



**Oddelek za filozofijo, Filozofska fakulteta, Univerza v Mariboru/  
Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor**

*in/and*

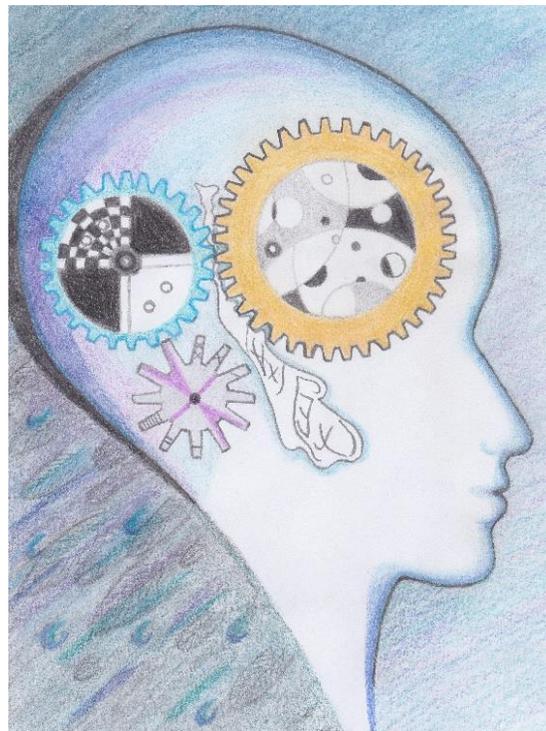
**Društvo za analitično filozofijo in filozofijo znanosti/  
Slovenian Society for Analytic Philosophy**

**Slovenian Society for Analytic Philosophy**

**Mednarodni študentski simpozij/International symposium**

**ŠTUDENSKI FILOZOFSKI SIMPOZIJ 2018  
PHILOSOPHY STUDENTS' SYMPOSIUM 2018**

**Zbornik povzetkov/Abstracts Booklet**



**MARIBOR, 10. 04. – 11. 04. 2018**



**Department of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts, University of Maribor**

**And**

**Slovenian Society for Analytic Philosophy and Philosophy of Science**

**MEDNARODNI SIMPOZIJ:  
ŠTUDENTSKI FILOZOFSKI SIMPOZIJ 2018**

**INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM:  
PHILOSOPHY STUDENTS' SYMPOSIUM 2018**

**Maribor, 10. – 11. April 2018**



## **Program/Programme**

### **Torek/Tuesday Prostor/Room 2.7/FF**

09:30 – 10:00	Pozdravni govori/Welcome speeches
10:00 – 10:30	Jelena Pavličić (University of Belgrade): Scepticism and Contextualist Diagnoses of the Problem
10:30 – 11:00	Milena Radović (University of Split): Problems of Modal Realism
11:00 – 11:30	Jelena Mijić (University of Belgrade): In Support of a Neo-Moorean Anti-skeptical Strategy
11:30 – 11:45	Odmor/Break
11:45 – 12:15	Tinkara Tihelj (University of Ljubljana): Questioning Blackburn's Approach to Knowledge through Virtue
12:15 – 12:45	Karlo Mikić in/and Dajan Plačković (University of Zagreb): Catuskoti - distinct, exhaustive, both or none?
12:45 – 14:15	Kosilo/Lunch
14:15 – 14:45	Aleksa Čupić (University of Belgrade): Relationism and Illusion
14:45 – 15:15	Daniele Mario Cassaghi (University of Milan): Phenomenal Intentionality: 'Original or Naturalisable?'
15:15 – 15:30	Coffee break
15:30 – 16:00	Bojan Popov (University of Belgrade): Putnam's Functionalism - A Short Analysis via some 'Key-Concepts'
16:00 – 16:30	Lalit Saraswat (Indian Institute of Technology Bombay): Downward Causation, Emergence, and Autopoietic Epistemology
17:15 –	Ogled mesta in večerja/City tour, followed by dinner



**Program/Programme**  
**Torek/Tuesday**  
**Prostor/Room 2.20/FF**

- 11:45 – 12:15 Phoebe Robyn Theodora Hopper (University of Vienna): Potential problems facing the interdisciplinary approach of cognitive science
- 12:15 – 12:45 Aljoša Toplak (University of Ljubljana): Pessimistic Induction
- 12:45 – 14:15 Kosilo/Lunch
- 14:15 – 14:45 Francesco Pesci (University of Illinois at Chicago): The Pointlessness of Reduction about Thick Concepts
- 14:45 – 15:15 Matej Drobňák (Czech Academy of Sciences): Communication in Context: An Inferentialists Approach
- 15:15 – 15:30 Coffee break
- 15:30 – 16:00 Carlos Benito Monsalvo (University of Barcelona): Slurs, The Embedding Problem and Conversational Implicatures
- 16:00 – 16:30 Filippo Batisti (Ca' Foscari University of Venice): A Cross-Linguistic Ontology of Action
- 16:30 – 17:00 Ćurčić Ana (University of Split): Ambiguity Challenges of Natural Language Processing
- 17:15 – Ogled mesta in večerja/City tour, followed by dinner



**Program/Programme**  
**Sreda/Wednesday**  
**Prostor/Room 2.7/FF**

- 10:00 – 10:30 Ninni Suni (University of Helsinki): Culpability for Implicit Prejudice
- 10:30 – 11:00 Tamaz Tokhadze (Ilia State University/University of Sussex): A Case for Conciliationism
- 11:00 – 11:15 Odmor/Break
- 11:15 – 11:45 Maja Repina (University of Maribor): Initial Situation: From Rawls to Sen
- 11:45 – 12:15 Dušan Arsovski (University of Belgrade): Deliberative Democracy and Transformation of Preferences
- 12:15 – 12:45 Joyitri Sarkar (University of Maribor): Possibility of Attainment of Boddhisattva
- 12:45 – 14:15 Kosilo/Lunch
- 14:15 – 14:45 Urška Martinc (University of Maribor): The Problem of Classification in Biology
- 14:45 – 15:15 Ana Katić (University of Belgrade): Systems Theory Perspective on the Concept of Superorganism: The Dynamic Biological Explanation
- 15:15 – 15:30 Zaključek/Conclusion



**Program/Programme**  
**Sreda/Wednesday**  
**Prostor/Room 2.20/FF**

- 11:15 – 11:45 Neja Kaiser (University of Maribor): Is Nissenbaum's Social Approach for Understanding Privacy Compatible with the Feminist Ideas on the Interconnection of Privacy, Public and Social Relationship?
- 11:45 – 12:15 Niko Šetar (University of Maribor): To Be or Not to Be: Quality of Life Between Antinatalism and The Repugnant Conclusion
- 12:15 – 12:45 Fabijan Purg (University of Ljubljana): Problem with the Individuation of the Senses: Hearing, Touch and the Vibratory Sense
- 12:45 – 14:15 Kosilo/Lunch



## Povzetki/Abstracts

*Jelena Pavličić, University of Belgrade*

### **Scepticism and Contextualist Diagnoses of the Problem**

Epistemic contextualism, which encompasses conversational and inferential contextualism, is one of the most widely discussed epistemological projects nowadays. However, the bulk of literature on epistemic contextualism focuses on the analysis of advantages and difficulties posed by these types of theories, predominantly treating them separately. The subject of this paper is the evaluation of these theses in light of each other. First, I provide an overview of the compelling contextualist diagnosis of the problem of skepticism – one that accommodates both skeptical and anti-skeptical intuitions while preserving the highly intuitive principle of the closure of knowledge. Both versions of epistemic contextualism share this core. However, there exist several axes of difference between the two camps on the steps to reach this diagnosis, one of which is discussed here – the explanation of how we fell into the skeptical trap in the first place. Conversational contextualism strives to explain this by adopting an error theory, which has been the target of many objections that can be lined up into two groups: those that aim to show that (i) error theory is not plausible and that (ii) the contextualist appeal to error theory leads to specific problems within the contextualist approach itself. Presenting arguments of both kinds, I will come to an important revision of Schiffer’s argument in forming objections that, it turns out, conversational contextualists fail to overcome. Thereafter, I will outline an inferential diagnosis of skepticism, which is not committed to the highly problematic error theory, and indicate one of its (dialectically observed) most significant aspects – the shifting of the burden of theory. I further argue that these results contribute to the notion of inferential contextualism as a favoured resolution of the problem of skepticism.



*Milena Radović, University of Split*

## **Problems of Modal Realism**

In his book *On the Plurality of Worlds* (1986), David Lewis argues for modal realism, which is a view stating that all possible worlds are ontologically on par with our actual world. In this paper, I will examine two arguments for modal realism, the indispensability argument and the argument from the recombination principle, and two arguments against modal realism, Lewis's own criticism of the impossibility of knowledge of other worlds and Lycan's circularity charge. First, I will examine Lewis's version of the indispensability argument. Its soundness will be examined considering the questionable status of the first premise, which states that we need to accept modal realism because of its benefits. This argument has developed in the philosophy of mathematics, and Lewis relies heavily on mathematics as an analogy to modal realism. He introduces a comparison between the necessity of mathematical objects for our best scientific theories and the necessity of modal realism to solve many philosophical problems and, most of all, to reduce the number of primitive notions in philosophy. Then, I will see if Lewis's recombination principle is a good answer to the charge that it is impossible to gain knowledge of other worlds. The principle of recombination is a perfectly good way to know some of the possible worlds, provided that we have already found that the modal realism is true. Lewis turns back to mathematics in his response to criticism about the impossibility of knowledge of other worlds. He makes use of mathematics when showing that causal connection is not needed for knowledge. There, he compares mathematical objects with other worlds, both of which are causally disconnected from us, but we can have knowledge about them. Finally, I will address the circularity charge against modal realism. I will show how it is not a fatal problem for modal realism, although the charge is in a way justified. The problem of circularity shows that modal realism has not been successful in diminishing the number of primitive notions, at least not as regards to epistemology, while ontology of modal realism does not suffer from this problem. Thus, the problem of circularity returns to the problem of knowledge of other worlds. Considering these arguments, we will see that common sense is ultimately the biggest obstacle to modal realism. Lewis's arguments for modal realism are not as strong as he needs them to be to successfully prove his theory. Although they are plausible, this is not enough to accept modal realism; at least not to us, considering that we rely too much on our common sense, and modal realism departs from that too much.



*Jelena Mijić, University of Belgrade*

## **In Support of a Neo-Moorean Anti-skeptical Strategy**

The aim of this paper is to argue in favour of the Neo-Moorean attempt(s) to solve a skeptical paradox. The thesis that Neo-Mooreans retain advantages and avoid disadvantages of rival anti-skeptical strategies – namely epistemic contextualism – will be defended. To illustrate the problem that a radical skeptic poses to us, Nozick's famous 'the Brain in a Vat' scenario will be used, which enables construing valid arguments consisting of jointly inconsistent but independently plausible premises.

The first and the second part of the paper will be devoted to Nozick's conditional analysis of knowledge and De Rose's epistemic contextualism, both based on the sensitivity principle. Referring to De Rose's contextualist theory, it will be shown that the failure of Nozick's conditional analysis of knowledge to provide a satisfactory answer to a skeptical paradox does not concern the sensitivity principle but rather closure denial, embracing the so called "abominable conjunction". The third part will be devoted to pointing out the weaknesses of presumably the most successful, contextualist response to the paradox. It will be shown that even though De Rose successfully surmounts the difficulties of Nozick's theory, on which his own antiskeptical strategy is partly built, a contextualist makes certain concessions to a radical skeptic. Finally, Black's Neo-Moorean anti-skeptical theory, based on the sensitivity principle as a strategy that makes no concessions nor counterintuitive proposals, will be introduced.

In conclusion, additional criticism, which can be addressed to "sensitive" theories of knowledge, will be considered. It will be argued that it does not point to the essential misconception of the presented Neo-Moorean solution of paradox if it turns out that the sensitivity principle is replaceable by the safety principle immune to these criticisms.



Tinkara Tihelj, University of Ljubljana

## **Questioning Blackburn's Approach to Knowledge through Virtue**

One of the philosophical widely desired goals is the account of how to attain knowledge.

In his paper "Reason, Virtue, and Knowledge", Simon Blackburn distinguishes between a weak and a strong virtue theory. These two theories are part of virtue ethics, with the latter being the foundation of virtue epistemology.

The difference between the mentioned virtue theories is provided with two equations. The first one deals with the nature of action (that it should produce the best balance between the benefit over harm if and only if that action is performed by the virtuous agent), whereas the other one centers around the rightness of action (an action is right in certain circumstances if and only if it is performed by the virtuous agent in those same circumstances).

The weak virtue theory rejects both equations. Appreciating this, Blackburn claims that this theory cannot be distinguished from reliabilism.

The strong virtue theory suggests (actually obliges us) to read equations in the opposite direction (from right to left). This kind of reading would tell us what virtues are doing, and in that light, they would equip us with balance of benefit over harm.

Virtue epistemology aims for knowledge (the goal of justified true belief) through its reliance upon virtues. I argue that we don't need the concept of virtue to attain knowledge, suggesting that the mentioned equations are problematic, as is the concept of virtue and the projected virtuous agency.



*Karlo Mikić and Dajan Plačković, University of Zagreb*

## **Catuskoti – Distinct, Exhaustive, Both or None?**

Catuskoti is the most famous of the Indian logical forms. It allegedly consists of four mutually exclusive and logically exhaustive modes of propositions, namely affirmation, negation, both of the first two, and none of them. This form was described by some scholars as irrational, inconsistent, paraconsistent, and paracomplete, although some others have maintained that catuskoti could be vindicated, given that the same Indian (and later Tibetan) logicians and dialecticians who used it also adhered to the Principle of non-contradiction and, perhaps to a lesser degree, the Principle of excluded middle. Nevertheless, catuskoti still perplexes the minds of philosophers on the ground of its usage, its purpose, and its univocal formal structure.

Having that in mind, in this presentation, we wish to do three things. First, we wish to address the traditional textual sources in the Buddhist literature by presenting examples of the logical form of catuskoti, like excerpts from certain Nikayas from Sutta Pitaka and some Mahayana scriptures, notably from the Prajnaparamita sutras and Nagarjuna's *Mulamadhyamakakarika*. Secondly, we wish to look at the interpretations of what catuskoti is deemed to represent and what its functions are in Buddhist literature, and then enlist, compare, and evaluate various formalizations of different types of catuskoti in modern symbolic logic given by authors like R. H. Robinson, R. D. Gunaratne, N. Yu-Kwan, D. S. Ruegg, G. Priest, and T. Makino to see if those formalizations correspond with the account of what catuskoti should be doing. Lastly, we will discuss whether some or any of the supposed ways of explaining the role of catuskoti in Indian, specifically Buddhist philosophical writings, are plausible.

Based on thusly reached conclusions, our aim is to solve the mystery of the catuskoti regarding its translation to symbolic logic, taking as our working hypothesis that the form of catuskoti could and should be reconciled with classical logical reasoning. Although, we admit that such defence of catuskoti robs it of certain exotic elements, but more seriously, it abandons the chase for the unified formal structure of catuskoti (except on a metalogical level). Instead, our interpretation satisfies itself with locating and identifying a couple of different acceptable formalizations of catuskoti (based on textual exegesis), while saving the attribute of classical rationality just to one of them.



*Aleksa Čupić, University of Belgrade*

## **Relationism and Illusion**

Relationism (also known as naïve realism in philosophy of perception) is a theory that describes perception as being a relation between the subject and the real, mind-independent object or quality of an object. It is a take on perception that advocates a view that real objects constitute our perceptual experience of them. It hopes to describe perception in solely relational terms. That means that it would avoid utilizing terms from the representational vocabulary. Such terms might, for example, refer to the subjective quality of our experience. That is the main reason why relationism is threatened by the so-called ‘illusion problem’. An illusion is a situation in which the subject perceives an object as being different than what it really is. To be precise, the subject perceives an object as being F, while the object itself does not instantiate F. For example, the subject is perceiving a blue wall, while the wall is actually white; yet, it appears blue due to an unknown source of lighting that is causing it to look as such. This poses a threat to relationism because if such a theory hopes to explain all perception as a relation to objects or their qualities, then how can it account for situations where the perceived quality is not instantiated by the object being perceived? I hope to present this issue along with some propositions for solutions made by various relationists. The first option would be to introduce a set of standpoint conditions that is relative to each situation. By adding this, relationism then claims that perception is a relation between the subject and the object, relative to a set of standpoint conditions (e.g. lighting, distance, time-space positioning, arrangement, etc.). This might resolve some basic issues, but we are still faced with a problem of the same kind. The problem is that, even with this expansion, relationism cannot explain situations such as blurry vision. Blurry vision is a prime example of the objects being perceived as being blurry, yet blurriness is not a quality of the objects themselves; rather, it is a subjective quality of our experience. The second option would be to blame judgement. Instead of saying that we misperceived an object as being F, we would, in such a case, say that we misjudged it on behalf of the lack of awareness as to the fact that makes the object appear as F. It will be shown that this claim is incompatible with the fact that some aspects of perception are interdependent (such as perceiving colour and perceiving shape). Lastly, I hope to present a solution that consists of expanding the relational theory to include non-relational terms, which will account for the subjective characters of experience.



Daniele Mario Cassaghi, University of Milan

## Phenomenal Intentionality: ‘Original or Naturalisable?’

Kriegel (2013) draws a clear-cut distinction between two rival research programmes, both aiming to account for the relation between phenomenality and intentionality – the Phenomenal-Internalist Research Programme (PIRP) and the Natural-Externalist Research Programme (NERP). In brief, while NERP advocates try to explain intentionality in terms of tracking relations in nature (Millikan 1984, Fodor 1990, Dretske 1994), and eventually they ‘cash out’ this notion of intentionality to explain the phenomenal character of the experience (Tye 2000); PIRP researchers go in the opposite direction by taking the phenomenality to be explanatorily or metaphysically prior to intentionality. Indeed, they claim that, ultimately, intentionality has to be explained in terms of its relations with the phenomenal character of the experience (i.e. Phenomenal Intentionality).

NERP and PIRP advocates face two complementary worries: while NERP gives a straightforward account of intentionality in naturalistic terms, it seems unable to deliver indeterminate contents (mainly because of the disjunction problem, Fodor 1990); *vice versa*, PIRP people have a clear answer on why the intentional contents are determined, but it is hard to understand how phenomenal intentionality may be naturalised.

Kriegel (2011) advanced the only ecumenical view apt to provide a way to speak about Phenomenal Intentionality in a naturalistic kosher manner. According to his proposal, a high-order theory of consciousness is what is needed to maintain both that the phenomenal intentionality is the original kind of intentionality (which yields determinate contents) and that it is fully naturalisable at once. Briefly, the idea is to understand phenomenality as a high-order content about a first-order one, as delivered by the naturalistic theories of intentionality (Kriegel 2011).

Unfortunately, I will argue that Kriegel’s ambitious projects fail to conciliate the two views. The first order content, which plays a pivotal reason within the naturalisation strategy by Kriegel, cannot turn out to be determined *in virtue of* Phenomenal Intentionality, otherwise the whole project is doomed to a disastrous circularity. So, either it is determined in virtue of other reasons but therefore the whole project collapses in a standard NERP theory, or it is not determined, but therefore it is not clear how a determined high-order content could arise from it.



*Bojan Popov, University of Belgrade*

## **Putnam's Functionalism - A Short Analysis via some 'Key-Concepts'**

In this analysis, after a very brief introduction into the context and the relevant line of problems within the philosophy of mind, it will be attempted to test the adequacy of Hillary Putnam's 'isomorphic functionalism' and its components, mostly 'functional isomorphism' [FI] and 'conceptual relativity' [CR]. In concreto, they will be put (by Putnam) into relation with the solution he offers, opposed to the dilemma created between dualism and materialism, while trying to give a good explanation of the 'mental' domain of human reality – and with that, a possible explanation of certain aspects of the nature of mind, cognition, etc. With the help of a piece of Ludwig's interpretation (of Putnam) and Patricia Churchland's critical insights into the theory at hand, we will try to assess the persuasiveness of Putnam's solution, but not as opposed solely with problems with which the two other mentioned approaches are faced. Hence, it is crucial to bear in mind that, in this analysis, the focus will not be related so much to the problems of dualism and materialism – in the case of satisfactory scientific explanation of the 'mental', *per se*. Here, we will primarily focus on facing Putnam's approach with issues that arise from the proposed solution itself (with regards to Churchland's insight), to come to the conclusion that this approach, as defined by him is unpersuasive – due to certain contradictions that it seems to have. It will be attempted to explain this via the two conceptual components that have been introduced – namely implications of FI and CR, taken partially as Putnam defined them, and as well as Ludwig interprets certain concepts in his theory; and another concept in-between the two mentioned, 'pragmatic pluralism' [PP]. As an effect of Churchland's critique, it follows that there is no way out for Putnam but to go back to the physicalist explanation. In other words, by doing so, Putnam's functionalism would be self-contradictive, since it would allow the *physicalistic* explanation to be primary, most adequate. That would be directly opposite to his anti-reductionist views. But it may be that we can indeed salvage Putnam's and Churchland's insights in a coherent, practical manner, regarding the way we execute relevant lines of scientific inquiry in context of conceptual frameworks (within a theory) of an open, inclusive, interdisciplinary kind. This is enabled by CR, which by chance dissipates during the analysis, only to prove as a certain 'doorway' towards a possible constructive conclusion. Because with CR implying ontological neutrality on the conceptual level of theory, coupled with it being taken as a form of PP – or, in this context, taken to be a sort of 'open-type' methodology in theory (and perhaps practice as well); we have a sketch of what this possible approach, as implied by the results of this analysis (as well as others referred to and implied as well) could be (hence also possible hints of the fruitfulness of this kind of inter-theoretical approach in philosophy, but also in other sciences).



*Lalit Saraswat, Indian Institute of Technology Bombay*

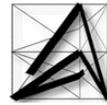
## **Downward Causation, Emergence, and Autopoietic Epistemology**

‘Downward causation’ plays a crucial role in hierarchically organised systems where feedback recursive strategies are performed with internal and external selection criteria. This all is done under natural selection framework and lead to epistemic and cognitive growth. Such mechanisms help in multi-level variations and selections, and they retain the progressively intensified form of stability and autopoietic functioning. Campbell (1974) mentions that evolution by natural selection is mostly seen as reductionistic in nature, but he also situates evolutionists and himself as holding a viewpoint “that degree at least we are reductionists, even if we are not ‘microparticulate-derivationists’... Instead, many of us even qualify as emergentists” (Campbell 1974: 189). The mistakes made by earlier reductionistic approaches while determining the denial of a few significant points made by vitalists should be avoided. Denial of design is not what Darwin must have sought; it is perhaps ‘the argument from design’, where some intelligent designer is posited – this could also be observed in the case of the acceptance of ‘teleonomy’ without teleological explanatory understanding (Wimsatt 1972).

Campbell begins with following two basic tenets that allow reductionists to adhere with hierarchically organised biological systems, and then he proposes two principles for emergentism and ‘downward causation’. With these additions, a complete picture could be grasped for the overall understanding of emergence, regulation, and self-organising aspects in hierarchical systems. Otherwise, reductionists’ and vitalists’ viewpoints seem to have an incomplete picture of reality. This way, Campbell’s contribution is noteworthy in bringing a meeting point for these two schools of thought. Campbell recognizes Poincare (1908, 1913) as the propounder of the selectionistic theory, as he sees the Poincarean notion of ‘mathematical beauty’ as vicarious selector. He defies Barham’s position of taking Poincare as an anti-selectionist. Campbell outlines an interesting point, in both evolutionary epistemology and biology, about the unit of selection and criteria to determine it. SoS or its features act as a bridge to fill the gap between pure selectionism and autopoietic features.

It features a strong point of collaboration between autopoiesis and ‘selection-by environment’. Campbell depicts that the Barhamian perspective is quite significant for the age-old issue of ‘unit of selection’. Barham’s points on autopoietic understanding along with Campbellian ‘downward causation’ play an important role in addressing the issue of complexity, order, and different units of selection. ‘Downward causation’ has been championed and validated by Campbell (1974, 1990), and Polanyi (1968). Its central tenet is that higher stages have strategic control over lower ones even in complex hierarchized form of system. The notion of such causation has its implication on the understanding of emergence.

Demarcation between the living and non-living has been the central issue for biologists and philosophers. Maturana (1970, 1974), Varela (1979), and both (1975, 1980) noticed and discussed in detail the unique feature of living system, a phenomenon, which is a self-organisational property of a system, called ‘autopoiesis’. This, according to them, is the unique classifying feature of living systems.



Phoebe Robyn Theodora Hopper, University of Vienna

## Potential Problems Facing the Interdisciplinary Approach of Cognitive Science

Kuhn theorised that concepts hold meaning relative to the scientific paradigm in which they are used. Scientific paradigms are characterised by a set of foundational beliefs that inform research focuses and the methods used to investigate them. These foundations also provide the theoretical and pragmatic-methodological background for all paradigmatic concepts. The problem of incommensurability arises when attempts are made to compare concepts from different paradigms – concepts from different paradigms are simply not comparable because they lack common measure. One repercussion of this is that researchers of different paradigms may talk across each other – they may use the same word for different concepts, with different theoretical foundations, which disables real discursive engagement. Another is that there is no neutral and pragmatic ground from which two paradigms may be assessed (Kuhn, 1996).

With reference to cognitive science, I liken the different disciplines within the field to Kuhnian paradigms – there are distinct theoretical (and historical) backgrounds to each discipline but, between them, common terms are used for different concepts. So during interdisciplinary research, we naturally come up against the problem of incommensurability. There is, however, the further problem of how to understand empirical data that have been collected within a different discipline from one's own. I argue that the data collected within a discipline can only be properly understood in the context of the theoretical background of that discipline. In the same way that terms and concepts mean different things in different disciplines (or paradigms), so too can data be interpreted differently given differing theoretical background between researchers.

To illustrate this point, I will examine the case of empathy research. A recently popular facet of empathy research is that of mirror neurons. These neurons (in the premotor cortex) fire when the subject observes another performing an action and have thus been taken as representing a neural basis for empathy. However, the question of which theory of empathy they lend support to seems to depend on the theoretical background of the researcher reporting on their activity. Those who discovered mirror neurons were neuroscientists who (as such) interpreted their activity as support for the cognitivist *simulation theory*, which posits that we infer the mental states of others via reference to an internal simulation (Hickok, 2014). However, the same findings are also taken by enactivists as support for *direct perception theory*, according to which mental states are expressed in a person's bodily actions and are, therefore, directly accessible to the similarly embodied observer (Gallagher, 2001). In light of this, I argue that both theories are underdetermined by the scientific evidence pertaining to mirror neurons because the conclusions drawn from it may differ depending on the interpreters' theoretical background (i.e. their background beliefs about the world) (Stanford, 2017).

This all presents a problem for cognitive science – how can empirical data be used in interdisciplinary work without hindrance from the cross-talk of incommensurability and the inconclusiveness of underdetermination? Without neutral and pragmatic ground to stand on, how can we choose between competing theories?

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*Aljoša Toplak, University of Ljubljana*

## **Pessimistic Induction**

The history of science is littered with examples of theory change - many theories that were once very successful have since been wholly rejected. Starting from this premise in his now famous paper from 1981, Laudan set up the stage for the so-called pessimistic meta-induction (PMI), an argument in favour of scientific antirealism; If most successful theories in the history of science (or a significant fraction of them) were later refuted, we should expect that most (or a significant fraction) of our current successful theories will be refuted at some time in the future. A wide variety of responses to the argument has been given since. One has been to restrict realism, e.g. entity realism or structural realism. Another popular approach trivialised realism with the appeal to the causal theory of reference. On the other hand, some rejected the starting premises. This article examines the possibility that the premises from which PMI starts are compatible with some basic sort of scientific realism, which consists of the claim that our current empirically successful scientific theories are probably approximately true. One argument suggests that PMI ignores the possibility of eliminative inference and maintains that theory changes in the past increase our confidence about our current successful theories. Another one questions the assumption that our current successful theories are not different in kind from past ones, and states that our reliability is potentially and probably different from that of our predecessors since there is a significant difference in the methods we use. A closer examination will be placed on Fahrbach (2009, 2011). His defence of scientific realism starts with the observation that at least 80% of all scientific work has been done since 1950, proceeds with the claim that practically all of our most successful theories were entirely stable during that period of time, and concludes that the projection of refutations of successful theories to the present is unsound. The exponential growth of science would therefore suggest a realist stance towards current empirically successful scientific theories. I will argue that there is a potential problem with Fahrbach's inference. Some thoughts on how to proceed with the investigation of PMI and related problems will be included in the conclusion.



Francesco Pesci, University of Illinois at Chicago

## The Pointlessness of Reduction about Thick Concepts

Do thick *terms* like ‘courageous’, ‘kind’, ‘cruel’ or ‘insensitive’ express thick *concepts* that are irreducible to a conjunction of a nonevaluative component plus a thin evaluative component (good, bad)? Antireductionists (McDowell, Wiggins, Dancy) think so and I argue that they are right. Yet, most of the recent arguments offered for the irreducibility of thick concepts (Kirchin, Roberts) have, if not failed, at least proved weak by the lights of their reductionist rivals (Elstein-Hurka, Väyrynen). One of them, perhaps the most discussed, is the so-called *shapelessness* thesis. This is the thesis that the extensions of thick concepts are not unified under non-evaluative similarity relations. Thus, for example, if I say that KIND is to be analyzed as GOOD in virtue of some nonevaluative feature, there is an endless variety of ways in which we can specify the latter. Moreover, the same nonevaluative feature can make an action kind in one context and unkind in another. If no nonevaluative similarity across contexts is detectable, then what all applications of the concept have in common is the irreducible content KIND, which picks out, antireductionists argue, the irreducible property of kindness.

Reductionists argue that *shapelessness* is no bar to a bi-partite, separationist analysis. Although we might not be able to tell, by means of conceptual analysis alone, whether KIND does pick out a purely nonevaluative extension, it may be a matter of synthetic a posteriori truth. It may be *intensionally* true that there is no such nonevaluative shape, but whether it is also *extensionally* true will have to be determined by empirical investigation. Secondly, mention of the context may simply show that the standards by which the extension is determined are not given in the literal meaning of the concept. Take a more descriptively loaded term like ‘courageous’. If we are to analyze it in terms of “good in virtue of facing fear in a dangerous situation”, the nonevaluative component (facing fear...) may underdetermine the extension, because we may have no way, merely from conceptual analysis, to distinguish courage from recklessness. But context may play a role in this, by providing purely *nonevaluative* standards of courage (facing fear in *such and such* a circumstance). On such a reading, a thick term expresses an underdetermined nonevaluative content which receives full determination by the context and whose *thin* evaluation (good, bad) is conveyed *pragmatically* by some conversational mechanism.

In this paper, in order to help the antireductionist case, I challenge one central assumption of the debate; that is the idea that what is important to settle is whether the separation is *possible*. I argue that centring the discussion on this issue favours reductionists and suggest that antireductionists should adopt a more indirect argument. The argument purports to show that even if possible, all reductionist analyses are unilluminating, because they cannot answer the question of what is *the point* of having a certain thick concept. Because it cannot be fully explanatory, reductionism becomes otiose. If so, we have no reason to suppose that thick concepts are not irreducible.



*Matej Drobnák, Czech Academy of Sciences*

## **Communication in Context: An Inferentialists Approach**

According to the standard view, the content ascribed to utterances often deviates from the standard meaning of sentences. This distinction is well-known as a difference between speakers meaning and linguistic/standard meaning. The deviation is considered to be a result of context dependence of sentence content – the standard meaning is modulated by contextual cues (present in a conversation).

The aim of this talk is to discuss how the framework of normative inferentialism (Brandom 1994, 2000; Peregrin 2006, 2014), could be used to explain and represent the difference between standard meaning and a content of sentence as uttered in context. For this purpose, I will focus on the distinction between the inferential potential (IP) and the inferential significance (IS) of a sentence.

IP of a sentence A can be understood as a set of sets of sentences which can be inferred from A and other premises. In some way, it represents the meaning of a sentence. Moreover, inferentialists believe that the meaning of a sentence is perspectival; i.e. one sentence may have different significances in different contexts. As Peregrin claims, the relation between the context invariant IP and the context dependent IS is straightforward: “the inferential significance of A within the context C is the value of the inferential potential of A for C” (Peregrin, 2014: 51).

One way how to represent the meaning/IP of a sentence A is by a set of sets of sentences:

$$\text{IP}(A) = \{ \langle X_1, D_1 \rangle, \langle X_2, D_2 \rangle, \dots, \langle X_n, D_n \rangle \}$$

where  $X_1 = \{M_1, \dots, M_n\}$  and  $D_1$  is a sentence which can be inferred from  $X_1 + A$ ;  $X_2 = \{N_1, \dots, N_n\}$  and  $D_2$  is a sentence which can be inferred from  $X_2 + A$ ;  $X_n = \{O_1, \dots, O_n\}$  and  $D_n$  is a sentence which can be inferred from  $X_n + A$ .

According to this approach, context is inherently part of the representation of meaning – instantiated by collateral premises that are members of sets  $X_1, X_2 \dots X_n$ . If IS is the value of IP for C, then to understand a sentence as uttered means to eliminate those sets from IP which do not include premises relevant in a particular conversation. For example, if  $\text{IP}(A) = \{ \langle X_1, D_1 \rangle, \langle X_2, D_2 \rangle, \dots, \langle X_n, D_n \rangle \}$  and a hearer knows that premises from  $X_1$  apply in the conversation and (in the ideal case) none of the premises from  $X_2$  to  $X_n$  apply, then  $\text{IS}(A) = \{ \langle X_1, D_1 \rangle \}$ .

If we assume that sets of premises  $X_1, X_2 \dots X_n$  are socially well-established and well-known among members of communities, then we found an elegant way how to incorporate contextual dependence into an inferentialists framework. According to this approach, the meaning of a sentence includes all contextual values. A contextual modulation is not seen as a deviation, but as a specification of meaning. To fully understand a sentence in general requires knowing all its possible significances. To understand a sentence as uttered requires singling out an appropriate subset of significances from its inferential potential.



*Carlos Benito Monsalvo, University of Barcelona*

## **Slurs, The Embedding Problem and Conversational Implicatures**

Christopher Hom's semantic proposal for slurs, namely combinatorial externalism, has been challenged on different grounds, but the most important objections have to do with the so-called *embedding failure* of slurs, i.e. the property of projecting the offensiveness out of different embedding forms.

Combinatorial externalism, in a nutshell, is the thesis that the derogatory content of slurs is semantically determined by social institutions. In particular, by the ideology and the practices they prescribe. Thus, a person uttering a sentence containing a slur expresses a proposition composed, in part, by the truth-conditional semantic content with which the slur contributes when the person stands in the right causal (external) connection with the social institution (racist, homophobic, etc.).

As already noted, the main problem for combinatorial externalism is accounting for how the offensiveness of slurs projects when embedded in different ways. Some authors argue, for instance, that occurrences of slurs under denials are no less inflammatory than cases in which the slur is actually predicated. That is, according to them, (1) and (2) would be equally derogatory:

(1) Benjamin is a kike.

(2) Benjamin is not a kike.

This would show that the offensiveness of slurs cannot be explained in terms of their semantic derogatory content, as Hom does, since even when there is no predication – or better, when the contrary is predicated – the use of the slur is equally derogatory.

Hom himself has proposed different explanations in order to account for the embedding failure of slurs, but none of them has been compelling enough. Our starting hypothesis is that Hom's suggestion that embedding failure might be explained in terms of conversational implicatures is a plausible solution. To show this, we will go through the most relevant and commonly highlighted cases of embedding, namely, negations, conditionals, modals and reports, and defend that there is a difference in offense-generating pattern between these kind of utterances and those in which the slur is predicated. We will specially focus on negations and try to offer a sound explanation of why does the offensiveness project. Then we will argue that this analysis can be easily extended to other cases.

To briefly illustrate how our argument runs, consider again (1) and (2). We do not deny that (1) and (2) *can* be equally derogatory. We want to argue that they *might* not, and the reason is, precisely, that they differ in their offense-generation pattern. To put it plainly, (2) can derogate as much as (1) does by conversationally implicating the proposition that Jewish people are kikes. Thus, we will show how such a conversational implicature can be both calculated and cancelled (contextually and explicitly) by providing examples that exhibit these properties.

As a final remark, we point out that Hom's proposal requires introducing conversational implicatures in order to account for some cases, but that this does not make the proposal more or less pragmatic than it originally was. Conversational implicatures are propositions that arise in virtue of some pragmatic features. However,



those propositions implicated will derogate, if they contain a slur, due to the semantic content they express. In this sense, the pragmatic phenomena to which Hom appeals enable derogation but do not ground it.

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Filippo Batisti, Ca' Foscari University of Venice

## A Cross-Linguistic Ontology of Action

A much-investigated domain in the linguistic relativity (i.e. the study of the systematic correlations between linguistic diversity and cognition) debate is colour. Are the cross-linguistically diverse distinctions, within the spectrum of our biological endowments that let us perceive, completely arbitrary? Or is colour naming a somewhat constrained task, since humans share the same perceptual apparatus? Whatever the conclusion, our species-specific common ground remains undisputed and even, apparently, undisputable: human biology lets us operate discriminations on the basis of the wavelength composition of the light independent of its intensity and that is precisely the ‘objective’ ground upon which cultures and languages unleash the creativity guaranteed by the partial arbitrariness of the dissecting task – even if this operation is arguably done within certain constraints (Berlin & Kay 1969; Rosch 1972; Lucy 1997; Kay & Regier 2006).

However, such a premise is not shared by another domain that, according to Sidnell&Enfield (2012), is subject to linguistic relativity effects as well: social interaction through linguistic means (Austin 1962). On this view, different languages offer different vehicles for bringing about the same given social action by making certain ‘lexicogrammatical resources’ available as a means to an end: each of these tools carries some language-specific subtle ‘collateral effects’, which, for instance, affect the continuation of the interactional pattern, i.e. offering a different degree of possibility to elaborate the topic, compared to closing it. Thus, languages shape “our very possibilities for social agency” (Enfield&Sidnell 2017).

If this holds, another question follows: if an action  $x$  performed through the linguistic means of language  $A$  results in  $x_A$ , and let it be the same with language  $B$  ( $x_B$ ), could the differences be so dramatic that one could say that not only  $x_A \neq x_B$ , but even  $x_A \equiv y_B$ ? In other words, the possibility that in the end it would not be possible to call them ‘the same’ action has to be taken seriously (Zinken 2016).

This question implies also an acknowledged taxonomy of actions (among others, cf. Searle 1976, criticized by the authors) built upon an ontology of action in interaction: is there a *continuum* upon which languages and cultures draw their arbitrary distinction or not? After all, a taxonomy of actions may be useful for retrospective analysis, but maybe not for actual interactants in order to carry on one’s ordinary business.



Ćurčić Ana, University of Split

## Ambiguity Challenges of Natural Language Processing

Study on intelligence is one of the oldest disciplines. For more than 2000 years, philosophers have tried to understand the way people function when they occupy their minds with questions, thinking, remembering, reasoning, perception and so on. Apart from being interesting and useful, study on artificial intelligence (AI) gives us an opportunity to understand the way people function. When Turing proposed his test, he based it on language because the language is tied to the way people think, but people and AI do not communicate in the same way. People use natural languages, e.g. English or Japanese, while AI uses formal language. Formal language consists of the alphabet and syntax, and it is defined as a set of strings where each string is a sequence of symbols. Formal language is based on a meta-syntax for context free grammar, e.g. Backus - Naur form (BNF). A machine that communicates in natural language needs to be able to successfully perform two actions. First, it needs to translate natural language to an encoded message using the alphabet and the syntax of a formal language that is the machine's internal language. The second step is producing the external natural language that can be comprehended, in an inverse way regarding the first step.

During the process of translation, we usually have the following result: the message is mainly understandable, but grammar and fluency can present a problem. The cause of this lies in the fact that machines do not understand the meaning, but are acting upon a set of rules using their own grammar that takes words out of context.

The aim of this paper is to present ambiguity problems that NLP faces. Although NLP has an extremely rich form and structure, it faces certain ambiguity problems on syntactic, lexical and semantic level.

Syntax ambiguity is caused by parsing the sentence in different ways. A lot of ambiguity problems is caused by prepositional phrases and adverbs.

Lexical ambiguity comprehends words with multiple meanings. In many cases, those words can change their word class. These situations happen often in English because one word can be noun, verb, or verb phrase, depending on context. The situation gets more complicated since some of the most common words can belong to different word classes.

E.g. verb 'run'

- i) I always go for a run in the mornings. (run = noun)
- ii) My dog loves to run. (to run = verb)
- iii) He is on the run from the law. (on the run from the law = verb phrase)

As can be seen from iii), there are some semantical issues that depend on the context of the phrase. Regarding semantical field, the biggest issues are representing metaphor (e.g. "Speak up, please!") and metonymy (e.g. "I read Popper.").

Previous tries to resolve the ambiguity problem have been based on logical inference with no quantitative measures of certainty. Lately, a new approach of belief networks has provided an answer to the question of combining evidence from different sources. However, we are still stuck with deciding what evidence to put into the network and deciding what to do in the case of repeating answers.



*Ninni Suni, University of Helsinki*

## **Culpability for Implicit Prejudice**

This paper argues against the view that when a harmful bias, such as prejudice, is the result of widespread cultural ignorance, agents are non-culpable for the resulting injustice.

The question of culpability for implicit and automatic patterns has been under much discussion ever since studies in empirical psychology showed that even people who explicitly endorse egalitarian ideals may have implicit prejudiced associations. These associations influence one's behaviour in a way that may lead an agent to commit an injustice unintentionally. This presents a problem for standard accounts of moral responsibility, because it undermines two central conditions for responsibility: awareness and control (Saul 2013). Others have argued against this (Holroyd 2012, Washington & Kelly 2016). And yet others have tried to find a middle ground, claiming that prejudiced agents are culpable, but not if they were merely unlucky to be born into a prejudiced society (Fricker 2016).

I begin with a definition of implicit bias and prejudice. Then, using a distinction first made by Jules Holroyd, I identify the question of culpability that I think is the central one: that of culpability for action influenced by implicit bias. I then present and discuss previous accounts concerning culpability for implicit bias in general, and prejudice especially.

Fricker (2016) assumes a broadly attributionist view of moral responsibility, according to which agents are responsible for more than just those actions they have voluntarily chosen, as long as they can somehow be attributed to the agent, or reveal something about who she is as a person. Fricker traces the grounds for culpability in whether or not the mistake originated in the epistemic system of the agent. By contrast, if someone acquires a mistaken belief from a source she has good reasons to trust, she is epistemically and morally innocent for the mistake. Therefore, Fricker argues, when a harmful bias or prejudice is inherited from the community, the agent cannot be held culpable. The mistake was committed somewhere else within the epistemic community, perhaps a long time ago.

The problem with the argument is that prejudice, defined as motivated maladjustment to evidence, contains both epistemic and motivational aspects. Unlike a false belief, the motivation that underlies prejudice is part of who the agent is: a motivation is part of the emotional construct of a person, even if it originated outside her epistemic system. Therefore, the roots of the problem can be traced back to the agent's own epistemic system, and she is culpable.

The problem cannot be averted by claiming that the motivational part might not be necessary to uphold prejudice once it has been formed, and that it is possible for only the epistemic component to percolate through the society. A disposition to make certain kinds of judgments is as much part of a person's epistemic construct, as a motivation is. An agent with a problematic doxastic disposition can at least be held epistemically accountable.



Tamaz Tokhadze, Ilia State University/University of Sussex

## A Case for Conciliationism

In my talk, I will present a novel argument for Conciliationism - the view that when epistemic peers, i.e. equally competent and informed individuals, disagree, they should make at least some doxastic conciliation. I outline a simple formal framework for modeling peer disagreement and show why it is always probabilistically reasonable to lower one's original credence when one gains the evidence of peer disagreement.

I begin by discussing a simple case of peer disagreement. Ann and Nina are equally informed and qualified individuals concerning some domain  $S$ . We can think of  $S$  as a set of mutually exclusive propositions. Ann and Nina are 80% reliable to identify a true proposition in  $S$ .

At some time  $t_1$ , they are asked to determine a true proposition in  $S$ . They think about the issue independently and come to conflicting conclusions. Ann thinks  $H$  is true and Nina thinks  $Q$  is true, where  $H$  and  $Q$  are members of  $S$ . At some later time  $t_2$ , they find out about the disagreement. How should they react to the disagreement?

Now, there are four possible ways the world could be with regard to whether or not Ann and Nina have judged the issue correctly.

- i. Both Ann and Nina are correct.
- ii. Ann is right, Nina is wrong.
- iii. Ann is wrong, Nina is right.
- iv. Both Ann and Nina are wrong.

(i) – (iv) comprises a partition: a set whose members are exhaustive and mutually exclusive. Let  $A$  be a proposition that Ann's belief is true and  $N$  be a proposition that Nina's belief is true. Let  $r$  be reliability measure, such that  $0 < r \leq 1$ ; and  $n$  be a constant. Now, if we assign probabilities to each of the state descriptions, we will get the following table:

Table 1:

A	N	State-description at $t_1$
T	T	$r^2$
T	F	$r(1 - r)$
F	T	$r(1 - r)$
F	F	$(1 - r)^2$

When Ann and Nina gain the evidence of disagreement, they should *exclude* the possibility that both have



evaluated the evidence correctly. Thus the remaining probabilities should be changed in the following way:

$$2(1 - r) + n(1 - r)^2 = 1$$

With simple algebra:

$$n = \frac{1}{1 - r^2}$$

Ann's and Nina's new credences in the relevant propositions should be:

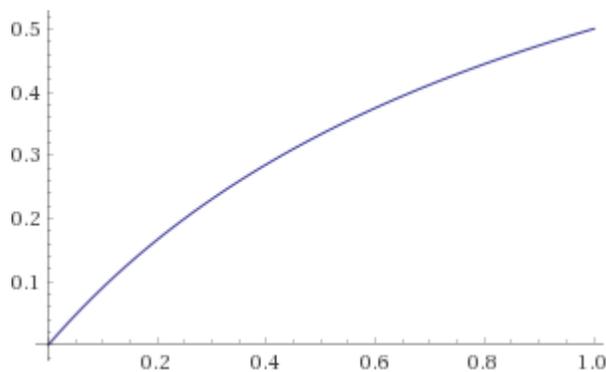
$$\frac{r}{1 + r}$$

Whenever  $0 < r \leq 1$ :

$$r > \frac{r}{1 + r}$$

Thus, the peer's reliability at determining the correct answer is always *strictly greater* than her level of reliability after the evidence of disagreement is disclosed.

The result can also be represented via the following graph:



The horizontal axis represents reliability of a peer, before the discovery of disagreement. The vertical axis represents credences in the disputed proposition after the disagreement is disclosed.



In the remaining part of my talk, I will explain two interesting lessons we can learn from this formal framework:

- i. Disagreement with a reliable peer should massively reduce your confidence in a disputed proposition. By contrast: disagreement with a less reliable peer should only slightly reduce your confidence.
  - ii. There is a subtle but important difference between the epistemic significance of *disagreement* and the epistemic significance of *agreement*.

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## Initial Situation: From Rawls to Sen

In his work, *A Theory of Justice*, John Rawls describes the initial contractual situation as original position. Original position is the initial choice situation in which free and rational persons would choose principles of justice that would further on regulate all agreements. Rawls claims that rational persons in an initial situation would always choose the two principles of justice over the alternative options. These two principles are a principle of equal basic liberties and a twofold principle of fair equality of opportunity and a difference principle.

The circumstances in which persons in original position find themselves in must always give the same results, i.e. the choosing of the two principles of justice. Rawls defines the circumstances as objective, listing coexistence in time and space, moderate scarcity of resources, everyone wants the biggest amount of the benefits for themselves; and as subjective circumstances, like different individual interests, conflicting claims on resources, no special knowledge of state of affairs, only general knowledge of human psychology etc.; which together form what is commonly known as the veil of ignorance. Under it, Rawls presupposes, people would come to a unanimous decision and choose the two principles as the most rational and the most just outcome.

This emergence of a unique set of principles of justice, something Amartya Sen calls “the first act in Rawls’s multi-staged unfolding of social justice” (2010: 56), has an important role in the proceedings of Rawls’ theory, but nevertheless receives an extensive critique from Sen. The latter gives an example of three children, having conflicting claims over an object with no one having more or less right to it, and with everybody having completely general, comparable arguments that can all be equally defended in an impartial way. This poses a threat to the cornerstones of Rawls’ theory by directly opposing the unanimous decision of choosing the two principles of justice. How can there even be such a decision if there are equally just but opposing ideas arising from a simple case like the one above.

The focus of the article will therefore be the presented dispute and the reasoning behind each side’s arguments. In the article we will examine the defense Rawls gives in later writings (*Justice as Fairness: Reformulation*) and Sen’s counterarguments.

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## **Deliberative Democracy and Transformation of Preferences**

The purpose of this paper is twofold: 1) To describe one model in which individual preferences of participants in the deliberative process are subject of change, and 2) to demonstrate that the process of transformation of preferences is real by showing and analyzing the results of the first deliberative poll.

The paper starts with a discussion on the theory of deliberative democracy. The first part of the paper is devoted to a brief historical demonstration of the development and definition of this term. It will be concluded that for deliberative democracy, it is essential to assume the change of individual preferences. The next thing to present will be a theory in which the assumption about the nature of individual preferences is exactly the opposite – assumption of fixed preferences. This will help us understand why it is necessary to assume a change in individual preferences at all. An example of such theory that starts from the opposite assumption will be the theory of social choice in Jon Elster's interpretation. It will be shown that this theory faces a number of contradictions that concern individuals and their preferences. It will become clear that the preferences (as defined in the theory of social choice) are not formed in the way that the theoreticians of social choice would want. Another big problem in social choice theory is that individual preferences are not subject to observation, so we cannot really know that the claims that participants express are 'real' preferences or that they are rational. The third problem is the assumption of a relation between autonomy and morally permitted preferences. It will be shown that the autonomy of preference is not crucial for its moral character and vice versa.

One solution for these problems will be found within a deliberative democracy. The solution will be shown through the analysis of the mechanism of transformation of preferences within the deliberation, which Elster develops in his paper "The market and the forum: Three varieties of political theory". When we show that the assumption of fixed preferences faces problems, it will be a natural step to assume change of individual preferences. Of course, the task will then be to 1.1) precisely describe the model in which a different concept of individual preferences are assumed and 1.2) to analyze how would individuals change their preferences. It will turn out that the first benefit of the deliberative process is intra-deliberation, which is a mechanism for itself and is a consequence of public deliberation and its effects to participants. The second benefit is an educative purpose of public deliberation that it has on individuals. After a theoretical setting, we will ask ourselves if the assumption of a change in preference is real at all.

The last part of the paper is the answer to this last question through the presentation of empirical research of changes in individual preferences that are presented and analyzed by Robert C. Luskin, James S. Fishkin, and Roger Jowell. We will conclude with the description and analysis of these important empirical results that reinforce the assumptions from Elster's theory.



*Joyitri Sarkar, University of Maribor*

## **Possibility of Attainment of Bodhisattva**

Bodhisattva is someone whose end is aimed at enlightenment and takes up a direction in her or his life that moves in the ways of Buddha. This is for the sake of spiritual and material welfare of all living beings as well as anyone who is prepared to undergo hardships and make sacrifice (Shantideva, 2008). Though the word 'Bodhisattva' has been explained in different ways, in this paper, we will not focus on the meaning, but rather on the 'possibility of the attainment of Bodhisattva' by drawing a connection with Western philosophers like Derek Parfit and Aristotle's view on 'good life'.

One of the objections raised against the doctrine of 'Bodhisattva' is quite similar to the objection raised against 'consequentialism', and that is that of severe or too much demandingness. The 'Demandingness Objection' might have been raised against other moral theories as well, but in this context, we will focus only on consequentialism. It is commonly associated with over-demandingness because of sacrificing her well-being and maximizing overall welfare. No self leads to living in alignment with the bodhisattva ethical code of discipline and conforming to its ideals. Objection of over-demandingness depends on the issues, like bodhisattva, that radically get to identify the well-being of others with his well-being, which leads to the reduction of the tension between self and other beings.

One of the proposed solutions for this problem is the transformation of psychology to such extent by the realisation of one's nonexistence of self that helps to achieve Bodhisattva. Before we highlight other points, we must briefly explain the Buddhist doctrine of 'denial of self or no-self', that means anattā (Pali) or anātman (Sanskrit). It is to be believed in Buddhism that there is no fixed or permanent self or soul in living beings. The doctrine of Bodhisattva aims to help to relieve the suffering of all creatures and realizing awakening universally, hence leading to beings in the society to such awakens.

The major Buddhist philosophy fundamental is the very idea that everything in the world of humanity depends on the mind. Considering the non-theistic character of bodhisattva, it starts from the concept of human point of view relation and does not put its emphasis on the metaphysical nature of things. Though bodhisattva does not directly give the definition of 'that which is', it opens up the point about the ultimate human interests and situation, namely that human existence is only but a suffering, where it is revealed that the perfection of humans lies in compassion for all living things (Chogyam, 2013). Bringing benefits to others leads to one's motivation, finding ways in calming one's mind, learning new skills, maintaining stability of the emotion, and it leads to understanding the views of other people. The paradoxical truth of bodhisattva is that the human being's only possible free choice is to decide to work towards the freedom of all humankind.



*Urška Martinc, University of Maribor*

## **The Problem of Classification in Biology**

The aim of this paper is to analyse the problem of classification in biology. In the process of explaining whether biological kinds are natural kinds, we will help ourselves with examples from biological classification.

In this paper, we will first try to define what are natural kinds and what are biological kinds. We will help ourselves with different authors from the fields of philosophy and biology.

Then we will analyse the problem of classification in biology and compare the classification of reptiles and birds according to the Linnaean classification with the cladistic classification. In doing that, we will utilize ideas by Samir Okasha and other selected authors.

Samir Okasha says that “[the] traditional Linnean taxonomy counts lizards and crocodiles as members of Reptilia, but excludes birds, which are placed in a separate class called Aves. Pheneticists agree with this traditional classification, for birds have their own unique anatomy and physiology, which is quite different from that of lizards, crocodiles, and other reptiles. But cladists maintain that Reptilia is not a genuine taxonomic group at all, for it is not monophyletic.” (Okasha, 2008: 109–110)

In this case, we will try to show if the so-called ‘artificial ranking’ is contrary to the natural classification of organisms. We will help ourselves with selected authors. We will try to show that due to the so-called ‘artificial’ classification, we must not conclude that biological kinds are not natural kinds.

To sum up, in this paper we will try to answer the question regarding the problem of classification in biology, and try to demonstrate, via examples, that biological kinds are natural kinds.



*Ana Katić, University of Belgrade*

## **Systems Theory Perspective on the Concept of Superorganism: The Dynamic Biological Explanation**

In this paper, we analyze the specific reductionist attempt to resolve a dilemma regarding the concept of superorganism and we offer our solution to the problem of superorganisms. The reductionist attempt is based on the notions of individual selection and Hamilton's rule and it fails to fully explain some of the key characteristics of biological formations usually considered to be the main examples of superorganisms. Consequently, the authors of aforementioned reductionist explanation, philosophers of biology, conclude that the hypothesis of superorganisms has a limited use in biology; it is only a heuristic agent and, as such, presents a fundamentally replaceable hypothesis in biology. We use the holistic type of explanation constructed by using systems theory in a particular biological context. Our type of explanation, more precisely, is called a dynamic biological explanation and it is based on the idea of an organism as a dynamic self-organization. The aim of this paper is to represent the concept of superorganism in this theoretical perspective and to show the context of the study in which the concept of superorganism appears to be the necessary and fruitful concept in a contemporary biological theory.



*Neja Kaiser, University of Maribor*

## **Is Nissenbaum's Social Approach for Understanding Privacy Compatible with the Feminist Ideas on the Interconnection of Privacy, Public and Social Relationship?**

There are many views on the meaning and value of privacy, but there is no secret that when we speak about issues of privacy protection, public discourse, policymaking and legal practice, we lean on the liberal view of privacy.

Some philosophers, e.g. Rosenblum, think that modern liberals have linked the liberal view of privacy with romanticists' position on privacy. Consequently, modern liberalism does not only try to protect private sphere of social life, but also tries to create an area within the private sphere, where individuals may enjoy privacy. We are talking about one of two forms of liberalism's public-private distinction, which is often discussed under its legal guise of a 'right to privacy'. As other public-private distinctions that also distinguish between the political and social, this one also has become the legitimate target of feminist criticism.

Why? The idea of a right to privacy has been interpreted to mean that any outside interference in the family is a violation of privacy, which led to the immunization of family from important reforms created to prevent different types of abuse of women. In other words, the right to privacy of individual members of the family has been subordinated to family autonomy.

In order to protect women's interests, feminists have taken different strategies. The first group has started to challenge the traditional family, the second one has focussed their attention on women's personal lives, and third one has become interested in new social approaches for understanding privacy. We think the third strategy may be the right one.

Our main goal is to properly represent Nissenbaum's new social understanding of privacy and discuss whether her idea about privacy as contextual integrity represents a good response to the feminist critique of privacy.



Niko Šetar, *University of Maribor*

## **To Be or Not to Be: Quality of Life Between Antinatalism and The Repugnant Conclusion**

In his 2006 book, titled *Better Never to Have Been: The Harm of Coming into Existence*, David Benatar defends the controversial theory of antinatalism, e.g. the notion that no more sentient beings (humans) should be brought into existence. He argues that merely existing is painful and harmful, and that even the best of lives are, on average, bad, due to an asymmetry between pleasure and pain, stemming from the notion that while pain is bad and pleasure is good, the absence of pain is good, while the absence of pleasure is not bad, which results in non-existence being preferable to existence.

An opposite of Benatar's antinatalism may be found in Derek Parfit's book *Reasons and Persons*, wherein he reaches what he himself calls The Repugnant Conclusion. Despite the fact that the conclusion is counterintuitive to such an extent to have been branded 'repugnant' by the author himself, Parfit claims that we ultimately must accept it, as long as we assume we have a moral obligation of creating a new human being, if it does not harm us and if that new human being has a potential of leading a happy life. This leads us to recognise that a decrease in quality of individual lives can be justified by the quantity of lives being lived, which gives us the Impersonal Total Principle that demands we determine the ethical value of variously sized human populations according to total sum of all "what makes life worth living" (Parfit uses this term to jointly refer to all the factors that contribute to a life being worth living) in that population, regardless of the quantity of lives being lived or the quality of individual lives. The conclusion itself states that for every population A, where lives are well worth living, there must be an unimaginably larger population Z, where lives are barely still worth living, with population Z being better than population A due to Impersonal Total Principle.

Certainly, Benatar's antinatalism seems no less repugnant than Parfit's Repugnant Conclusion. However, it seems that – depending on how we answer the question "Does a newly created human being have a potential to lead a good life?" – we inevitably start heading towards one of these conclusions. If we answer negatively, we must acknowledge the inherent harmfulness of existence and recognise antinatalism, but if we answer affirmatively, we must acknowledge ethical superiority of Parfit's dystopic population Z.

Yet, must we truly accept Parfit's Repugnant Conclusion? Is there a better alternative to Impersonal Total Principle? Is the absence of pleasure indeed not bad while absence of pain is good, and therefore does Benatar's asymmetric argument hold? Can these opposing views on default quality of life complement each other to offer a more acceptable third view? These and such questions are to be examined in this paper, in an attempt to determine whether there is indeed no escape from this appalling bipolarity.



Fabijan Purg, University of Ljubljana

## **Problem with the Individuation of the Senses: Hearing, Touch and the Vibratory Sense**

There has been a resurgence of philosophical interest in the question of how, if at all, sensory modalities are to be individuated (Keeley 2002; Macpherson 2011; *cf.* Grice 1962). This paper will contribute to current philosophical debates by addressing the specific issue of how we might distinguish hearing from touch. I will argue that the various criteria that have been proposed for distinguishing one sensory modality from another may be inadequate in this case. My goal is to propose two ways in which this separation, proceeding from the traditional Aristotelian notion of five senses, can be challenged.

The first involves leaving out one of the five senses, namely hearing, and bundling it up together with the sense of touch. I challenge the widely accepted notion of touch as a contact sense and claim that some of the tactual achievements involve neither physical contact nor experience of contact *per se*. Touch may perceive a wide range of sources and involves different kinds of receptors on and in different parts of the body. The sense of touch is therefore a very distinctive perceptual system, involved in a wide range of perceptual abilities. Cochlear hearing can simply be understood as one of them. When perceiving the vibration, we normally do not exclude the sense of touch from the sense of hearing. Following this idea, it may be suggested that cochlear hearing does not bring anything new to the table; it just amplifies something that can already be perceived via touch, but it does so with such precision that it deserves its own individual sensory modality. Given this, I think there is no reason to disregard the claim that cochlear hearing, rather than an individual sense, could be understood as a specialized form of touch.

The second way calls for the additional sense of vibration detection that involves hearing and certain, but not all, types of tactual achievements. My attempt is to identify the sense of vibration as a somehow graspable sensory modality that cannot be fully explained by the sense of touch or sense of hearing alone, but rather as a means of sensory integration that encompasses both. My main argument for the introduction of this additional sense was the observation that some experiences cannot be explained as a mere composition of touch and hearing. I concur with Katz's (1925) proposal that the vibration sense represents a bridge between the pressure sense and hearing.

Hearing and touch represent two fairly distinct senses, but at the same time it is very hard to determine where one ends and the other begins. Claims that one sense is an integral aspect of the other, or that both are composites of an additional unitary sensory modality will obviously not be resolved. However, such claims suggest that, in studying perception, the strict separation of the senses may not be the only possible starting point. Other approaches are also possible and may offer alternative perspectives in the philosophical examinations of perception; integration of the senses, as proposed in this paper, is one of them.

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