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“Decolonizing Environmental Discourses Within Environmental Ethics: The Case of Non-economic Values of Nature”

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decolonization – non-economic values of nature – Indigenous traditional ecological knowledge -
decolonizing environmental discourse – decolonial theory.

Abstract

Values of nature are still an important and up-to-date topics withing environmental discourses, yet its criticism lack prominent perspectives which has not entered this area of research.

This work is part of the introduction of my Doctoral dissertation and is a continuation of my previous research on environmental values, particularly on the non-economic type of values - moral, aesthetic, ecological value as well as Indigenous perspective of nature- vis-à-vis the economic values of nature which reduce natural environments and all parts of nature to commodities to be sold and traded in the market. My approach of criticizing the monetary value of nature situates in the attempt to decolonialize environmental discourses, starting from the philosophical field of Environmental Ethics.

I argue that Environmental Ethics has been traditionally ‘centered on the West’, meaning revolved around mainly Wester issues and case studies, Western philosophical leadership, quoting predominantly Wester sources, as well as promoting Wester ideas such as conceptualization of sustainability, development, wellbeing etc. leaving with no or little attention for Non-western alternatives. Hence, with the intention of filling this gap and in the attempt of decolonizing environmental discourses starting from environmental Ethics -and therefore to overcome Western philosophical hegemony and power structures- I introduced, and I have tried to integrate Indigenous worldviews into my philosophical work. I started to investigate Indigenous views of nature based on their traditional ecologic knowledge (TEK), which is a situated knowledge meaning connected to specific places and type of natural environments.

One of the outcomes of decolonizing environmental discourses, within Environmental Ethics, is to challenge, to rethink the colonial premises of knowledge and to transform its content. A decolonial approach to environmental discourses promotes interactions between different type of actors such as: researchers, scientists but also local people, and minorities like Indigenous people. It explores also other types of knowledge, such as, for instance, local traditional knowledge or the Indigenous traditional ecological knowledge (TEK), which can bring alternative angles to the fora of learning and understanding nature.

Abstract for Congress for Doctoral Researchers in Philosophy 2023 between the Monday 23–Wednesday 25 October 2023 at Tampere University.

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Anarchism, Moral Theory and Practices: Comparing Benjamin Franks' Virtue Ethical and Todd May's Consequentialist Approaches to Anarchism

In my paper, I would inquire about anarchism's relationship to moral theory. That is done through examination and comparison of Benjamin Franks' virtue ethical account and Todd May's consequentialist moral theory to anarchism. Anarchism refers here to the strain of the working-class movement from the 19th century that remains one of the more influential strands of radical Left theory and practice. Within anarchist theory, there has been considerable debate about what, if any, is the most suitable moral theory for anarchism. May and Franks have tried to answer that question from different directions. May's moral theory is a consequentialist and poststructuralist theory, influenced greatly by the likes of Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze and more recently Jacques Rancière. Franks' virtue ethical approach to anarchism takes Alasdair MacIntyre's neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics emphasising social practices as its moral philosophical starting point. Although these theories stem from different points of origin, they do share surprisingly a lot in common with each other. Especially noteworthy is their emphasis on practices as one of the defining aspects of anarchist action and a site of actualising often abstract moral principles in concrete real-life situations. Through comparing their shared features like focus on practices, I aim to show that May and Franks' different moral philosophical standpoints can be brought closer together, thus narrowing the apparent gulf between virtue ethics and consequentialism, at least within the realm of anarchist theory and implying the feasibility of such a convergence more broadly in moral philosophy. My main sources from May include *The Political Philosophy of Poststructuralist Anarchism* (1994), *The Moral Theory of Poststructuralism* (1995) and *The Political Thought of Jacques Rancière: Creating Equality* (2008). Franks' main cited works are "Anarchism and the Virtues" (2010) and *Anarchisms, Postanarchisms and Ethics* (2020).

Congress for Doctoral Researchers in Philosophy 2023

Abstract

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Crusius' Typology of Reasons and Its Significance

Christian August Crusius (1715–1775) represented the Thomasian-Pietist tradition, which involved a pessimistic stand on the powers of the human intellect. Therefore, it is not surprising that Crusius opposed several views of rationalism, which is grounded particularly in these powers. His revisionist and critical views also had an impact on the pre-critical Kant. Crusius deals with the principle of sufficient reason (or better, the principle of determining reason) in his dissertation *Philosophical Dissertation on the Use and Limits of the Principle of Determining Reason, commonly called Sufficient* (*Dissertatio philosophica de usu et limitibus principii rationis determinantis, vulgo sufficientis*, 1743); according to this powerful but dubious principle, everything must have a sufficient or determining reason, which explains its existence. Crusius argues here against several Leibnizian and Wolffian views regarding the principle and propounds a partly original analysis of 'reason' (*ratio*), which I call Crusius' typology of reasons in my doctoral thesis. In this paper, I elucidate Crusius' typology and its connections with various things such as the question of free will and consider its philosophical significance.

Alienated enlightenment, Enlightenment alienation

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Abstract:

In my paper I aim to approach the Enlightenment ideal of emancipation through the concept of alienation. I do this by excavating a notion of alienation in G.W.F. Hegel's philosophy in light of recent Hegel-interpretations.

Alienation and domination have been persistent themes in the critique of the Enlightenment project, articulated by critics ranging from conservative to postmodern. While the Enlightenment on the surface promises a bright new future it leads to alienation, uprooting individuals from society and their own lifeworld. While the Enlightenment project promises universal equality and freedom it comes off as being nothing but a veil for (western, patriarchal, elite) political and social domination; a way of imposing a universal form on a heterogeneous totality. In the most extreme interpretations the naive universalism of the Enlightenment leads directly to the catastrophes of the 20th century, to Auschwitz and the Gulag.

Thus today we find ourselves being vary of the enthusiasm and promise of the Enlightenment project. Yet there is a possibility of approaching these criticisms from a new philosophical angle and in the process salvaging some of the values at the heart of it. Alienation can be posited as a way out of domination and as a prerequisite for emancipation, as a possibility generated by the age of modernity. Strands of this thought can be found in G.W.F. Hegel's works, especially in light of recent interpretations. It is these strands which I aim to connect and develop in my thesis.

My hypothesis is that by doing this a notion of alienation emerges which functions as a condition of possibility rather than as a punishment for the hubris of modernity. This notion can then work as a resource in tackling sociopolitical challenges of our times. Alienation can point towards a ground for non-oppressive solidarity, in that we can find connection through our universal (alienated) non-belonging rather than substantive identities. The source of our emancipatory freedom similarly lies in our very inability to ever fully assimilate to any social context, to never overcome alienation.

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Democracy and a reflexive pluralism of solidarities

Abstract:

In debates about the rightful context or domain of democracy, liberal nationalists and statisticians have employed the concept of solidarity to support their accounts of democracy. In contrast to their views, which emphasize a single source or context of solidarity, I argue that solidarity does not give us reason to prioritize the (nation-) state as the primary context of democracy, but rather reveals the need for a multi-layered institutional order that motivates solidarities and democratic practices in different contexts of politics. Drawing on the work of Rainer Forst and Jodi Dean, I theorize what I call a reflexive pluralism of solidarities. The concept refers to a political culture in which participants are motivated to form multiple relations of solidarity and are capable of reflecting on the value of these relations. The emergence of a reflexive pluralism of solidarities does not require a fixed context of cooperation such as the state, but rather a responsive, multi-layered institutional order that fosters participants' capacities to evaluate the democraticness of political and social integration.

To illustrate the importance of reflexive pluralism for democracy, I distinguish between democratically harmful, neutral, and valuable solidarities. It is likely that all of them exist and will exist within any social sphere. However, democratic social spheres supported with responsive institutions differ from undemocratic ones in that in conjunction two of the latter forms lead participants to combat exclusions and wrongs following the harmful solidarities. Democratically harmful solidarities are deeply exclusionary relations and associations that are maintained for the benefit of a partial group over others. Neutral solidarities refer to relations and associations of everyday interaction and integration in which participants support and help each other. There are epistemic gains when participants have multiple everyday contexts of solidarity in which they encounter others with different backgrounds and viewpoints. This motivates them to produce democratically valuable solidarity associations to overcome injustices and exclusions in everyday contexts of integration.

Costs of Pluralism

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The paper is joint work with Uskali Mäki.

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Plurality and diversity in science have been associated with significant epistemic benefits. *Knowledge-extending benefits* may result when a plurality of models, theories, or methods can jointly serve a wider range of epistemic purposes than any of them alone (Giere, 2006; Mitchell, 2003). *Knowledge-improving benefits* may result from interaction between researchers who differ in their knowledge, perspectives, background commitments, skills, and other factors, when criticism and debate help remove biases and mistakes (Longino, 2002). Some authors stress that researchers should even actively try to increase the degree of plurality and diversity in science (Chang, 2012).

However, an increased degree of plurality and diversity does not only have benefits but also drawbacks or costs, which have only been explored in a cursory way. Any judgment on whether some disciplines should have more plurality or diversity of some kind – whatever the means to effect such a change – one should also consider the costs. In this paper, we develop a more comprehensive and detailed understanding of the costs of pluralism, proceeding in the spirit of *the economics of scientific knowledge* (Zamora Bonilla, 2012) and consulting the fields of *transaction cost economics* (Williamson, 2008) and *organizational sociology of science* (Whitley, 2000).

We begin by cataloguing the epistemic benefits that various kinds of plurality and diversity may have according to the philosophical literature. Each presumed benefit may increase the need for scientific labour in one form or another. Costs result from 1) the labour needed to bring the potentially beneficial plurality into existence in the first place. For example, it is more economical to use one model template to represent a set of target phenomena, compared to developing a range of altogether unrelated, and thus more diverse models for the same purpose. Costs also result from 2) the labour needed to process the plurality and diversity into epistemic benefits. For example, the supposed benefits of criticism across theoretical or disciplinary perspectives only materialize when scientists dedicate enough time and effort to making the exchanges informed and constructive. Finally, costs result from 3) the labour needed to counter adverse effects of plurality and diversity. For example, some forms of plurality might weaken the scientific consensus, and if the perception of consensus by the public supports trust in science, then increased plurality means scientists must work harder to maintain public trust in science.

Transaction cost economics explains existing institutions as cost-minimizing arrangements, given any level of benefits. In the case of plurality and diversity in science, cost-benefit comparisons are difficult since the costs and benefits do not seem commensurable. Expected benefits are epistemic, indirect, and more uncertain, while the costs are non-epistemic, more direct, and less uncertain. We will examine this observation and its implications. In particular, we ask whether the high intellectual transaction costs that accompany high degrees of plurality and diversity could explain differences in the actual degree of them in various disciplines, given differences in the institutional aspects of the disciplines.

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Epistemic injustice, invalidation, and nonbinary experiences

How do different forms of epistemic injustice shape our understanding of marginalized gender identities, and do they effect theories about the metaphysics of gender? I aim to answer these questions by focusing on nonbinary experience and analyzing different forms of epistemic injustice that pertain specifically to nonbinary people. I also explore the influence that different forms of epistemic injustice have on our understanding of nonbinary genders both on an epistemic and on an ontological level. I argue that in addition to the marginalization that nonbinary people share with binary trans people, there are unique elements of oppression that concern specifically nonbinary genders.

First, I introduce the concept of epistemic injustice. Fricker (2007) differentiates different forms of epistemic injustice: testimonial and hermeneutical injustice, and additionally, hermeneutical marginalization. Testimonial injustice occurs when speaker suffers from an unjust deficit of credibility due to prejudice, whereas hermeneutical injustice pertains to an unjust deficit in intelligibility due to hermeneutical marginalization - someone is hermeneutically marginalized when they under-contribute to the shared hermeneutical resources. Fricker and Jenkins (2017, 271-272) describe the relationship between the three elements in a following way:

(1) Socially patterned testimonial injustice tends to produce (2) hermeneutical marginalization in relation to one or more areas of social experience; which in turn tends to produce (3) hermeneutical injustice in relation to the intelligibility of those areas of experience.

Fricker and Jenkins (2017) lay out different injustices that binary trans people face in especially in clinical settings, where all three different elements of epistemic injustice are acutely present. Traditionally, medical approach to transition has operated under strictly normative settings, and in addition to other prejudices, trans people have not been seen as reliable sources of their experiences, or intelligible contributors to knowledge about trans issues. These injustices also expand beyond medical settings to non-institutional interpersonal relations. I claim that nonbinary people face similar issues as binary trans people when dealing with epistemic injustices pertaining to their identities.

I argue that nonbinary people face additional issues concerning epistemic resources around their identity. Whereas it is not uncommon for people in marginalized to experience testimonial injustices in the form of non-affirmation of identity, nonbinary people additionally experience invalidation of identity across multiple social contexts, where the whole existence of nonbinary genders is questioned, and not seen as 'real' or 'credible' (Johnson et. al., 2020). This resistance of acquiring better hermeneutical resources is an act of *willful hermeneutical ignorance* (Pohlhaus Jr., 2012), where resources created by marginalized groups are not integrated into existing hermeneutical resources utilized by dominant groups. Invalidation and ignorance happen on institutional and interpersonal levels, and strikingly, also within LGBTQ communities.

The non-availability of some gender categories is based on the perceived lack of credibility in testimonies and on insufficient hermeneutical resources. This has potentially interesting implications for metaphysical theories of gender that are based on externally given group memberships, such as ones presented by Ásta (2018), where gender conferrals depend on the resources available to conferrers, or by Haslanger (2012), where the metaphysics of gender depend on existing oppression. To mitigate the harms created by credibility deficits and lack of collective hermeneutical resources, it is important to understand the mechanisms creating these injustices.

Morally Required Evils

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Morally permissible evil acts are accepted by a lesser evil justification by many moral theories, both consequentialist and deontic. A lesser evil justification is not only intuitive but also institutionalized in criminal law as the ‘defense of necessity’. (Simons 2005; Halborg 1997; Arnolds & Garland 1974.) Instead of claiming that some evils are ‘lesser’ in the sense of being somehow insignificant, and thus, morally permissible, lesser evil justifications entail a forced choice restricted between evil alternatives. The intuitive pull of the idea that lesser evils are morally permissible in desperate situations demonstrates the Walzerian shift from ‘rights normality’ to ‘utility of extremity’ in so-called moral tragedies. Yet, a lesser evil justification need not be a purely consequentialist notion but can also include deontic considerations and constraints like respecting rights (Benbaji 2005) and the assumed difference in moral badness between causing and allowing harm. (See for example Frowe 2018; Kamm 1989.) If the lesser evil justification is valid, it shows how moral evil and moral wrong sometimes come apart *in extremis*. In a moral tragedy each available alternative inevitably implies that the agent must commit an evil. In such situations lesser evils become morally permitted as the morally ‘best possible’ or least bad alternative.

A lesser evil justification, and thus, the possibility of permitted evils, turns on three assumptions. Firstly, lesser evil justifications entail that at least some evils are commensurate. This allows evils to be compared and ranked according to their severity to lesser and greater evils. If they could not be so ranked, ‘a lesser evil’ would make no sense, let alone ground a justification to commit one evil over another. As it happens, different levels of severity among evils seem intuitive enough. Especially so when different evils are alternatives to be inflicted or allowed on the same person or when there is no difference between killing and letting die. Killing one person seems like a lesser evil than killing five people, and torturing a victim before killing them in a painful way seems like a greater evil than painlessly killing that victim without torturing them. Secondly, a lesser evil justification entails that at least sometimes the fact that an evil is lesser compared to its alternatives, can constitute a decisive moral reason that counts in favor of committing the lesser evil alternative when the choice is forced between different evils. This too, seems to be the case as it is rather uncontroversial that harm to moral agents and patients is bad and ought to be minimized.

According to moral rationalism moral judgements are based on normative reasons that count in favor of committing certain acts over others. In rationalist morality normative considerations create justifying and requiring reasons that can be weighed against each other to create moral permissions and requirements. (Portmore 2008; Gert 2007; 2003; Dorsey 2012.) By moral rationalist logic lesser evils are justified by the reason that they minimize inevitable harms. (Frowe 2018; Pummer 2021) However, in this chapter I will argue that only *the least evils* are morally permissible. Moreover, I will argue that least evils are not only morally permissible but *morally required*. In other words, it is not only morally acceptable to cause least harm but a moral obligation to do so whenever such an alternative is accessible. Consequently, least evil alternatives are the morally required courses of action in moral tragedies while other evil alternatives are morally wrong even in morally tragic

situations. If this analysis holds, it is not only that *in extremis* moral evils and wrongs come apart but that there are morally evil morally required acts in moral tragedies – meaning that sometimes it is morally right to do an evil.

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God in Cicero's speeches and philosophy

The notion of God has a prominent role in the ancient philosophy.

Yet, it is still not entirely clear what the early philosophers meant with the notion of god (or gods), and for what purposes the notion was introduced and used in philosophy.

I suggest that the practical way the Roman philosopher and statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero (106-43 BC) wrote on philosophy may help us to understand in what sense and for what purposes the notion of god(s) was evoked in ancient philosophical writings.

While Marcus Tullius Cicero lived in the last century before the common era, we still have a many of his philosophical works, speeches, and personal correspondence at our disposal. These writings give us an exceptionally good view on the Hellenistic philosophy and on the philosophy of the last century of the Rome's republic. His most central philosophical writings on theological philosophy and the question of god(s) are found in his treatises *De Natura Deorum* (On the nature of the gods), *De Fato* (On the fate, fragmented) and in his book about divination (*De Divinatione*). The notion of God, religion, and philosophical themes are also central in many of his preserved public speeches.

Cicero does not question the existence of god(s), but he thought that the previous philosophers' way of writing about it (them) makes one doubt not only the existence god(s) but the usefulness of the religion in the first place.

In one of his most interesting speeches on the topic *De Domo Sua* ("On his House") Cicero utilizes two philosophical ideas taken from Plato:

First, when approaching god(s), it is not enough to perform the right rituals, but one must also be in the right state of mind, since god(s) do not listen wicked men having bad intentions.

Second, Cicero relies on the ancient idea that while god(s) has given men the laws, god(s) themselves must also obey the same laws.

In Cicero's main opus concerning the god(s), *De Natura Deorum*, the main question is not whether god(s) exist. Cicero takes that for granted. The question is, rather, does god(s) care about human beings. Here the focus is on the human virtues. That is, if god(s) does not care about people, the religion is void, and virtue based on religion does not have any solid basis.

Cicero also writes that physics (in the sense of understanding the structure and function of the world) does not need god(s). Nature can be explained without any reference to it. Philosophical theology only makes the relationship between god(s) and the world murky to the extent that the question of god(s) involvement in the world eventually becomes pointless.

I suggest that Cicero's practical approach to philosophy and his demarcation between Theological philosophy and the Physics might help us better understand what we are talking about when we are talking

about the role of god(s) in the ancient philosophy. It seems, according to Cicero, that there are at least three ways how one can decipher the role of god(s) in the Antiquity:

- 1) Genus mythicon, that is, how poets talk about them (and the poets are, in Cicero's thinking, wrong).
- 2) Genus physicus, that is, how physicist use god(s) in their reasoning. (Yet, according to Cicero, the physicians¹ do not really need god(s) to explain nature. The way physicist write about god(s) only makes things more difficult to understand.)
- 3) Principeps civitatis, that is, god(s) relation to the state. (Cicero mainly uses this to establish god(s)'s role is ensuring the stability of the state through divine laws, rituals, and customs.)

¹ Physics, as in, physiologi, or the "natural philosophers"

Defending the Pure Causal Theory of Reference Grounding for Natural Kind Terms

The paper claims that the reference grounding of some natural kind terms can be ‘purely causal’. Briefly, the idea of purely causal grounding of reference is that the speaker performing the grounding of term *t* about kind *K* need not have available a true description of *K* for the grounding to succeed. Rather, in the simplest case what is needed for the grounding act to succeed is (a) an intention to use *t* as a general term, (b) a causal (e.g. perceptual) contact with a token *x* of *K*, and (c) a suitable relation of sameness among tokens of *K*.

The major difficulty for the pure causal view is to make sense of the relation of sameness that defines *K* without the help of associated true descriptions. The family of issues here are colloquially known as the *qua*-problems. In nutshell, the problem is that any token of *K* shares in several relations of sameness. For example a sample of gold is also a sample of the kind metal. Therefore, when a speaker performs a grounding act (e.g. by saying ‘Let that be called “gold”’) while being in causal contact with a sample of gold, why is it that the term becomes grounded in the kind gold and not to the kind metal? Moreover, the causal contact is always mediated by the common observable properties of gold such as yellowness, so why is the term not grounded in some combination of these instead?

The received view in the literature appears to be that the *qua*-problems pose an insoluble problem to the pure causal view, and therefore the view needs to be supplemented. A popular strategy is to adopt a “hybrid” view of reference grounding, where some true associated description serves the work of excluding unwanted generalizations. To continue the classic example, in the case of gold the successful grounding needs to be something like ‘Let this yellow, heavy metal be called “gold”’. Another major alleged advantage of the hybrid view is that only it can make sense of reference failure, i.e., why terms such as “witch” or “phlogiston” do not refer to anything real despite the fact that speakers who grounded the terms likely were in causal contact with something real while intending to use “witch” or “phlogiston” as a general term.

The paper provides two main strategies, continuous with existing arguments, of supporting the pure causal view and therefore rejecting the hybrid view. The first strategy focuses on making sense of the relation of sameness by drawing from a recent proposal to understand the essences of some natural kinds as “super-explanatory” properties. Briefly, the idea is that the term “gold” is grounded in the chemical kind AU because this chemical property explains many of the observable features of gold, such as its yellowness, while also explaining why these properties tend to co-instantiate in samples of gold. The second strategy provides actual, historical cases of natural kind term groundings where the associated descriptions were in fact false.

Non-Empirical Questions for Long-Term Fairness in Machine Learning

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Abstract. Fair machine learning (fair ML) research has proposed numerous theoretical accounts of fairness in prediction tasks as well as practical measures and tools for evaluating and improving fairness in machine learning models and prediction-based decision procedures more broadly. Empirical frameworks applied in this domain are commonly premised on the notion that the decision-making settings and contexts wherein predictive models are used remain *static* – in particular, that the observed data values remain unchanged through time. Recent works have identified problems with this approach, and the field has begun to develop empirical frameworks for so-called *long-term fairness in machine learning* (LTFML)¹. Frameworks for LTFML are considered to more suitable for evaluating and improving long-term fairness in actual prediction and decision-making tasks which are often executed in dynamic and evolving contexts. Though there is an extensive critical literature on the moral assumptions and conceptual limitations of standard empirical frameworks for fair ML², emerging empirical frameworks for LTFML have yet to be subjected to similar scrutiny. This is a considerable gap in the literature especially considering that there are conceptual and epistemic-ethical questions that arise only in non-static contexts of evaluating and designing fairness-enhancing interventions, such as questions regarding the balancing of short- and long-term benefits and burdens resulting from sequences of interventions executed through time. The proposed paper (1) identifies and examines a set of non-empirical questions and problems implicated by the transition from static to non-static considerations of fairness in machine learning and (2) outlines alternative approaches to each of these problems in an effort to show that the incorporation of specific technical assumptions has considerable ethical implications for intervention design and evaluation. The paper proposes that empirical frameworks for LTFML ought to articulate their epistemic-ethical assumptions and account for relevant moral implications in order to properly inform their safe and effective application in practice.

¹ See, for example, Liu, L. T., Dean, S., Rolf, E., Simchowitz, M., & Hardt, M. (2018). Delayed impact of fair machine learning. In *International Conference on Machine Learning* (pp. 3150-3158). PMLR; Ghosh, A., Shanbhag, A., & Wilson, C. (2022). Faircanary: Rapid continuous explainable fairness. In *Proceedings of the 2022 AAAI/ACM Conference on AI, Ethics, and Society* (pp. 307-316).

² See, for example, Scantamburlo, T. (2021). Non-empirical problems in fair machine learning. *Ethics and Information Technology*, 23(4), 703-712.

Nibbana according to the Pali suttas

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Buddha's philosophy is centered around suffering, or, more specifically, the nature of suffering and how to get rid of it. This philosophy of suffering they express in the form of four noble truths, a basic teaching that all forms of Buddhism share. What is more controversial is how one ought to understand the cessation of suffering, nibbana, the highest goal of Buddhism. The history of Buddhist philosophical tradition has provided several interpretations. In my paper, I will make a modest dive into this history of interpretations through a reading of the four noble truths as presented in the original Pali canon of suttas, the oldest record of Buddha's thought. I argue that through a close reading of Buddha's word concerning nibbana we may understand it as a transcendent state of cessation of sensual experience. This way of reading, however, goes directly against some Buddhist interpretations, especially those of the mahayana tradition. Here, nibbana is understood as an immanent state where one's relation to sensual experience changes, but experience itself does not cease. My conclusion is that the suttas support a transcendent reading of nibbana and that this seems to differ from many other interpretations. Thus it seems that Buddhisms may in part be differentiated in the way they understand their ultimate goal of nibbana.

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Sapere Aude? Kant's Relation to Jacobins

In my paper, I will describe Immanuel Kant's political philosophy's relationship to French and German Jacobin philosophy and direct implications Kant's philosophy in political philosophy during French revolution 1789-1794 and during the reign of Terror in France and Revolutionary wars.

In the first part of my paper, I describe Jean-Jacques Rousseau's influence on Kant's political thinking during the pre-revolutionary Enlightenment era and how it shaped Kant's political thinking. In this part of the paper I also describe attacks against Kant's Enlightenment thinking from the German thinkers during his era, like Justus Möser's arguments and how Kant responded to them.

In the second part of my paper, I describe how Kant commented the French Revolutions' first part in 1789. I continue by describing Reidar Maliks argument about Kant's political thinking in this era, and how Kant turned against the radical turn of the Revolution.

Or, did Kant actually turn against radical turn the revolution, especially after the execution of Louis XVI?

This is the main question I ask in my paper. I also describe how Kant's political writing influenced German Jacobins during the Revolutionary wars in German princedoms, especially in the short-lived Mainz Republic. I argue that these questions about radicalization are one of the main questions in Kant's political philosophy because his commentaries on the Revolution, especially in *Der Streit der Fakultäten* have been hard to interpret and leave lots of areas for interpretation. The question of political radicalization today is timelier than ever.

It has been argued that Kant was negative and reactionary towards the Revolution's radical turn in many commentaries, such as in Sophie Wahnich's *In Defence of Terror: Liberty or Death in the French Revolution* (2012). In concluding remarks, I ask the question, was Kant's stance opaquer, or was Kant's view about Revolution so reactionary as Wahnich claims.

Post-Animalising Philosophy

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Abstract

In Western societies, the idea of the animal has been negatively value-laden and in a hierarchical relation to the idea of the human. This ideology of human superiority has been called *human exceptionalism* containing two premises: (1) human uniqueness and (2) human superiority due to this alleged uniqueness (see e.g., Gruen, 2011, pp. 4-5). The mainstream of Western philosophy has adhered to human exceptionalism throughout the history of philosophy. However, animal ethicists have questioned human exceptionalism by various arguments, also based on empirical similarities between human and other sentient beings (see e.g., Horta, 2014, on the *argument from species overlap*), and on the irrelevance of abilities such as rationality for moral considerability and equality (see e.g., Faria, 2016, pp. 44-46). Nevertheless, even animal ethics, that has questioned the human-animal dualism, has continued to use the term ‘animal’ that embeds negative connotation and inferiority in comparison to the term ‘human’ in Western culture.

In this paper, I examine reasons for abandoning the term ‘animal’ due to its ambiguity and problematic value-ladenness. I argue that we can understand the term ‘animal’ as denigrating in the cultural context of human exceptionalism, for which reason it is problematic to refer by the term even to nonhuman sentient beings. Thus, it is an act of animalising to call any subject, including a nonhuman sentient, an animal. Animalisation is disrespectful by implying moral inferiority. Disrespecting any sentient being is morally wrong (see e.g., Dunayer, 2004; Korsgaard, 2018); hence, I argue that animalising any sentient being is morally wrong. Moreover, the term ‘animal’ contains ambiguity, as it may refer to (1) all biological animals including humans, (2) all sentient beings including humans, (3) a subset of sentient beings including humans (e.g., subjects-of-a-life, see Regan, 2004/1983), (4) all nonhuman biological animals, (5) nonhuman sentient beings, or (6) a subset of nonhuman sentient beings. In everyday language, ‘animals’ usually refers to nonhuman animals, which separates humans from all other animals in lines of human exceptionalism.

As an alternative to the term ‘animal’, I propose using ‘sentient’ as a noun. Sentience, having affective consciousness, is a morally relevant property, as it entails having subjective, experiential wellbeing. Sentience demarcates equal moral subjects from entities lacking experiential wellbeing and moral considerability. ‘Sentients’, thus, creates a new group of *us* including nonhuman and human individuals. As Paola Cavalieri (2009) has argued, the concept of the animal has been a problematic part of an unjustified and hierarchical worldview; this negatively value-laden concept contributes to oppression and should not sustain. My analysis moves forward by suggesting new, sentiocentric, and post-animalising language that centralises sentient subjectivity. Dispensing with the human-animal dualism implies a shift to post-animalising and sentiocentric philosophy that recognises also other sentients than humans as subjects who have individuality, experiences, feelings, and often agency accompanied by knowledge. An advantage of using the term ‘sentient’ instead of the ‘animal’ is that it functions against objectification of sentients by making their sentience, that is, conscious affective experiencing, explicit. We should, moreover, abandon the idea of ‘animal ethics’ as a subfield of ethics that examines the treatment of nonhuman animals. Instead, mainstream ethics should incorporate the frame of sentiocentrism and transform to *sentient ethics*, of which a subdomain can consider relations between sentient moral agents. Sentiocentric ethics and sentiocentric other fields of philosophy would recognise the sentience and affectivity of everyone, including of moral agents, in an affirmative way. It can include new concepts such as ‘sentientkind’ (cf. ‘humankind’). I conclude that we need a shift towards language that rejects animalisation. We should, thus, move towards post-animalising and sentiocentric philosophy that centralises sentient beings as subjects. Ultimately, also other disciplines, social movements, and all societies should explore the same shift to overcome animalisation.

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Tragedy and the Climate Change

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The urgency of climate change crisis has raised in theatre and it's research a new ecological wave called 'ecodramaturgies', the theoretical framework of which can be found mainly in posthumanism and new materialism. At the same time, the question of tragedy seems to create interest across the borders of disciplines, for instance, in moral philosophy and political theory.

I will study the following questions in my presentation: What tragedy could provide for theatre at the time of climate crisis? How the idea of tragedy should be reconsidered in this context? What are the possibilities and limitations for adapting the tragedy of climate change on the stage? The major question can also be formulated in another way, in the words by poet-philosopher Friedrich Hölderlin's (1770-1843): "what is tragic for us" – 'us' referring to our time?

According to Cary Wolfe's idea of posthumanism, antiquity can play an important role as a corrective to the universalist assumptions of modernity. I argue this is one reason for tragedy's importance now: tragedy crystallizes some of the deepest dilemmas and controversies that have brought us to this devastating condition that seems to have no happy ending, by presenting simultaneously our rationality and pursuit to transgression and the exposure to contingency, ambiguity and fragility. Following Jos de Mul's ideas I emphasize the role of modern technology and it's *pharmakon*-effect for the "rebirth" of tragedy in the age of Anthropocene.

Wai Chee Dimock describes tragedy as a particular kind of irony of scale: tragedy arises when the maximum damage is taking place within the minimum of time and when our cognitive abilities are least adequate. For Dimock tragedy is not bound by stage or script, or human suffering and calculation, though it manifests itself rarely without any human input. Tragedy covers the entire biosphere and the climate change is a massive example of it.

Considering the climate change as tragedy means that we have to expand the classical idea of tragedy. An important question is, whose suffering is understood as tragic. Tragic suffering must cover not just some exceptional individuals or not even all humans, but ultimately all living beings. Elin Diamond stresses that posthuman tragedy cannot uphold anthropocentric designs anymore. One way to rethink tragedy is to acknowledge the more-than-human agencies, and give these actants more space and independency on stage without resuming them under human conditions.

However, it is very challenging to bring climate change on stage, if we consider, for instance, Stephen M. Gardiner's idea about climate change as a "perfect moral storm" or other philosophical lines of thought that emphasize the exceptionality, difficulty and sheer magnitude of the phenomenon. Like Una Chaudhuri and other scholars of theatre research have noted, the scale of the climate change is simultaneously so vast and so slow that it goes beyond our anthropocentric narratives and narrow temporal comprehension. Nevertheless, it is not a mission impossible or total failure. Although climate change may not be able to be experienced as a whole, various aspects of it and our understanding of them can be manifested. Theatre also shares with ecological crisis some special elements like uncertainty, precarity and finitude. As tragedy is the extreme formulation of these, it has potentiality to express and study climate change.

ONTOLOGICAL DISTINCTIONS WITHIN SOCIAL CATEGORIES

In my presentation, I study the ontology of social categories by drawing distinctions corresponding to ontologically distinct, but in practice often causally interconnected, aspects of social kinds. The social categories I am interested are the ones people are categorized as like genders, professions, and relationship statuses, and my focus lies on the level of an individual person.

People are categorized as for example being a man, a nurse, a mother, an athletic. In everyday life it is often not necessary to make ontological distinctions within a category, but to understand these phenomena and the political struggles relating to them, it is useful to understand the complexities they contain at the ontological level. For example, a person being a nurse can refer to many things that have quite different metaphysical constitution. A person can be categorized as a nurse for example if a person:

- a) works currently as a nurse, or
- b) has graduated as a nurse, but does not work as nurse, or
- c) has an official status giving them the permission to work as a nurse, or
- d) identify as a nurse, or
- e) is conferred as a nurse in specific time and place.

If we study these situations, we notice that they differ ontologically from each other, since their constitution and constituents differ. If simplified, A refers to ongoing process where a person repeatedly performs tasks relating to nursing like taking care of patients. B refers to a person's personal history, C refers to a legal or official status, D to mental attitudes the person has towards themselves, and E is constituted by action or attitudes of mostly other people in the specific situation.

There are situations, where a person is categorized as a nurse, but only one of those features is true about them, or on the other hand situations where all of them are true. None of those is "the real definition" of being a nurse or neither are those different parts of a single ontologically unified feature of "being a nurse". Those are different, often interrelated aspects of it, and in my argument, even ontologically distinct aspects of being a nurse. Being a nurse is not one thing, it is many things, and to make the situation even more complex, these things change from one context to another, like for example withing different legislations or time periods. In real life, the political struggles often happen when one of these aspects and its hegemonical importance gets challenged, since in real life, these different aspects contradict each other often in a person's life.

Similar ontological distinctions can be made to most of the other social categories too. Different social categories have focus on different kinds of aspects, and the relevance of those comes from the society the category in question is studied. For example, being a nurse in Finland in 2023 does not have so strong social pressure for the person to have certain bodily features that it would make there to exist an ontologically distinct aspect of it, but many other categories do. The struggles of the ontological status of bodily features of an individual of for example different genders, races, disabilities, kinship statuses are ongoing, since the understanding that these features have other aspects than just bodily features is raising.

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Title: Jenann Ismael on causation and free will

It is often thought that physics indicates that free will is not possible, because if one knew the laws and the initial conditions of the universe, it could be possible to calculate everything that would happen in the future. Philosopher Jenann Ismael argues against this view and claims that human beings do have free will.

In a deterministic universe where classical, Newtonian mechanics applies, the worry of causal determinism arises and creates a problem for free will. If everything we do is determined by the causal antecedents, it looks like we do not have the freedom to decide our actions. Ismael argues that this is not the case and explains how physics can actually help us save the notion of free will.

Ismael claims that freedom of will is not a problem for human agents who are self-governing subsystems of the world, because free will can exist in the open subsystems of the world. Free will and causation are local, happening in the subsystems that have causes affecting them from the outside. In the level of the universe as a whole there prevails deterministic causality, because the universe is a closed system, so there are no causes affecting it from the outside.

Ismael claims that causation is not in contradiction with free will. On the contrary, “causal relations are handmaids to choice” (Ismael 2016). Deliberation is one of the basic human actions and in deliberation we see our possibility to affect things. Our volitions guide our actions.

The past is something we cannot affect but of which we have knowledge. The future is an unknown area, but, according to Ismael, one that we can change. With all the memories, experiences and knowledge from the past it is possible for us to make pondered decisions. In the open subsystems of the world, we have the ability to make things differently. Causation is a way to bring about ends, and not a threat to free will.

Ismael’s arguments for free will are interesting. They help us to understand the structure of causation and its role in decision-making. There are many problems with denying free will, for example, the difficulty of explaining the feeling of freedom that we have in our everyday life, or the problem with ethical behaviour: if action is not under one’s control, how could one be blamed for bad acts? Still, Ismael’s claims might not be sufficient for a hardened fatalist. The argument that free will works in open subsystems of the world but not at the level of the whole universe seems to sidestep the question of whether our actions are *truly* free. Is there freedom of will, if it only works locally, but not globally? In some works, Ismael does write more from the viewpoint of perspectival causation. After all, feeling of freedom and fundamental freedom seem to be two different things.

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