (Berk&Demarzo 2014), institutional economics (Williamson 1985), market design (Roth 2016) and macroeconomics (Mankiw 2012).

This description of the prospects of narrative economics presupposes that narrative economics is intimately related to, but still partially distinct from the fields of economic inquiry that it seeks to complement and enrich. In my paper, I will argue that the connection between narrative economics and other fields of economic inquiry is substantive in the sense that narrative economics deals with the same domains of phenomena as all of economics—namely, those relating to the choices of agents with potentially unlimited wants made under conditions of scarce resources, which force the agents to choose between mutually incompatible action alternatives. Moreover, I will argue that narrative economics is different from other branches of economics because of its innovative methodological approach, which brings resources from the disciplines of epidemiology and narratology to bear on the subject matter of economic science.

The main substantive claim of my paper is that narrative economics may be understood as a form of *quantitative behavioral macroeconomics*. First, I will argue that narrative economics is a form of *behavioral economics*, because it poses constraints on the idealized rationality of the economic agent described in neo-classical microeconomic theory. Second, I will argue that narrative economics is a form of *macroeconomics*, because it studies the influence of narratives on economy-wide indicators of economic activity, such as consumer confidence or inflation expectations. Third, I will argue that narrative economics is a form of *quantitative economics*, because it draws on quantitative epidemiological models of disease dissemination and spread in order to account for the propagation of narratives in a population of economic agents.

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Epistemic Accountability and Attributionism

Ninni Suni
PhD student, Social and Moral Philosophy
University of Helsinki
ninni.sun@helsinki.fi

This paper argues that interpreting epistemic deontology in terms of attributionism about responsibility allows us to make sense of epistemic accountability without having to accept doxastic voluntarism.

Epistemic deontology (ED) is roughly the view that epistemic practices are subject to deontological concepts such as blame, responsibility, or ought. A famous line of criticism against epistemic deontology is to point out that deontological concepts apply only when we have direct voluntary control, and beliefs are not under direct voluntary control (Alston 1988, 2005). Supporters of epistemic deontology have pursued roughly two different routes in answering the critique. First is to deny that beliefs are not under direct voluntary control, in other words, to endorse doxastic voluntarism (DV) (Steup 2000, 2001). The view has been widely criticized for misconstruing the role that will and choice play in forming beliefs, and many find the second line of argument more convincing. That is to deny that ought implies can in epistemic context (Feldman 2001, Kornblith 2001, Chrisman 2008).

The main insight within the No-Ought-Implies-Can strategy (NOIC) is that in epistemic context 'ought' refers to standards of evaluation. This doesn't solve the problem, however, because it's uncontroversial that standards of evaluation don't presuppose agency or voluntary control. Therefore it's open to both supporters of doxastic voluntarism and critics of epistemic deontology to concede that NOIC is right in epistemic context, while arguing that it still doesn't earn the right to use other deontological concepts such as duty, blame, or responsibility. They can then continue to hold their positions with respect to these concepts and the possibility of voluntary control.

Kauppinen (forthcoming) suggests a way to identify epistemic norms by the distinctive way that it's appropriate to hold others accountable for complying with or breaking them, which is by reducing epistemic trust. Kauppinen maintains that his analysis provides further support for NOIC. While I agree with his view of epistemic accountability, I claim that it still leaves open the question of when exactly it's appropriate to hold others epistemically accountable. The competing interpretations come from two lines of reasoning about moral responsibility. The more traditional voluntarist account of moral responsibility holds that one is morally responsible only for those acts or omissions that one has voluntary control over. This has been contested by a number of authors who hold a broadly attributionist view of moral responsibility (e.g. Arpaly 2003, Sher 2009, Smith 2008, 2015). They criticize voluntarism for being too limited, and claim that in reality we hold others accountable also for those acts and omissions that can in some way be attributed to the agent, or that somehow reflect who she is as a person. The debate around attributionism is hot in the sphere of moral responsibility, but I argue that when applied to the question of epistemic accountability, it succeeds in accommodating the conflicting intuitions concerning deontological concepts: attributionism earns the right to use deontological concepts in epistemic context without having to accept doxastic voluntarism, while not being limited to standards of evaluation.

Communication, Agreement, and Dimensions of Content

Abstract, 30/05/2018

Tuukka Tanninen

tuukka.tanninen@helsinki.fi
University of Helsinki

Semantic externalism provides an account of content with directly referential expressions with objects themselves as their semantic values. These objects form singular propositions that serve as contents of sentences. The classic arguments by Kripke and Putnam show that speakers may express singular propositions with or without realizing that they do so, or in other words, that semantic and epistemic aspects of certain propositions come apart. Putnam, for instance, famously claimed that he may express propositions concerning beeches and elms without knowing virtually anything about beeches and elms, except perhaps that they are some kind of trees.

The externalist notion of content has been very fruitful but from a wider linguistic point of view the account is rather sparse. If *understanding* involves knowledge of content, and if *translation* involves preservation of content, then what is usually known and preserved doesn't seem to be this kind of content. For instance, speakers with no scientific education may understand sentences (and evaluate the correctness of their translations) about plutonium, silicon, alcohol, and what not, while being quite ignorant concerning these substances.

Another reason why externalist content is unsatisfactory is that many of our thoughts are "egocentric" as Jackson has put it. Many of my beliefs represent the world as being a certain way with respect to myself. If I believe that it is freezing or that there is no beer, I in fact believe that it is freezing in my whereabouts and that there is no beer in my disposal. The externalist content can't serve as the egocentric content.

2D-semantics is a framework put forth to enrich the notion of content. For instance, Jackson and Chalmers have argued for two-dimensional content: primary content (or A-intension) is an egocentric dimension of content, captured by a set of centered worlds, while secondary content (C-intension) is similar to externalist content. According to Chalmers *communication, agreement, and disagreement* are to be explained by appealing to the interplay of the two dimensions of content. In the paper I explain briefly how this is supposed to work, and then I discuss a new problem for Chalmers' account, pointed out by Alexander Sandgren (2018). I argue that a Hintikka-inspired account that appeals to a *perspectival* and a *physical* dimension of content avoids Sandgren's problem but explains the aforementioned phenomena.

Abstract:

METAPHYSICS OF GENDERS

Gender is the most central feature of an individual person, because it basically cuts through all fields in a person's life. It's usually the first thing people want to know when a person is born, it's one of few features that is stated in Finland in the person's national identification number, it's a class others categorize the person to belong to from the first sight (or sound, or name, or...), and it's a huge part of a person's identity even when the person doesn't define their gender. So what is gender?

When taking the question of metaphysics of gender under scrutiny, it can be noticed it is not just one question but many, and it can be studied from a large array of aspects (see e.g. Haslanger 2012, Mikkola 2017, Witt 2011). One way of approaching the question is to look at what different things gender refers to, and then study what kind of entities these are metaphysically and how they relate to each other. Gender can be for example divided to four aspect: legal gender, gender identity, social gender (traditionally called just gender) and biological gender (traditionally called sex), where the distinction between sex and gender is the most discussed. This categorization is problematic, but I take it as a starting point, and use it to make further and more useful distinctions.

To study the different things metaphysically that gender refers to, I use the distinctions Ron Mallon (2014) has presented that can be used while studying different accounts of social construction. This is because most of the aspects gender has, are social constructions in one way or another. He makes the distinction between constitutive social construction and causal social construction, and points out that it is important to study who is the agent doing the construction and not only focus on what is constructed.

If we for example look at the gender that is stated in the person's national identification number and gender others categorize a person to have immediately when perceiving the person, we can notice they differ metaphysically radically from each other. Other is *a legal entity*, which causes person to have certain legal duties and rights, and other is *a representation other people get* while perceiving the person's look, name, sound, etc. These two have causal and historical links to each other, but the link is not necessary and may be complicated. Legal entities are constitutive social constructions constituted by the whole institution of law and society, and the representation of gender in this particular case is a causal construction constructed by (the mind of) the observer.

In my presentation I will look in more detail all the distinctions I've done within gender, and study their metaphysics and relations they have between each other.