



# **PERSPECTIVES ABOUT TRUTH**

**Truths about truth**

## **Book of Abstracts**

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**Panel 1**  
**Truth and other semantic notions**  
**Organizer: Paula Tomi**

**How Does “True” Modify Dual Character Concepts?**

**Ethan Landes and Kevin Reuter (University of Zurich)**

As an adjective, “true” can be used to pick out the genuine or real members of a kind, as in “true artist” or “true scientist”. However, experiments have also found that “true optician” or “true cashier” are generally considered infelicitous (Knobe, Prasada, and Newman, 2013; Liao, Meskin, and Knobe, 2020; Reuter, 2019). The category of dual character concepts has been posited to explain this difference, particularly for social kind concepts (Knobe, Prasada, and Newman, 2013; Leslie, 2015; Del Pinal and Reuter, 2017). Social kind concepts that can be felicitously modified by “true” such as ARTIST, SOLDIER, and SCIENTIST have separable descriptive and normative dimensions, each of which is sufficient for category membership on its own. For example, the descriptive dimension of ARTIST covers what it is an artist does, whereas the normative dimension involves commitment to art. It is still unclear, however, how “true” functions in natural language when it is applied to social role concepts. Based on new experimental data, we will argue that “true” works by raising the salience of the normative dimension.

In the first experiment, we tested whether “true” was indeed sufficient to modulate to the normative dimension. We gave participants a thought experiment where a janitor had the values of a scientist, fulfilling the normative dimension of the dual character concept but not the descriptive dimension. Participants agreed much more that the janitor was “a true scientist” (4.04 out of 7) than a scientist (2.78 out of 7) (the scale was anchored at ‘1 = strongly disagree’ and ‘7 = strongly agree’).

In the second experiment, we tested whether “true” was necessary to modulate dual character concepts to the normative dimension. We found it was not. Using the same vignette and scale as Experiment 1, participants were willing to rate above mean both “in a sense George is a scientist” (4.47 out of 7) and “in a sense George is not a scientist” (4.2 out of 7) when the two were asked together.

In the third experiment, we specifically raised the salience of the dual character concept’s normative dimension by providing aspects of the normative dimension to participants. Participants were either asked whether “being a scientist” or “being a true scientist” requires certain properties, including the normative properties “devotion to scientific discovery” and “passion for discovering new scientific truths”. Participants gave nearly equally high scores about whether features of the normative dimension of scientist were required for scientists (6 and 6.25 out of 7) vs true scientists (5.9 and 6.2 out of 7), suggesting seeing features of the normative dimension is enough to activate that dimension of dual character concepts.

Together, these findings suggest that that “true” elicits the normative dimension of dual character concepts by raising the salience of the concept’s normative dimension, a function not unique to “true”. Experiment 1 demonstrated that the descriptive dimension is the default reading of “scientist”, and Experiments 2 and 3 demonstrated that contextual factors are sufficient for swapping interpretation to the normative dimension. Indeed, contextual factors are so efficient at modulation that we saw no difference in responses in Experiment 3 between “true scientist” and “scientist”.

## James on Thinking About Truth

Noam Tiran (University of California San Diego)

William James's view of truth is often conceived as standing in stark opposition to correspondence theories. As several authors have suggested, this conception is a gross oversimplification – if not a straightforward caricature – of James's actual view (see, e.g., Ben-Menahem, 1995; Chisholm, 1992; Haack, 1976; Putnam, 1997, 2005). I follow these authors by suggesting that James thinks about true beliefs as consisting of a cluster of elements that include both correspondence with reality and coherence with other beliefs; as well as other interrelated factors such as usefulness, action-guidance, and verification. While this idea seems to be highly supported by James's writings, it also yields a puzzle: if James's view indeed implies that truth consists in part in correspondence with reality, then it is unclear in what sense *other elements* are equally essential to truth, as James seems to insist. I propose an answer to this question, which sheds light on his way of conducting conceptual analysis in general. Specifically, I suggest that James does *not* approach the task of explicating truth by trying to articulate its set of necessary and sufficient conditions. Instead, he is engaged in what I call *exemplar analysis*. James begins by asking what *exemplary truth*, or *truth at its best* is, and with his findings he proceeds to identify non-exemplary members of the category. Indeed, according to James, exemplary truth is more than just correspondence with reality. Exemplary true beliefs are also satisfactory, serve to guide human action, and are verified by experience. Non-exemplary truths, on the other hand, lack some of these characteristics but are nevertheless worthy of the title in virtue of the similarities they share with exemplary truths. This means that truth admits not only of degrees, but of outliers as well. This feature seems to be a strength of the view by James's lights, as he insists that pragmatism's conception of truth is intended to cover a variety of phenomena to which we apply the word, from "the most complete truth that can be conceived of, 'absolute' truth, if you like, to truth of the most relative and imperfect description" (1908: 2). I propose that this method of conceptual analysis is meant to track not only what competent language users *mean* by truth, but also the ways in which they categorize some things *as true*. If this is correct, then James anticipates certain advancements in cognitive science – specifically, the exemplar theory of categorization (Nosofsky, 1988) – by many decades. I end with a plea to consider exemplar analysis as a legitimate, and perhaps even crucial, method of conducting certain investigations.

## Davidson on Truth

Bogdan Oprea (Independent researcher)

When it comes to the concept of truth, some philosophers define it in terms of a correspondence between what we say and what exists, or in terms of a coherence between our beliefs. Other philosophers define it in terms of the practical consequences of our beliefs, or in terms of a warranted assertibility. However, there are also philosophers who consider the concept of truth to be either redundant, or even undefinable, yet a fundamental concept. Among the philosophers who embraced the latter approach was Donald Davidson.

Starting from the question "What is meaning?", his main goal was to provide a theory of meaning for natural languages. Considering that understanding a sentence consists in knowing its truth conditions and that Tarski's semantic conception of truth offers the best way to achieve them,

Davidson reversed the direction of explanation of T-sentences and adopted a Primitivist approach. In his view, the Tarskian approach provided us almost everything we needed and wanted about truth. And yet there is still something to be said about it. According to Davidson, the concept of truth is intimately linked with the concept of meaning, but as long as the latter one is intertwined with the verbal behaviour of people, we need also to show how the interpersonal understanding works. To accomplish this task, he first developed the method of radical interpretation, and later he sketched the model of triangulation.

In this presentation I will try to show that despite its attractiveness, the Davidsonian approach might have some problematic aspects. First, I will try to emphasize that appealing to Tarski's semantic conception of truth is unlikely to provide the best way of getting a workable theory of meaning for natural languages. Second, I will try to underline that in many regards, Davidson's project of providing an insight on how the interpersonal understanding works is incomplete.

### **What would Kripke say about Pinocchio?**

**Paula Tomi (Politehnica University of Bucharest; University of Bucharest)**

The Pinocchio paradox (Pinocchio says: My nose is growing), which is a version of the Liar, does not use any semantic terms at first sight. According to Eldridge-Smith, on Kripke's approach the predicate used in the paradox is not among the semantic ones, thus it should be fully defined. This means that all sentences that contain it must have a truth value.

Such a conclusion would refute some of the achievements of the Kripkean theory of truth. Note that the conclusion is predicated on the assumption that the Pinocchio paradox has a non-semantic character and it is grounded. In this presentation, I am going to argue that this is not the case on both accounts, namely that the predicate used is semantically loaded and it is actually ungrounded.

Ordinarily, predicates are divided into semantic and non-semantic ones. I will argue that there is a middle class: those predicates that are not among the semantic ones, but they can be used in a semantic manner based on the context; meaning that they have a semantic charge/they are semantically loaded. Most of the non-semantic predicates can be transformed into a semantically charged one. In the case of the Pinocchio paradox, '(nose) growing' got a semantic charge based on the specific context where '(nose) growing' is strongly linked to falsehood, the sentence becomes paradoxal. The Kripkean approach doubled by the proposed minimal natural modification can successfully address Pinocchio paradox.

### **Carnap & Tarski on the Semantics of Truth**

**Siddhant Khamkar (Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay)**

Carnap's incorporation of semantics in his formerly syntactic enterprise is widely attributed to the influence of Tarski's semantic theory of truth. Accepting semantic notions such as truth helped Carnap overcome the shortcomings of a purely syntactical approach which allowed him to express the scientific relations of confirmation and testing. Pierre Wagner recently argued that Carnap's conception and goals of his semantics were quite distinct from Tarski's and that the latter had a very minimal influence on him. While Tarski's definition of truth attempted to incorporate the

correspondence intuition within the formal concept, Carnap's acceptance of it as an explication disregards Tarski's aim of accurately capturing the "essence" of the ordinary concept of truth. Explications are not meant to characterise an ordinary language concept accurately but are meant as pragmatic choices between useful systematic concepts (the explicata) that are intended to replace a vague and inaccurate concept (the explicandum). Thus, the "correctness" of a notion of truth for Carnap is not a question of fact but of pragmatic decisions regarding its usage in a linguistic framework. Through a discussion of the differences between Tarski's and Carnap's ideals of formalisation and explication, respectively, this presentation attempts to characterise the role of truth within Carnap's semantical program.

### **Does Minimalism Define Truth?**

**Zhiyuan Zhang (The Chinese University of HongKong)**

Minimalism [See Horwich (1998)] consists of three major claims: 1) Truth itself is exhaustively stipulated by the equivalence schema (ES) it is true that p if and only if p; 2) there is no substantive truth property; 3) the word 'true' has expressive property. But it remains to be shown that whether these three claims, if coherent at all, do define truth. A full definition of truth involves a characterization of the meaning of 'true' and some claim about the nature of truth. Now Minimalists should do two things: show that 1) these claims are coherent and 2) the equivalence schema does implicitly define the meaning of 'true'.

We first consider the coherence issue. One major worry is that claim (1) may be incompatible with claim (2). It should be noticed that ES itself does not preclude truth to have substantive property. For any instance of ES, correspondence theorists of truth can take a correspondence reading of it, and rewrite ES as it is true that p if and only if 'p' corresponds to some fact, which can further lead to the thesis that truth is correspondence. Perhaps Minimalists can contend that one special feature of ES is that all theorists of truth can accept ES. If you take truth to be superassertibility, you can just read ES as it is true that p if and only if 'p' is superassertible; If you are a pluralist, you can read ES differently in different regions of discourses, etc. Now Minimalists can say ES itself leaves the nature of truth property open, which is compatible with claim (2). But minimalists still have responsibility to show why substantive readings of ES should be dismissed and how can a minimalist reading of ES be given.

Even if Minimalism is coherent, Minimalists still need to show that the meaning of 'true' has indeed been stipulated by ES. One worry is that a minimalist reading of ES will lead to a semantic indeterminacy of the word 'true' 2 [See Eklund (2021)]. The semantic indeterminacy of 'true' can explain 1) why minimalists cannot get a reductive meaning of 'true' and 2) different potential truth properties fit ES well. But this result will be a disaster if there is only local truth predicate: if the meaning of 'true' in a particular instance of ES is indeterminant, then what property does a particular valid argument preserve? Such position is a nihilism of truth, and consequently, of knowledge. Minimalists, then, must assume a universal truth predicate to be semantically indetermined while concede that local truth predicates have reductive meaning(s). But where does the universal truth predicate live? Whenever you pick out a sentence that involves 'true', it must be a local truth predicate pertaining to a particular discourse. I can see no hope for minimalism to claim 'true' has meaning now.

In conclusion, Minimalism does not define truth (in the way) as Minimalists may think.

## **Epistemic Desiderata, Context-Sensitive Assertibility and Truth**

**Andrei Marasoiu (University of Bucharest)**

In the backdrop of work by Ramsey and Tarski on the semantic conception of truth, identifying which propositions are true might perhaps be seen as boiling down to identifying which propositions should be asserted. If that were the case, then substantive theories of truth may be reconceived along the lines of substantive theories of assertibility. That is not, however, what we find in the literature(s) on assertion, and this is a puzzle I start from.

Assertibility seems to be a notion at the juncture of at least three different traditions. One is a tradition which considers warranted assertibility in the background of our limited epistemic perspectives and of the norms of inquiry and dialogue governing our partial and fallible knowledge. A second is a tradition which identifies which propositions ought to be asserted with those which form part of a putatively realizable ideally completed science. A yet third tradition focused on pragmatic encroachment and emphasizes the interests that influence which propositions get asserted (and perhaps do so as a matter of principle). The variety of these traditions, and the little traffic between their contentions, might give us pause.

One key challenge I articulate, then, concerns how to integrate these various traditions in a coherent notion of assertibility that might do them justice. I argue that the challenge could conceivably be met by appealing to a conception put forward by William Alston, according to whom a context-sensitive mix of epistemic desiderata is always at work (differently in different epistemic contexts) in identifying which propositions ought to be asserted.

However, Alston's strategy relies, as he himself acknowledges, on regarding truth as the core primary epistemic desideratum, that all other epistemic desiderata track. If this key assumption is challenged (as Alston's contextualist opponent is likely to insist), then it is no longer clear that we can preserve the connection between (even ideal) assertibility and truth. I end by considering how this debate is influenced by the differences between pluralism concerning substantive theories of truth, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, pluralism concerning various epistemic desiderata, of which truth might be only one.

### **Subjective Truth(s)**

**Dan Zeman (University of Warsaw)**

Many areas of discourse are considered to be non-factual – that is, there is no fact of the matter on which the truth of assertions pertaining to the discourses in question can rely on. This idea has led to taking the notion of truth to be unsuitable for playing any role in characterizing the discourses in question. Among the areas considered to be non-factual are also those that can be called “subjective discourses” – discourses in the characterization of which *subjects* are taken to play an essential role. Despite the existence of practices of asserting and communicating with expressions belonging to such discourses, there are no facts of the matter that correspond to them. For example, it has been suggested that there are no facts of the matter for what is funny, what is tasty, what is beautiful or ugly, and even for what is morally good or what we ought to do. If one buys the claim that in non-factual domains the notion of truth plays no role, one is led to the conclusion that it plays no role in subjective discourses either, and therefore that attempts at characterizing such discourses should look elsewhere.

In this talk, I argue that taking subjective discourses to be non-factual – and thus eschewing the role of truth in relation of them – is a mistake. While a notion of objective truth (one, presumably, corresponding to the idea of facts of the matter) cannot be found in subjective discourses, a notion of *subjective truth* is sufficient for their characterization. My main argument is a proof of concept: that is, I show that there are several views in contemporary semantics that employ a notion of subjective truth, and that using the notions found there is enough to provide a characterization of subjective discourses.

Thus, in the remainder of the talk, I present several semantic views that all embrace the claim that truth is subjective, to each of them corresponding a different way of cashing out this idea. For example, according to *contextualism*, truth is subjective because the assertions made using the expressions in question make reference to a subject (or a standard, or a perspective); according to *relativism*, truth is subjective because the assertions made using the said expressions are true relative to subjects (or standards, or perspectives); finally, according to *expressivism*, truth is subjective because the assertions at stake depend on subjects being in certain (conative) mental states. I further discuss several arguments that have figured prominently in the debate between these views: the argument from faultless disagreement, the argument from retraction, the argument from perspectival plurality and various syntactic arguments. For each argument, I point to new developments within each view that tackles it, the upshot being that all views sketched remain viable alternatives. The consequence for the issue of characterizing subjective discourses is that there is a notion of subjective truth (implemented in several ways) that is suited for the task and that avoids appeal to the idea of non-factuality.

## **Kantian Views of Empirical Truth**

**Nathaniel Goldberg (Washington and Lee University)**

In the Critique of Pure Reason, Immanuel Kant offers brief but bold remarks on truth:

The old and famous question with which logicians were to be driven into a corner and brought to such a pass that they must either fall into a miserable circle or else confess their ignorance, hence the vanity of their entire art, is this: “What is truth?” The nominal definition of truth, namely that it is the agreement of cognition with its object, is here granted and presupposed; but one demands to know what is the universal and certain criterion of the truth of any cognition. (1998/1787, A57–58/B82)

Yet, surprisingly, Kant concedes that nothing beyond the nominal definition can be had.

This paper has three aims. The first is to show that, contra his concession, Kant can be read as providing a universal and certain criterion specifically of empirical truth. Though he never puts it this way, according to Kant, the truth of empirical claims, or synthetic a posteriori judgments (e.g., that in January 2021 Joe Biden became the 46th U.S. president), depends on the truth of non-empirical claims, or synthetic a priori judgments (e.g., that  $45 + 1 = 46$ ), because the latter are partly constitutive of the former. Further, since, for Kant, synthetic a priori judgments are true for all human beings, his view of empirical truth is anthropocentric. The second aim is to consider several analytic philosophers to show that Kant’s is only one possible Kantian view of empirical truth. Generally, according to such a view, the truth of empirical claims depends on the truth of non-empirical claims, because the latter are partly constitutive of the former. Moreover, though they never put it this way, for some analytic philosophers, non-empirical claims are true for all members

of a community, making empirical truth ethnocentric. For others, non-empirical claims are true for all individuals, making empirical truth idiocentric. And for others still, non-empirical claims are true for all language users, making empirical truth logocentric. This paper's third aim is to show how considering these different Kantian views of empirical truth offers lessons about the nature of empirical truth itself.

## **Coherentism and the Weight of Experience**

**Seyyed Mohsen Eslami (Tarbiat Modares University)**

[0] Coherentism about justification is among the main options with regard to the structure of justification, though its importance goes beyond this specific debate as (among others) it is among the main theoretic motivations for coherentism about truth, though they need to be kept distinct (Olsson, 2021). Here I raise an underexplored worry about the view, further continuing a familiar debate. [1] First, some preliminary remarks about the view in question. In the debates over the structure of justification, coherentism is defended against other options, i.e., foundationalism, infinitism, and skepticism. The view has its own motivations, including our epistemic practices, and can be developed in different ways, depending on how the different elements of the view are cashed out. Meanwhile, it has its own challenges. One main challenge for coherentism is its (in)ability to account for experiences (BonJour, 1999; Olsson, 2005). This is the so-called isolation objection, according to which coherentism merely neglects our experiences. This is an unacceptable consequence. [2] In response, coherentists have emphasized that they have resources to accommodate experience. In fact, they argue, it is among the common mischaracterizations of their view. When we consider the view with its proper formulation, we can better appreciate its potential. [3] After reviewing such a response from recent proponents of the view (Poston, 2014), I argue that the problem goes deeper. If the coherentist takes the worry seriously and attempts to accommodate the relevance of experience, she should also attempt to account for the special importance (or weight or strength) of experience as well. That is, coherentism needs to explain how it can take into account the weight of the experience. The pre-theoretic phenomenon to be explained is that we take experiences to be of a special weight. Note that this worry is a general one about degrees of justification. However, since there already exists a debate about coherentism and experience, we can understand the problem as a further step in this debate. [4] It is helpful to consider a structurally parallel challenge in the relevant literature of normative reasons, which can shed light on the possible ways of reacting. Humeanism about normative reasons, according to which normative reasons are based on the agent's desires, faces a problem in explaining the weight of different reasons. The natural option for the Humean would be to appeal to the strength of desires to explain the weight of reasons based on them – a view called proportionalism. However, the resulting view does not function as it leads to unacceptable consequences, extensionally and else. In response, Humeans have attempted to substitute an alternative view to explain the weight of reasons as is expected of an adequate theory of reasons (Schroeder, 2007). The challenge is whether Humeanism has the resources to develop an alternative view for weighing reasons, in line with its motivations and attractions (Enoch, 2011; Scanlon, 2014; Shafer-Landau, 2012). [5] I raise the parallel challenge for coherentism, which is underexplored. After developing the challenge, I sketch some of the available routes and lines of thought which might be of interest to the coherentist.



## Truth Pluralism and the Problem of Ambiguity

Teemu Tauriainen (University of Jyväskylä)

Since its introduction to philosophical debates, truth pluralism has been accused of falling prey to more than one type of ambiguity challenge. Pluralists themselves have said relatively little about these challenges: “Generally, however, the issue of ambiguity for pluralism has not been well-analyzed.” (Pedersen & Wright 2018, 4.1). I demonstrate four ambiguity challenges that concern truth pluralist models. After this, I argue that pluralists have equal if not better ways of resolving them in comparison to their monist competitors.

First, according to Quine’s classical objection, from the pluralist acknowledgement of various ways of being true (coherence & correspondence) follows that ‘is true’ becomes ambiguous between these ways (Quine 1960, 131). Call this the grounding ambiguity challenge:

(I.) Grounding ambiguity challenge: truth is ambiguous between different types of truths

Second, when pluralists argue that different ways of being true vary by domains of sentences like physics (correspondence-truth) and aesthetics (coherence-truth), the truth of mixed sentences that include concepts from both domains (“snow[physics] is beautiful[aesthetics]”) becomes ambiguous:

(I.) Mixing ambiguity challenge: domain-membership and subsequently the truth of mixed sentences is ambiguous

Third, semantic ambiguity compromises one’s ability to categorize sentences into domains, for ambiguous components like “is white” potentially assign sentences to both domains of speech about extensional (color property[physics]) and social (class membership[sociology]) affairs, which are potentially governed by distinct truth-grounding properties (correspondence & coherence). Call this the semantic ambiguity challenge:

(I.) Semantic ambiguity challenge: domain-membership and subsequently the truth of semantically ambiguous sentences is ambiguous

Finally, one can argue that truth is de facto ambiguous, denoting various truth-concepts or properties. Call this the inherent ambiguity challenge:

(I.) Inherent ambiguity challenge: truth is inherently ambiguous

I argue that only the first challenge is distinctive to pluralism. Reason being that the second and third challenges concern the individuation of domains, which is also a relevant problem for the monists, who rely on there being a division between truth-apt (physics) and non-truth-apt (aesthetics) domains. Further, I argue that based on the current pluralist methods for individuating domains, pluralists have equal if not better tools for dissection the second and third ambiguities. In relation to second challenge, both pluralists and monists can restrict the domain-assigning factors to singular terms (“snow”) or predicates (“is white”), thus resolving the problem of mixing. In relation to the third challenge, pluralists and monists can restrict truth-aptness to only disambiguated or interpreted sentences. Finally, pluralists have better tools for dissecting the inherent ambiguity of truth to their monist competitors, for pluralist models explicitly build on the idea of explicating the relations between different types of truth-concepts and properties. This, in turn, provides additional push for adopting pluralism over their monist competitors.

## **Truth by Brute Force - the Issue of Completeness for a Minimal Natural Deduction Proof Calculator**

**Marian Călborean(University of Bucharest)**

One result of the 'Logic and software' elective course held in 2022 at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Bucharest was the interactive development of a natural deduction calculator that successfully proves propositional exercises in classical textbooks. The calculator is written in Python, a common programming language, allowing the easy study and change of the software code corresponding to NK rules. It also uses brute force - running all allowable rules until the conclusion is adequately derived, then retracing the steps to display the shortest path to it; no human-like rules-of-thumb or backwards reasoning were used. Since computational complexity required speed optimizations, a demonstration of their soundness and completeness is sketched. Finally, the philosophical implications of using brute force to find a proof for any tautology are discussed.

## **Epistemic Normativity for Non-Classical Truth**

**Gareth Pearce (University of Vienna)**

This talk connects three related concepts: Carnapian Logical/Alethic Pluralism, Epistemic Normativity and Information. It argues that Carnapians cannot be Veritists, but that there's a good nearby theory of epistemic normativity (the Information View) that works instead.

The Carnapian logical pluralist holds that logical correctness is a language relative notion. A logic is correct for a language iff it endorses all the valid inferences in that language (Carnap, 1937). However, different languages have different semantic properties. Some languages are classical, some are free (allow for empty names), some are many valued. This means that the nature of truth, and hence validity, differs from language to language. Consequently, there are many logics that are correct for some language. Logical pluralism is true. Importantly, for this talk, Carnapians are also alethic pluralists. There are many analyses of truth correct for some language.

Veritism is the view that Truth is the source of epistemic normativity. At present, it is the most popular view of Epistemic Normativity (For a classical take, see Clifford (1877). For a more recent take see Pettigrew (2016) who relies on prior work by Goldman (2002) and Joyce (1998), amongst others). Surprisingly, a Carnapian cannot be a Veritist. The Carnapian must either hold that (1) All types of truth are epistemically valuable or (2) Only some (perhaps even just one) types of truth are epistemically valuable.

If they accept (1), then they have to accept that truth in so-called nonsense languages, like those that model nonsense logics like Tonk (Prior, 1960), is epistemically valuable. I take this to be unacceptable.

If they accept (2), then they must explain why the particular types of truth that are epistemically valuable are, and why those that aren't, aren't. To do that, they need to invoke the epistemic value of something other than truth, but then they concede that truth isn't the source of epistemic value.

Thus, the Carnapian cannot be a Veritist. This means that they have to give a rival account of epistemic normativity. This talk suggests just such a rival view: the Information View. On the Information View, information, not truth, is the source of epistemic value. Information, here, is

meant in the technical sense.  $n$  bits of information are a factor  $2^n$  reduction on the number of the epistemically possible worlds.

The talk shows that if one accepts the Information View, one can explain the epistemic value of “good” kinds of truth, as well as the lack of epistemic value of “bad” kinds of truth.

A nice feature of this view is that it allows the Carnapian to hold on to their logical pluralism at the normative level. It would be odd to have a Carnapian view that is pluralist about logic, on the descriptive level, but monist on the normative level. Fortunately, there are a wide range of logics (classical and non-classical) that are able to yield information, and hence have an epistemically valuable kind of truth.

## **Truth from a Neurophilosophical Perspective: How the Consciousness-World Interface Might Inform Our Theories of Truth**

**Robert Chis Ciure (University of Bucharest)**

In philosophy, models and theories of truth abound (for an overview, see Burgess & Burgess 2011; Glanzberg 2018). An oft-overlooked fact is that all truth-evaluable propositions are actual cognitive experiences of conscious agents. Thus, with the exception of some naturalization tendencies of Quinean lineage in epistemology, philosophical theories of truth have never been articulated by considering the crucial problem of the brain-world relation. For instance, a notion like truth-as-correspondence implicitly presupposes a brain-world interaction, where stimuli are sensorially and cognitively parceled to express a proposition that might “correspond” to a state of affairs. The question is this: what can neuroscientific theories of the consciousness-world interface tell us about a philosophical concept like that of truth? Could neuroscience inform this debate, thus making truth an explanandum of neurophilosophy? One could consider two prominent contemporary theories of consciousness as a case study: the Integrated Information Theory (Oizumi et al. 2014; Tononi et al. 2016; Haun & Tononi 2019; Barbosa et al. 2021) and the Temporospatial Theory of Consciousness (Northoff & Huang 2017; Northoff 2018; Northoff & Zilio 2022). Both theories discuss the matching problem between the statistical structure of the environment and that of the brain. I claim that the deliverances of a future, mature consciousness science can and will impact our philosophical theorizing about truth, by giving us a purchase on how consciousness intersperses the environment and its brain.

## **Truth and Time**

**Ionel Narița (West University of Timișoara)**

Dacă evaluatorul este specificat, valoarea de adevăr a propozițiilor depinde de timp. Relația dintre timp și valoarea de adevăr a unei propoziții este funcțională, cu alte cuvinte, pentru orice propoziție  $p$  există o funcție  $p: T \rightarrow V$ , unde  $T$  este timpul, iar  $V$  este mulțimea valorilor de adevăr. În acest caz, pentru a obține o valoare de adevăr determinată, orice propoziție trebuie completată cu o propoziție temporală,  $(p, t)$ . Propozițiile temporale au sintaxa  $t = \text{„Este momentul } t\text{”}$ . Relația dintre o propoziție oarecare și o propoziție temporală nu poate fi formalizată prin conjuncție, așa cum sugerează utilizarea acestor propoziții în exprimarea curentă, deoarece se ajunge la paradoxuri. Pentru a elucidă relația dintre propoziții și propoziții temporale trebuie să ținem seama de specificul acestora din urmă, respectiv, o propoziție temporală este adevărată numai într-un anumit moment și

falsă relativ la orice alt moment. Pornind de aici, ajungem la concluzia că relațiile dintre propoziții și propoziții temporale trebuie să aibă caracteristici aparte pentru a evita paradoxurile date de formalizarea obișnuită în limbajul simbolic al propozițiilor. De aceea, în formalizarea acestor propoziții, se dovedesc mai utile simbolurile pentru relațiile dintre propoziții, mai curând decât cele pentru operații propoziționale. Lucrarea investighează și posibilitatea ca proprietățile propozițiilor temporale să aparțină și altor categorii de propoziții. Metodele de decizie asupra valorii de adevăr sau a valorii logice a propozițiilor trebuie să aibă în vedere specificul propozițiilor temporale.

## **Ontological Deflationism and Metaphysical Realism**

**Ataollah Hashemi (St. Louis University)**

Proponents of deflationary approaches to ontology argue that answers to ontological questions are grounded in conceptual, conventional, and linguistic analysis rather than reality; accordingly, ontological disputes are non-substantive and merely verbal. One of the latest versions of ontological deflationism is the thesis of quantifier variance —QV— developed by Eli Hirsch in the recent literature of metaontology. According to QV, there is no metaphysically privileged sense of quantifier that truly carves the nature at its joint; thus, truth or falsity of ontological claims are determined in virtue of the particular interpretation of a quantifier that one arbitrary or practically chooses. This deflationary view obviously relativizes the meaning of existential quantifiers that are expected to make our ontology explicit. Thus, QV seemingly stands in contrast to ontological realism according to which ontological disputes are settled by external reality. Hirsch, nevertheless, calls himself a realist and claims that QV is compatible with metaphysical realism.

In this paper, I aim to take up the validity of Hirsch's claim and address the question of whether QV is coherently compatible with metaphysical realism. This paper begins with a brief review on the debate between ontological realists and ontological deflationists. In the rest of the paper, I develop some models of realism can purportedly be in accordance with QV; then I show that each of these models faces serious problems that make them really incompatible with QV.

A model of metaphysical realism that seems to be compatible with QV is a version of mere stuff or non-thingy ontology that entirely eliminates *things* from a true picture of reality. In this way, there is no need for quantifier to describe reality; hence QV's denial of a privileged meaning of quantifier seems compatible with realism.

In my paper, I argue that even a mere stuff ontology presumes a form of structure that can potentially be depicted by a privileged language, and this issue stands against the main idea of QV that rules out the possibility of any kind of privileged representation of the world. An alternative metaphysical realism that seems compatible with QV is multi-structural model of reality according to which each quantificational ontological language correspondingly coordinates with one of these structures. I try to portrait a model of multi-structural reality that is purportedly compatible with QV; finally, I argue against the defensibility of such a model, particularly from a deflationist point of view.

## **A Defense of the Traditional View of the Logical Properties of Grounding**

**Wenqi Zong (North University of China)**

Grounding is a central notion in answering “what is fundamental” that has been seen as primitive, which means it cannot be defined or analyzed. However, grounding proponents think that the notion can be understood via its logical features. Some philosophers argue against the view that grounding is irreflexive, asymmetric, and transitive, which will threaten the way of understanding grounding. However, I think that if grounding is reflexive and symmetric, grounding would fail to show the level difference in reality. Moreover, for philosophers who disagree that grounding is transitive, I will argue that the transitivity would not dismiss the relevance of grounds. At last, I will show that only if grounding is irreflexive, asymmetric, and transitive, it would be applied for answering "what is fundamental". In this paper, I will reply to the disagreements on grounding's logical features to show that the above three features are unproblematic.

## **Why the Truthmaker of A Proposition Is Not the Entity?**

**Yu Zhang (Peking University)**

Theory of truthmakers means the truthmaker of a proposition is the entity, which means what makes the proposition true is the entity. G. Rodriguez-Pereyra argues for the truthmaker principle (TM): Necessarily, if  $\langle p \rangle$  is true, then there is some entity in virtue of which it is true ( $\langle p \rangle$  stands for the proposition  $p$ ) and claims the asymmetry between proposition and entity. This means the truth of a proposition is grounded in reality, but the reality is not grounded in the truth of propositions.

I think it has many problems and I will object to this argument from six aspects, including 1. Negative truth does not have a truthmaker; 2. The relationship between truth and the world is not simplex but multiple; 3. Instantiated relation is a good objection to the asymmetry of theory of truthmakers; 4. *Because* is predicate or non-causal connective word would be against theory of truthmakers; 5. The relation between entities and propositions should be closer. If not, theory of truthmakers would face aboutness challenge; 6. Incidental truth and necessary truth reveal the limitation of theory of truthmakers.

## **Panel 2**

### **Communication and social studies**

**Organizer: Jeremy Wyatt**

#### **Truth Without Borders: An overview**

**Jeremy Wyatt and Joe Ulatowski (University of Waikato)**

In this talk, we will offer a brief overview of the programme of cross-linguistic research on truth that is being pursued within the research network *Truth Without Borders*. In doing so, we will

detail some of the philosophical motivations for this work and some of its anticipated philosophical implications.

### **Truth and Linguistic Diversity**

**Masaharu Mizumoto (Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology)**

In this presentation, I will explore the possibility of the linguistic diversity of truth. I will start from what it is or should be like, especially if it is to be philosophically interesting, and then consider its possible consequences if it is possible at all.

### **Contemporary Perspectives on the Buddhist Theory of the Two Truths**

**Sonam Thakchoe (University of Tasmania)**

Academic studies reveal that the theory of two truths in Indian Buddhist thought is not directly equivalent to any of the Western philosophical conceptions of truth. I will argue that even with the semantic approach to the two truths—the predominant practice in Western philosophy—the traditional Buddhist philosophers are not strictly correspondence theorists nor coherentists. They are neither pragmatists nor realists, not even fictionalists or deflationary theorists in a strict Western philosophical sense. Nevertheless, I will argue that the Buddhist notions of truth do share many aspects in common with Western philosophical treatments of truth. My presentation will outline some tentative proposals put forward in contemporary Buddhist philosophical studies to articulate best the relationship between the Western and the Buddhist theories of truth.

### **Truth and Evidence in African Philosophy: A Chewa Perspective**

**Grivas Kayange (University of Malawi)**

The presentation focuses on elaborating the Chewa concept of truth, which is dependent on the idea of evidence. The Chewa people are a group of Bantu speakers that are present in part of Malawi, Zambia, and Mozambique in sub-Saharan Africa. In this study, I use an ordinary language-use approach to meaning, and analyse the concepts ‘chilungamo’ and ‘choonadi,’ which are used to translate the word ‘truth.’ The word ‘chilungamo’ is used interchangeably for truth and justice, hence calls for linking these two notions. The word ‘choonadi’ literally refers to what can be seen, and calls for evidence. Truth being a property of what is said, also requires confirmation, where every individual can ascertain that it is the case. I further analyse some literal and figurative expressions that represent truth as linked with justice, and as dependent on evidence. The presentation suggests (a) developing a Chewa logical concept of truth following from the analysis, and (b) conceptualising truth in terms of various degrees.

**Panel 3**  
**Cultural heritage and memory**  
**Organizer: Romulus Brâncoveanu**

**The Truth and its (Brief) History**  
**A study on the Concept of Anxiety and its many configurations**

**Ștefan Bârză (University of Bucharest)**

Starting with Eric Voegelin's thesis regarding the processes of ideologization of the history of ideas, I am bringing forth a particular case that, I believe, was especially vulnerable for ideological recontextualizations – that is the case of the concept of anxiety from Søren Kierkegaard's 1844 *Concept of Anxiety*. What I am looking at is the early reception of the Kierkegaardian *oeuvre* in the Norwegian patrimony, a reception which has a two-fold complication – one is cultural and the other theological. This talk attempts at reconstructing these two by following the way in which Kierkegaard's "attack upon Christendom" in Denmark is essentially a reformation movement and is transmitted into the Norwegian intellectual circles rather as a mark of cultural aestheticization. Through this strange case of reconfiguring the truth value of the discourse on the concept of anxiety, my thesis is ultimately hermeneutical – that the potential truth of a particular message is always in interpretative struggle with both its original context and its potential ideological recontextualization. This dynamic of instrumentalization of truth is structurally inescapable and is the very condition of communication and meaningful transactions between cultural heritages. In the midst of this hermeneutical processes and exchanges, we find the angst-ridden, Kierkegaard-influenced Edvard Munch and its prolific enrichment of the Norwegian patrimony.

**Truth, Institutions, and Our Reference to Them**

**Andreea Popescu (University of Bucharest)**

This paper offers an account of the truth conditions for sentences involving reference to institutions, and their actions. The account depends on a theory of reference for names of institutions, and a theory of agency for institutions.

First, I argue that the names of institutions are polysemous. I argue that the polysemy depends upon two frameworks. Relative to the framework of the world of things, we refer to Klaus Iohannis when we say "The President rejected the law". "The President of Romania" is a definite description, i.e., it individualizes a single object, but given a different state of affairs someone else could have been the President of Romania. I argue that the names of institutions also have a fixed reference, and relative to the world of social facts, they behave as rigid designators. Relative to the world of things, the reference of "The President of Romania" will change. However, relative to the world of social facts, something remains constant across time and possible worlds, i.e. the institution of the presidential function.

Second, I argue that institutions are agents in their own right, and not reducible to the sum of the members of the institutions, i.e. to the individual agents. I argue for a deflationist approach to the problem of group agency and show that this approach allows for a simple realist view of group

agency. I argue that within the world of social facts, truth conditions for action sentences involving reference to institutions are not dependent upon reductivist or eliminativist views of group agency.

### **Adevărul hermeneutic. Cum înțelegem faptele istorice?**

**George Bondor(Alexandru Ioan Cuza University)**

În contribuția de față îmi propun să definesc și să explicitez conceptul de adevăr hermeneutic, util pentru înțelegerea modului în care putem vorbi despre evidență în științele umane. În acest scop, voi explora mai întâi latura epistemologică a acestui concept, încercând să explic în ce moduri pretenția de obiectivitate pe care științele spiritului o revendică diferă în funcție de obiectul lor de studiu: texte, fapte culturale, evenimente istorice. În această privință, îmi propun să analizez ce anume se întâmplă în privința adevărului la granița dintre fenomenele individuale și macro-fenomene, explorând totodată trecerile dintr-un regim în celălalt. În al doilea rând, voi urmări latura fenomenologică a conceptului de adevăr hermeneutic, schițând și posibilele consecințe epistemice pe care le are ontologia fenomenelor istorice și a istoricității, așa cum a fost ea tematizată cu premise fenomenologice.

### **Adevăr, stil și patrimoniul cultural în filosofia istoriei a lui Lucian Blaga**

**Romulus Brâncoveanu (University of Bucharest)**

În filosofia sa a istoriei, Lucian Blaga consideră că ideea de adevăr, semnificația acesteia, „depinde întrucâtva de anumite condiții spirituale ale popoarelor și epocilor”. (Blaga 1977, 19). Istoriografia sau modul în care diferitele popoare și epoci își concep istoria se află în consonanță cu reprezentările pe care popoarele sau epocile și le fac despre adevăr, despre ceea ce este adevărat. Privilegierea a ceea ce este tipic conceptual în reprezentarea lumii de către vechii greci, de exemplu, i-a condus la prezentarea faptelor (istorice) într-o manieră poetică ce ridică imperfecțiunea concretului la înălțimea unui model ideal al lor. De aceea, Aristotel consideră poezia mai adevărată decât istoria (Aristotel, Poetica, 9.1451b5-7: Poezia „este mai filosofică și mai serioasă decât istoria. Poeții vorbesc mai mult despre cele universale, pe când istoria despre cele particulare.”). În concepția lui Blaga, faptele istorice apar numai într-un câmp stilistic, iar „istoriografia care se referă la fapte care nu au legătură cu stilul nu-și merită numele”. (Blaga 1977, 36). Această concepție asupra faptelor istorice ca eveniment petrecut sau obiect survenit într-un câmp stilistic creează posibilitatea asimilării vestigiului ca element prim într-un vocabular al cercetării în patrimoniul cultural. Astfel, definiția unanim acceptată a patrimoniului cultural, așa cum apare în documentele UNESCO, subliniază aspectele stilistice ale constitutivității acestuia: „Patrimoniul cultural este moștenirea artefactelor fizice și a atributelor intangibile ale unui grup sau societate care sunt moștenite de la generațiile trecute, menținute în prezent și păstrate în beneficiul generațiilor viitoare. Patrimoniul material include clădiri și locuri istorice, monumente, artefacte etc., care sunt considerate demne de păstrat pentru viitor. Acestea includ obiecte semnificative pentru arheologie, arhitectură, știință sau tehnologie ale unei culturi specifice ”. (UNESCO 2018). În lumina filosofiei istoriei a lui Lucian Blaga, putem spune că, așa cum faptele istorice se constituie doar în cuprinsul câmpurilor stilistice, un vestigiu material și imaterial aparține patrimoniului cultural numai în măsura în care el este expresia unei matrici sau a unui câmp stilistic care îi acordă semnificație și îl face demn de păstrat pentru generațiile viitoare. În felul acesta, elementele patrimoniului cultural se



dovedesc demne de a fi păstrate în viitor ca expresie a capacității de creativitate pe care un grup uman sau o epocă istorică au manifestat-o. Patrimoniul cultural, în termenii lui Blaga, devine astfel parte a istoricității omului, a omului ca ființă istorică, a demnității existenței sale înțeleasă din punct de vedere metafizic.

### **Restoration or falsification of the natural landscape? An analogy with the work of art**

**Constantin Stoenescu (University of Bucharest)**

The project of an environmental ethic, still in the form of Land Ethic proposed by Aldo Leopold, contained from the very beginning references to the beauty of nature, which created the appearance of an ambiguity between what is beautiful and deserves to be valued aesthetically and what is good and it must be universalized ethically. However, the ambiguity is systematic and can be controlled by a demarcation criterion. In this study I aim to explore the analogy between natural entities and artifacts, especially by analyzing the relationship between restoration in art and the ecological reconstruction of a natural site. I thus identify grounds for establishing the conditions under which we can speak about the falsification of nature and about the duties we owe to landscapes and other natural entities characterized by uniqueness.

### **Imagini ale nostalgiei în raportarea la patrimoniul cultural**

**Ileana Dascalu (University of Bucharest)**

Raportarea nostalgică la episoade ale trecutului colectiv, uneori mediată de patrimoniul cultural, nu se bucură de o bună reputație printre spiritele critice. Se poate spune că ocolește dinamica adevăr-reprezentare fidelă, introducând elemente de afectivitate care generează idealizare sau distorsionare a faptelor. Dacă vorbim despre « nostalgici ai comunismului », ai interbelicului sau ai regalității în România putem găsi exemple de decupaje problematice în relația cu trecutul - fără să fie vorba de cei care au motive să susțină public diverse imagini, ci de oamenii care se referă la experiențele și valorile proprii. Cu toate acestea, nostalgia, ca stare afectivă care implică o constelație de emoții și mecanisme de proiecție face parte din psihismul uman, iar modul în care se exprimă în context cultural poate fi de interes. Prezentarea propune o încercare de a explica modul în care sunt generate emoții colective prin raportarea la patrimoniul cultural din trecut, de a identifica, pe cât posibil, cum se exprimă nostalgia și de a sugera că nu ține de « trecutul ca trecut » ci, mai degrabă, de acel trecut pe care istoricul David Lowenthal îl descrie ca fiind « o țară străină ».

### **Principiul majorității: între necesitate și adevăr**

**Andrea Menna (University of Bucharest)**

Una dintre chestiunile fundamentale ale gândirii politice, filosofice și juridice privește problema majorității, privită atât ca simplu instrument practic cât și ca principiu în procesele decizionale și pentru alegerea demnităților publice. Această prezentare vrea să fie o contribuție la încercările de a face lumina asupra elementelor raționale, juridice, politice, psihologice, pe care se bazează ideea numărării „capetelor” pentru a stabili variantele politice de interes public. Acest demers va fi posibil prin analiza celor mai relevante experiențe politice și sociale care s-au

confruntat, în diferite momente istorice și în diferite contexte, cu problema găsirii unor căi pașnice, acceptate și împărtășite de cei mai mulți pentru a ajunge la decizii colective.

Astfel, se vor prezenta însemnările regulii majorității în anumite contexte istorice, culturale, doctrinare, sociale, care ni s-au dovedit a fi cele mai relevante pentru o asemenea cercetare, și anume: orânduirile Greciei clasice, doctrina creștină (și cea a dreptului canonic catolic după Marea Schismă), doctrina personalității juridice a corpurilor colective, sistemele politice comunale medievale ale Italiei de Nord, sistemele democratice moderne. În acest demers gândirea politică, cea filosofică și cea juridică, contribuie împreună la încercarea de a înțelege implicațiile politice, culturale și sociale reciproce asupra mecanismelor decizionale și deliberative ale colectivităților organizate în general și, în specific, asupra principiul majorității.

Vom arăta faptul că acest principiu nu este unul „natural”, ci un anumit produs modern al colectivităților de oameni, cărui rol și conținut se schimbă împreună cu schimbările sociale. Vom încerca să arătăm că el nu este pur și simplu moștenitorul principiului democratic sau al celui egalitar, refuzând ideea evoluționistă conform căreia acest principiu are originea în polis-ul grecesc și ajunge în zilele noastre prin reelaborări ideologice constante și coerente.

Se susține, în schimb, că principiul majorității modern, este rodul altor contribuții și că el poate fi analizat și printr-o perspectivă care ține cont de caracterul pe care l-a avut în diferite contexte, având uneori caracterul de necesitate, alteori ajungând să reprezinte o valoare în sine. În special, se subliniază felul în care în epoca modernă principiul majorității nu mai este doar un instrument în sprijinul unității corpului social, al întregului, ci, odată cu decaderea adevărului reprezentat de elementul divin, cu trecerea de la teologie la ideologie, acest principiu se umple de conținut: nu mai este doar un mijloc, ci devine el însuși un scop, capătând caracter de cvasi-ideologie, având o legitimitate proprie și propriul adevăr.

Prezentarea, ca parte a unei mai ample cercetări asupra genealogiei conceptului de majoritate, este în primul rând o reconstrucție istorică a unei idei. Din acest motiv, în privința metodologiilor de cercetare utilizate, ea își găsește locul natural în acele framework-uri definite în mod generic istoria ideilor și istoria conceptelor, care presupun ca ideile nu se dezvoltă în mod izolat, departe de indivizii care le-au elaborat și le-au folosit. În acest sens, pe lângă eforturilor de tip hermeneutic, am filtrat cercetarea prin analiza contextuală, contrastând anacronismul mai multor metode de interpretare, care de multe ori distorsionează sensul textelor și ideilor, prin citirea lor în termeni moderni. Acest demers necesită de o puternică interdisciplinaritate. Astfel, prezentarea va fi condusă ținând cont de diferitele contribuții doctrinare care au permis o evoluție a acestei discipline într-o mai amplă istorie intelectuală.

## **Rolul naratorului în restabilirea adevărului post-totalitar Studiu de caz**

**Ștefan Ionescu (University of Bucharest)**

După anul 1989, în România, așa cum era și firesc, apar o multitudine de mărturii, de la, spre exemplu, articole în presa scrisă și cărți și până la seriale dedicate la televiziunea națională, propunându-și să restaureze adevărul ultimelor decenii de până atunci, cel al unei perioade în mod curent numite, inclusiv până astăzi, ca totalitară. Analizând și acceptând, în principiu, sintagma de totalitară pentru a caracteriza acea perioadă, ne întrebăm ce fel de adevăruri încercăm să restabilească și ce au reușit să prezinte toate acele mărturii, toți acești martori, autori, esești, scenariști și regizori: adevăruri politice, colective, de grup, personale? Poate avea adevărul astfel de conotații și nuanțe? Poți vorbi (sau trebuie să vorbești) despre politică fără să faci politică? Este

condiționată și, mai cu seamă, denaturată restabilirea adevărului de tipul discursului ales, de viziunea sau chiar de calitățile, talentul, veleitățile estetizante ori de alte feluri sau de psihologia martorului-narator al evenimentelor? Vom încerca să găsim un răspuns sprijinindu-ne pe expunerea a două cazuri concrete, reflectând viziuni mai degrabă opuse, așa cum transpar acestea din două jurnale-mărturii, devenite între timp repere în cultura și în istoriografia noastre recente, scrise cu scopul asumat de a denunța totalitarismul autohton al celei de a doua jumătăți a secolului trecut, lăsate nouă de doi importanți oameni de cultură: pe de o parte de Nicolae Steinhardt, în „Jurnalul fericii”, respectiv de Adrian Marino în „Viața unui om singur”.

## **Panel 4**

### **Truth and Ethics**

**Organizer: Mircea Toboșaru**

#### **Tricky truths: How should alethic pluralism accommodate racial truths?**

**Ragnar van der Merwe and Phila Msimang (University of Johannesburg and Macquarie University)**

Some alethic pluralists hold that there are two kinds of truth operant in our alethic discourse: correspondence truth and superassertibility. In this paper, I argue that this dichotomous conception of truth cannot accommodate certain truths that do not obviously fit into either the correspondence or the superassertible category. I focus on social truths, specifically truths about race. Most alethic pluralists – e.g. Crispin Wright (1992) and Michael Lynch (2009) – surprisingly overlook the status of racial truths. Douglas Edwards (2018) is however an exception. His version of alethic pluralism – Determination Pluralism – holds that racial truths are superassertible rather than corresponding. I argue however that racial truths are a kind of what I will call *tricky truths* that seem to contain aspects of both correspondence and superassertibility. Alethic pluralists who subscribe to the binary correspondence/superassertible model of truth need to accommodate such tricky truths for their view to hang together as a cogent account of our alethic discourse. My argument suggests a fuzzy boundary between correspondence truth and superassertibility. There may be a continuum of truths, rather than a dichotomy.

#### **Moral Truth in Rawls’s Kantian Constructivism**

**Kyoungnam Park (Kyungpook National University)**

In this paper, I examine two different conceptions of moral truth in terms of the debate between moral constructivism and rational intuitionism, and defend the constructivist view of moral truth against the intuitionist view of moral truth.

According to moral intuitionism that G. E. Moor and Henry Sidgwick hold, moral truth or the truth of moral principles consists in the correspondence between the principles and a moral order which exists prior to our practical reasoning. According to this moral intuitionism which is also called moral realism, what we do when we cognize the correctness of a fundamental moral

principle is to intuit the truth of the moral principles in terms of moral facts which exist antecedently to our moral reasoning.

The two problems of moral intuitionism are as follows. First, it brings about a metaphysical burden of presupposing a mysterious realm of moral facts which are supposed to exist prior to our moral reasoning. Second, the intuitionist conception of moral truth is in tension with the notion of moral spontaneity which is crucial in ascribing moral responsibility to human agency.

In contrast to moral intuitionism, moral constructivism holds that moral truth cannot be conceived apart from our actual moral reasoning. Human beings as moral agents establish the validity of moral principles which must be applied to actual moral judgments through their moral reasoning, and, therefore, the truth of a moral principle must be constructed out of our active considerations of morally desirable persons and societies.

I defend this moral constructivist view of moral truth by examining Kant's conception of moral agency and Rawls's Kantian constructivism. According to Kant, human beings as moral agents understand themselves as free, equal, and rational beings, and choose principles which express such nature best. Human beings do not passively receive moral truth from either an exterior authority or an absolutely fixed fact which exists apart from their moral reasoning. Rather, human beings establish the validity of moral principles through their moral autonomy, and thereby construct the truth of a moral judgment in accordance with their practical reason.

Rawls's theory of the original position specifies the procedures of Kant's constructivism concerning moral truth. First, Rawls's theory of the original position captures Kant's conception of autonomy by explicating how moral agents would freely adopt the impartial perspective concerning social justice. In the original position, moral agents disregard the contingencies regarding their social positions and natural strengths under the veil of ignorance, and construct the principles of justice according to ideal conceptions of a morally desirable person and of a politically justifiable society. Second, Rawls's theory of the original position explains how moral truth conceived by the Kantian constructivism can be objective even though the truth of moral principles is based on the moral reasoning of human beings in terms of the impartial considerations of the conditions of rational choice.

## **The Later Wittgenstein, Ethics and Truth Deflationism**

**Jordi Fairhurst (Universidad de las Islas Baleares)**

During the past decades, philosophers have shown a growing interest in understanding Wittgenstein's later conception of truth. According to a widespread interpretation (see e.g., Baker and Hacker 1980; Kripke 1982; Williams 2004; Blackburn 2010; Horwich 2016), Wittgenstein adopted a deflationary theory of truth (or truth deflationism). Truth deflationism argues that truth is not a substantive property that can be informative analyzed in terms of, e.g., correspondence to reality, truth-makers, coherence within a system of beliefs, and so on. By contrast, truth is a 'thin' concept and all that can be said about it is exhausted by the relatively trivial and uninformative platitude 'p' is true = p, commonly known as the equivalence schema. Recently, Brandhorst (2015; 2017) has adduced further textual evidence in favor of this widespread view by bringing to our attention Wittgenstein's use of the equivalence schema in his conversations about ethics with Rush Rhees. Brandhorst has sought to develop a link between Wittgenstein's later moral philosophy and truth deflationism in order to shed some light on the epistemological presuppositions and commitments of moral talk. Specifically, he argues that Wittgenstein's embrace of truth deflationism offers a novel conception of moral truths which avoids the objectivist commitments of

moral realism and moral platonism.

The aim of this paper is to show that Brandhorst's deflationist interpretation does not do justice to Wittgenstein's later discussion about truth in ethics. It argues that, on the contrary, Wittgenstein remains faithful to his methodological pronouncements and merely presents us with grammatical platitudes about the meaning and use of truth predicates in moral disagreements, i.e., what it is to say that an ethical judgment or a system of ethics is true in this context. Negatively, Wittgenstein's grammatical platitudes teach us that in these discursive moral practices 'is true' and 'is false' do not have the function of predicating the property of truth or falsehood about something. Positively, Wittgenstein's grammatical platitudes serve as a reminder that when someone utters that an ethical judgment or a system of ethics is true, they are simply making an approving judgment of value which amounts to making the same ethical judgment or adopting that system of ethics. Meanwhile, when someone utters that an ethical judgment or a system of ethics is false, they are simply making a judgment of value which amounts to making the ethical judgment 'not-P' or disavowing that system of ethics.

Concluding, despite some of the existing parallels between Wittgenstein's conception of philosophy and the general premise of deflationism, there is insufficient textual evidence to uphold the claim that he propounds a deflationist account truth in his conversations about ethics with Rhees. The primary issue with the attribution of truth deflationism to Wittgenstein is that it is overly simplistic and, therefore, fails to capture the intricacies and nuances of Wittgenstein's later moral philosophy.

### **Analyzing Truthful Experiences: A Study of Transgender Values**

**Rebecca Farinas (Loyola University New Orleans)**

In this paper I explain an objective and creative method of value analysis, which I borrow from Alain Locke, in relation to our personal and cultural truthfulness of sexual identity. According to Locke, a Black American and Gay philosopher, consensus of truth/value imperatives require a method of "systematic relativism". Locke's value theory includes critique as well as practical usage of ideas on truth by other Classical American thinkers, such as William James, and John Dewey. However, more than debating pragmatic theories of truth, I hope to open our understanding of truth as a feeling-mode and aspect of our identity. So, I explain how some pragmatic theories of truth coincide, value making and transvaluation, and what that means to culture wars about gender and democracy.

### **Presumption of Truth in Legal Proceedings and Memory Distortion as Cause for False Identifications**

**Nikolina Smiljanić (University of Rijeka)**

Alvin I. Goldman (1999.) believes he has shown that truth is a central value when it comes to legal judgments. Any judgment system that performs poorly on the veritistic dimension is severely damaged. To produce truthful or accurate judgments, it is only natural to evaluate existing practices along veritistic dimensions. In the context of cognitive errors, e.g., confirmation bias, memory bias, and defining the values and states of beliefs, Goldman assumes that beliefs have objective truth values. In other words, if someone believes in their testimony and believes that they

are testifying truthfully (even though they are biased and unaware of it), can we consider it to be true? I will try to do what Goldman proposes - evaluate existing practices along veritistic dimensions of memory and its distortion during the legal process.

People are systematically biased in their reasoning and decision-making, which often jeopardizes the determination of truth as one of the fundamental goals in legal processes. But memory errors were often the cause of eyewitness misidentifications. Research in social and cognitive psychology (e.g., the work of psychologist Elizabeth Loftus and her colleagues) has shown that people who witness an event sometimes later incorporate non-existent features of the event into their memories. This 'misinformation effect' can cause eyewitness testimony to become unreliable as evidence of what happened<sup>1</sup>. This is also called a „memory bias”.

Eyewitnesses are prone to errors in their testimony because of the way the human memory system works. Human memory is flawed in ways that cause people to have false or distorted memories of past events, which can lead to suspicion of error when they testify honestly about what they experienced. For example, human memory is susceptible to the effects of misinformation. People also have a “false memory” about the details of events they experienced due to the effects of inaccurate information given to them after the event. In this paper, I will review some recent studies of memory bias and court cases (e.g a mega-analysis of memory reports from eight peer-reviewed studies of false memory implantation<sup>2</sup>) and raise a question: Can the epistemological standard of truth be upheld in court proceedings in the face of memory distortion/bias?

### **Foucault and Augustine: unethical truth**

**Fedor Nekhaenko**

We tend to find all resolutions (at least problematic questions) back to the ancient time. Truth and ethics do not present a significant exception being philosophically problematized since the «Socratic turn». I want to shed some light simultaneously on the history of our perception and an ancient theory itself scrutinizing through a vivid example questioned correlation between epistemology and ethics.

The most astonishing field to explore in the search for correspondence between truth and moral actions is ancient philosophy. One of the first enterprises in order to genealogically discover how the truth relates to the ethics was made by Foucault. He spent the last period of his career studying Plato, Hellenism, and Patristics through the lance of « ἐπιμέλεια ἑαυτοῦ» (soin de soi). Beginning with Plato he highlighted the trend among philosophers who make the ethics a necessary instrument searching for the truth. In Foucault's scope elaborated in «Technologies of the Self», good health, clear mind, deep understanding were mandatory attributes preparing a subject to receive inner truth about his or her life, behavior, and cognition.

Nevertheless, at one point he made a mistake extending his framework of «spiritualité» too far: in «Herméneutique du sujet» several times he asserted Augustine to be one of the representatives of the discursive regime where truth is subordinated to the ethical values.

Though researchers have penetrated a lot the topic of comparison made between two philosophers, no one has analysed to what extent Foucault's approach to

Augustine is historically and philosophically accurate till the present time in terms of ethical truth Foucault imposes on the church father. In my opinion, Foucault upholds a wrong thesis treating Augustine likewise Plato. Augustine never links ethics and truth criticizing Plato's theory of recollection (ἀνάμνησις) and the Delphic motto «cognosce te ipsum». Augustine states as impossible not to know oneself in «De trinitate». The truth (verum) as God himself happens to be

the sole and most significant object we perceive at first. No practice is mandatory to reach the truth we have been endowed since our creation according to «*imago et similitudo Dei*». Furthermore, in «*Confessiones*» the saint develops the theory of actual memory which contains all eternal truths and laws (*rationes et leges*) we have at hand without any preparation. Therefore, I will develop my thesis following 3 stages:

1) at the beginning, I am going to esteem all quotes Foucault dedicated to Augustine in «*Herméneutique du sujet*» and «*Technologies of the Self*» constructing the project of truth which depends on an ethical conduct;

2) then compare it with Augustine's mature position articulated in «*De trinitate*» and «*Confessiones*» where the church father rejects the platonism asserting that the truth (*verum*) is always inner divine word (*intus verbum*) nothing requires in addition;

3) finally infer possible outcomes for the swing Foucault initiated in the 4-th volume of «*L'Histoire de la sexualité*» dealing at the last time with Augustine and our perception of truth correlated to the ethics via one of the most influential Latin saints.

### **Honesty, Truthfulness, and the Good Life**

**Mircea Toboşaru (Politehnica University of Bucharest)**

My aim is to understand the connections between two imperatives, the honesty imperative, and the truthfulness imperative. The main question is how much we should care about truth. It is one thing to be honest in the sense of not telling lies and telling the truth if we know it, and another to care about truth such that we engage in demanding epistemic practices in search for truth, in order to understand truth and communicate truth to others. I call this radical concern with truth, truth searching and truth telling, the truthfulness imperative. In the end, I will briefly explore the relation between this imperative and the pursuit of the good life.

### **Should the wise man lie? Plato and Socrates on lying in the context of philosophical counselling**

**Veronica Bâtcă (West University of Timisoara)**

Plato's *Hippias Minor* focuses on which kind of liar is better, the one lying involuntarily or the one lying voluntarily to his or her interlocutor. This important question infiltrates philosophical discussions about the philosophical counselling process, where the counsellor must sometimes uphold information, especially of a profiling nature, from the client in order to manage the step-by-step counseling process. But is this ethical? In order to solve this issue, we look at Socrates' arguments in preferring the voluntary liar over the involuntary. First, we sketch Plato's theory of forms in relation to the philosophical counseling process and its connection to the preference for voluntary lies. Then, we ask ourselves if Socratic hesitations in dialogues bear some form of lying. Last, we underline the difference between Plato and Socrates in order to contextualize Socratic lying as part of philosophical counseling. This difference will be underscored by an example from the counseling room.

**Panel 5**  
**Post-Truth**  
**Organizer: Ciprian Bogdan**

**War Against Fake News: For The Sake of Democracy?**

**Sacha Ferrari (KU Leuven)**

During these past years, one argues that our democracies are threatened by a ‘new’ epistemic weapon of mass destruction: fake news. Academics, intellectuals, governments, and mainstream media are joining their forces to fight this new form of harmful disinformation. I argue that this war, at first glance beneficial for our democracies, may induce some harmful side effects to our democracies. In this presentation I will try to shed a new light on the problem of fake news by showing that (1) the concept of fake news is not only vague, but also biased and (2) against all odds, the battle against fake news is not only counterproductive, but can also be epistemically, politically, and socially harmful.

First, it has already been argued that the concept of fake news is not coherently applied within the literature (Jaster, 2021). However, one can state two main features: (a) fake news must claim false statements and (b) must do so with the aim of deceiving people. This minimal definition is as simple as it is non-rigorous. The problem lies in the understanding of the notion of intention to deceive. Does neglecting some information make a news article a fake news? Does an editorial bias (or a slightly opiated point of view) constitute a willingness to deceive? Furthermore, beside some obvious cases, stating what is intentional or not from the writer is simply a dangerous judgement on intentions.

Second, facing this threat, at least three responses have been addressed : (a) law enforcement, (b) fact checking, and (c) media literacy. We will comment these three responses. (a) During the past years, many governments approved laws censoring fake news and punishing fake-news makers. One can argue that this method is a form of soft state authoritarianism used to control information (Coady, 2021). Conversely, preaching that state officers assess fakeness of information in absolute independent and objective way is raises the issue of objective criteria for doing so. Furthermore, state censorship only enhances the echo chamber of the believers: seeing that an article has been censored is likely to be taken as evidence that the state wants to make us believe the opposite. (b) Mainstream media’s fact checkers aim to debunk information from other media. They assess the veracity of other out stream media’s articles. This so-called independent method raises an epistemological conflict of interest. Note that this epistemic checking fails: lots of mainstream media claimed a Russian conspiracy in the 2016 US elections, which turn out to be a fake news (Halimi, 2020). (c) Governments invested money in educational programs in order to make pupils critical thinkers capable of debunking fake news. This media literacy program echoes what Bourdieu and Passeron (1970) called “symbolic violence”. Stated briefly, education reproduces an arbitrary legitimized social order and epistemic domination schemes. We will question if these programs, although promoting critical thinking, promote an epistemic authority (the experts) and discard all other form of expertise.



## **Social Normativity and Social Communication in Time After Covid-19: Critical-theoretic perspectives**

**Gašper Pirc (AMEU-ISH; ZRS Koper)**

At present, we live in a society crucially characterized by a two-year crisis over COVID-19 and the current Russian invasion of Ukraine, which also points to the consequences of an unfinished transition in the post-binary world of the 20th century and a possible economic crisis in under the aegis of contemporary social pathologies. Such social pathologies establish independent normative focus with their ideological force and at the same time affect the standards of knowledge in society. It is worth asking whether it is the individual's helplessness in times of crisis the result of discourses that establish tendencies of knowledge in society and processes that have more to do with non-transparency of values and lack of responsibility, community sense and recognition of expertise than related to the component of reason? Maybe there is an answer that connects both sides of inquiry.

In the digital age, where conspiracy theories are increasingly involved in knowledge-sharing processes, mistrust towards the experts and “twitter politics” that shuns acknowledged facts are as much a result of political decision and emotions such as fear, shame and anxiety as a conscious denial of knowledge. There is a problem with this understanding: only with the acceptance of moral cognitivism is it possible to rightly conclude a direct connection between reason and normative identity, which, however, requires more detailed elaboration which may not be fully addressed in the paper. Just as the reflex of procedural memory is not in itself an expression of ignorance, it is difficult to unify the various expressions of the inability to justify cognition.

When words – expressions, concepts – as abstractions of the historical engagement of society – escape the application based on understanding, there is always a danger that the debate on the content of what is said – that is, on the theoretical and normative dimensions of a particular concept – may be trivialized into a semantic discussion in regards to the bare form of utterance. If I use J. L. Austin's terminology, what stands out is a perlocutionary effect of utterance (i.e., an act committed as a result of utterance) and not a rational discussion of the meaning of individual concepts in the lifeworld in which speech acts arise.

The term normative justification in both critical theory and modern philosophy in general often acts as a signifier of abstract philosophy that has difficulty to reach audience and possess practical use. In my speech, I will show why just emphasizing the need for normative justification represents an important reference point for the possibility of a more concrete understanding of the social pathologies and conflicts that arise in modern European society and in my view, can only be properly explained with the help of a solid normative program; the latter is conditioned by the possibility of one's own justification. It seems that in the changed political climate and in the face of new social issues presented to us by modern society, both the relativization of reason in society and the strict Kantian cognitivism acts as increasingly inappropriate extremes. However, the question remains whether it is possible to develop of the acceptable and practically useful the concept of communicative rationality and relatively solid normative structures of society, without resorting to too abstract, functionally limited and often unhistorical approaches to moral and social philosophy.

## **Truth and politics: an interpretation of the despotism of truth found in epistocracy viewed from the standpoint of the political vice of recalcitrance**

**Santiago de Arteaga (Pontifical Catholic University of Chile)**

Recalcitrance is a political vice characterized by the closing of ears to morally, epistemically and politically legitimate and valid positions of others, an indifference to the demands that political agents present, sustained on the pretension of annulling the dynamic character of politics in favor of a politics of fixed identities and presumably complete perspectives. Whoever is characterized by having what Mark Button calls, in *Political Vices* (2016), a ‘recalcitrant orientation’, prioritizes the maintenance of the present political structure and identity over a politics of becoming that would be sensitive to the emergence of different voices within the framework of the constant struggle to relate the parts and the whole with justice, preserving the dignity of all parties involved. Button notes that inherent in the recalcitrant orientation is "a tendency toward perpetual dominance". David Estlund, in his work *Democratic Authority* (2007), takes up the old idea that truth should have no place in political affairs because, given that it implies starting from conclusions, it acquires a non-deliberative mood and a despotic presence. What Estlund characterizes as "the despotism of truth over politics" means that truth must be abandoned in the political sphere because it obstructs deliberation, dissent and consensus, discussion and dialogue; therefore, it can only rule in despotic terms. This authoritarian character of truth results in what Estlund calls ‘epistocracy’ and is present in Plato's thought. Despotism is part of the epistocratic argument because authority is the necessary result of the knowledge of truth.

This paper intends to defend the following idea: the tendency of political recalcitrance to dominate allows us to understand the despotic character of truth, which derives in a presumed epistocratic legitimacy of the recalcitrant. Political recalcitrance presents a tendency to domination that accounts for the despotic character of truth that derives in epistocracy, so that there is a relationship between political recalcitrance and a presumed epistocratic legitimacy of the recalcitrant. To the extent that the recalcitrant is unwilling to perceive political reality otherwise, it generates the conditions for the demands, positions and needs of others to be broken under the yoke of the present political mode of being and identity. In this sense, the recalcitrant orientation becomes anti-political and presents a clear tendency to despotism. In this sense, in politics, truth becomes despotic because of the recalcitrant orientation, because of the fact that the recalcitrant turns a deaf ear to the positions of others and is above all persuasion. If truth is despotic, it is because of the tendency to dominance that goes hand in hand with political recalcitrance. To justify my claim, I will focus first on some fundamental characteristics of political recalcitrance that explain its tendency towards domination; then, on the conception of the despotic character of truth in its relation to epistocracy; finally, I will try to read the classical arguments in a recalcitrant key.

## **Social Media, World Alienation and Post-truth: Reflections from Hannah Arendt's political thought**

**Kelly Janaína Souza da Silva (Federal University of Rio de Janeiro)**

In light of recent debates on “post-truth” policies, “post-facts”, “fake news”, and “alternative facts”, among other contemporary phenomena that cover the issue of lying in politics, Arendt's work provides precious reflections on the relationship between truth and politics.

The last few years have seen significant changes in the way citizens communicate and stand to “be seen and heard” on political issues. Social media such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter have become essential tools for the expression and dissemination of ways of thinking, preferences, and ideas, transforming and/or intervening in ways of deliberation of people with each other, making many users of these networks consider their expressions in them as effective political participation. Despite the advances that this can also mean, the contemporary obsession with social media may reflect “a form of world-alienation in interrelated ways”, as Tchir puts it (Tchir 2018: 73). The character of the world as a set of facts and objects agreed upon and recognized by our common senses, which Arendt affirms, unequivocally, in a phenomenal way, is then compromised; since alienation – when the common world is not taken as part of “private worlds” – is one of the great threats to the annihilation of the world.

The construction of an online profile on a social media “validated” by likes, comments, and shares, in some instances, can be understood as more “real” and, in some way, “authorized”, than an offline life that is not able to interact with these immediate answers. In this way, losing the sense of a shared world is easier, since the interaction takes place with images, avatars, and personas hidden from the real human vision, and may even have repercussions on fictitious constructs, distant from the real people behind those avatars. As a consequence of this, we will have less reflection in the exposition of opinions and, equally, in the opposition of divergent opinions, the debate being able to operate only through categorical positions.

I outline here a still tentative approach to a central question of our time: how do new communication technologies and their consequent phenomena (such as post-truth) affect the political field? In this approach, still provisional, Arendt's notion of world alienation is highlighted in its relations with social media, the lie in politics, the possibility of altering the truths of facts and, the dissemination of information that technology now provides.

### **Deliberative politics: from ideology to post-truth and back again**

**Ciprian Bogdan (Babeş-Bolyai University)**

At first glance, the recent focus on post-truth and its distortive impact on deliberative processes might be the symptom of a fundamental shift in our social world. The manipulative possibilities of social media risk derailing deliberation by undermining everything that might go beyond personal interests, preferences, or idiosyncratic worldviews. Once we look closer, however, this distortion has already been captured by another term, ideology, which critical theory viewed as a false consciousness shaping reality according to the (social) interests of the individuals. Considering that the roots of deliberative politics lie (via Habermas) in critical theory, we will try to argue that any deliberative process can also be understood as an ideology critique. Accordingly, we expand on Christian F. Rostbøll's argument that deliberation unmasks ideology by challenging a central assumption of political liberalism (visible in John Rawls philosophical proposal), namely that personal interests/preferences are valuable in themselves and, thus, cannot be questioned. The main problem with this core liberal assumption is its blindness towards the possibility of personal interests/preferences turning into blatant expressions of a false consciousness. While agreeing with Rostbøll's criticism, we also challenge his attempt to identify ideology with the content of particular beliefs and argue that ideology should be viewed as a specific type of relationship between private beliefs (expressing interests or preferences) and public arguments. Otherwise put, we argue that ideology lies in the “shortcut” (Lafont) between private interests and public arguments which tends to bypass the process of “translation” (Habermas) of the former into the latter and vice-versa. Thus,

the critical edge of deliberation becomes visible only by accepting this (incomplete) translation process.

## **Of Pseudology, Post-Truth and Related Matters**

**Codrin Taut (CNR UNESCO)**

Without a rigorous or a fixed meaning, the notion of post-truth usually refers to the following aspects: the dominance of emotion at the expense of knowledge, the primacy of unverified claims or the lack of general regard for truth within contemporary societies. Phenomena such as the Brexit, the election of Donald Trump or more recently the Covid Pandemic 19, which intersected even partially the aspects listed above, have made the concept of post-truth a privileged descriptor of today's political world.

But along with this explanatory virtue, the use of the post-truth has been accompanied by moralizing discourses that imperatively demand the overcoming of postmodernist relativism and the embrace of a robust realism that can quickly cut between facts and fictions.

The observation from which our approach starts is that post-truth theories are based on two unquestioned dogmas. The first one of these concerns the presumed existence of a mythical epoch of the total transparency of the world. The second premise is that the post-truth era is only a negative product of the communication technologies, without other preexisting social and political premises.

Against this perspective, the thesis that we will defend is that an assessment of the notion of post-truth cannot dispense with the analysis of phenomena that function as its background. Our approach will take place in two stages. First of all, we will try both a comparative and a contrastive analysis of the post-truth theme and that the older problem of „lying in politics”, as it emerges from the approach of Hanna Arendt. Secondly, we will face the post-truth issue to post-politics situation.

## **A new theory of truth pluralism for the 'post-truth era'**

**Simon Truwant (KU Leuven)**

This paper proposes a novel, inclusive theory of truth that can account for diverse ways in which people in their daily lives take things to be true ('truth pluralism') and the various forms of untruthfulness that derail contemporary public debates (the idea of a 'post-truth society').

In the first part, I argue that, rather than being 'post' or indifferent to truth, we actually rely on multiple conceptions of truth in our private and public lives, even if we are not explicitly aware of this. Depending on context and motivation, we effortlessly shift between the conceptions of truth as correct representation of facts (correspondence), as a coherent worldview (discourse/narrative), as useful beliefs (pragmatism), or as lived experience (disclosedness). For example, we can meaningfully and truthfully discuss the problem of criminality on the basis of crime statistics, a conservative or progressive view of society, feasible policy proposals, and fear or hope about a changing world. By elevating the role of pragmatic truth and including the notion of truth as lived experience, my proposed theory expands on existing accounts of truth pluralism.

This account of truth pluralism neither coincides with, nor justifies truth relativism. First, it does not equate the diversity of truth conceptions to the diversity of conversation partners. The relevant difference is after all not between what different people believe –e.g., "that dress is white

and gold " vs "that dress is blue and black"— but between the different ways in which we take something to be true –namely 'this is a verifiable, objective fact', 'it must be so given other established knowledge', 'it is beneficial for all involved to agree upon this', or 'this feels profoundly true to me'. Second, this theory of truth pluralism affirms the normative standards of four truth conceptions that have been established in the philosophical literature, and thus upholds the distinction between truthful and untruthful behavior. In fact, since this distinction is drawn differently for each truth conception, we now have a variety of ways to identify untruthful behavior (ranging from internet trolling to incoherent conspiracy theories, irony, dog–whistling, and manipulative populist discourse).

The second part examines the formative role that truth pluralism plays in public debates on societal issues. In discussions about, for example, vaccination or trans identities, it is clear that objective facts, coherent narratives, pragmatic beliefs, and lived truths all play a significant role: the former can be discussed in terms of viral mutations, vaccination policies, or an individual's fear for complications or distrust of the government and 'big pharma'; the latter in terms of chromosomes and medical procedures, anti-discrimination laws, or suicidal thoughts. Our failure, accidental or deliberate, to identify which one of these truth conceptions an interlocutor has adopted at a given moment is a crucial but overlooked reason why so little progress is made in many public debates today. I thus claim that, from a philosophical perspective, the pervasive indifference with regard to the plurality of truth conceptions is the defining trait of our 'post-truth era'.

### **Post- value? On art value across the great autonomy/heteronomy divide**

**Lorin Ghiman (University of Art and Design Cluj)**

While art theory and history do not operate with a strong concept of truth, the postmodern critique of scientific objectivity did leave a mark on the discourses about art of the last half a century. A constructivist approach would make it implausible to maintain that artworks hold an intrinsic, universal value, rendering the traditional forms of critique and canon-building naive at best. On the other hand, without an intrinsic, fact-like, evaluation of the art works in its own autonomous experiential space, the whole range of art practices would become heteronomous, that is vulnerable to the valuation they would receive as commodities on the (art)market. The contribution looks at the status of the debate about normativity and value in the art discourses and further tries to assess if the theoretical debates do influence the art practices themselves.

### **Truth Or Myth: a discussion between Hannah Arendt and Hans Blumenberg on the politics of remembrance**

**An Dufraing (University of Antwerp)**

Arendt took Eichmann from the state of Israel. That is the verdict the philosopher Hans Blumenberg pronounces on Hannah Arendt's Eichmann in Jerusalem in his posthumously published essay "Moses the Egyptian". Interestingly, Blumenberg does not state that Arendt's analysis of the Nazi criminal Adolf Eichmann is wrong, but rather that it is wrongheaded. According to Blumenberg, she should not have written her book because the Eichmann trial calls for myth and meaning and not for analysis and truth. Blumenberg believes the trial does not primarily serve a juridical function, but is meant to provide the young state of Israel with a foundation myth.

According to Blumenberg this political myth is justified because of the precarious position of Israel as a new state and of the Jewish people after the horrors of the Shoah. This political myth requires us to disregard the historical truth of the person Adolf Eichmann and his deeds. For Eichmann to perform his mythical function, he has to become a nondescript figure onto whom all the evils of Nazism can be projected.

Arendt's depiction of Adolf Eichmann as a figure of ridicule interferes with this myth. Because of this Blumenberg calls Arendt a rigorist of truth. However, Blumenberg is wrong when he states that Arendt believes in truth for truth's sake. Her insistence on factual truth is fueled by the same concerns with the possibility of mastering the past and creating an opportunity for political renewal that also drive Blumenberg. Arendt resists the mythical interpretation of the trial because it means sacrificing reality to fiction. Blumenberg's proposed myth strays too close to ideology for Arendt. For Arendt it is precisely the divorce from truth and reality that hinders the creation of a new body politic after the catastrophe. Coming to terms with the past and creating a new space for politics require a form of storytelling that always takes factual truth as its starting point.

In my paper, I argue that the clash between Arendt and Blumenberg should be seen as a question of how to remember and give meaning to a painful past. What kind of stories does a body politic need in order to come to terms with the past? Blumenberg's answer is myth. Arendt's answer is truthful discourse. Blumenberg and Arendt hereby offer two different interpretations on the political role of remembrance. Both believe remembrance performs an important political function in renewing politics after a time of deep crisis. For Blumenberg remembrance is allowed to disregard facts in order to create a meaningful myth. For Arendt on the other hand remembrance entails looking reality in the eye and subsequently making a judgment on the kind of world we want to live in and want to share with others. From this confrontation with factual truth stories emerge that help carry a new common world.

## **Physis and truth**

### **Borislav Mihačević (Independent researcher)**

The notion of the truth is one of those concepts that cannot exist without a man, much like the notion of Being, time, or even freedom. The truth does not need God or an animal. The latter lacks a medium through which the truth can be grasped, namely speech. However, that is not in itself problematic. Because metaphorically speaking, a man can indeed lower himself on a "bestly" level, the animal, however, cannot lower itself beyond what it is. In other words, an animal not having the faculty of speech is not a disadvantage. According to Christian eschatology, the same can be said of God since God is truth. Furthermore, even artificial intelligence (AI) has no need for the truth. It operates with true or false data, but it cannot know about the truth as such. Thus man and the truth are ontologically connected. However, even taking into consideration the historical perspective where today it seems there is no space for not only the great narratives of the past but also where we have become obsessed with "fake news", the truth is "in demand". It is in "demand" because there is no truth without falsity. Man is no God, he or she is condemned to live in a shadowy world of appearances. Aristotle, in his *Metaphysics*, remarked that a man's relation to the truth is like a bat's eyes to daylight. The truth surrounds us and, at the same time, blinds us. The problem is not in the things but in us. Since we are "prisoners of the shadows", the truth is (un)concealed to the man, not made. The primacy of appearances means that the truth is a double-edged sword; no man cannot live without the truth, and at the same time, the truth is not simply given. That is the reason our initial mode of discovering the world is *doxa*, an opinion. It can be true

and false. A man without an opinion is not a man at all. Doxa reaches the entire world. That being said, my presentation will focus on Heidegger's concept of physis, namely Being, in relation to Hannah Arendt's sublimation and critique of it. I will examine her text, *The Truth and Lie in Politics*, to ask the following questions. To name a few; "Is the truth tyrannic in the field of politics?", "Is lying in politics more important than the truth?", "What is the relation of the truth to politics?".

**Panel 6**  
**Modal Truth**  
**Organizer: Mihai Rusu**

**Modal reconstructions of abstractionist forms of non-eliminative structuralism: a critical assessment and a (tentative) extension**

**Adrian Luduşan (Babeş-Bolyai University)**

One of the main stances in modern philosophy of mathematics, known as 'structuralism', consists of a rich cluster of conceptions whose common denominator is the slogan that structures are the subject matter of mathematics. Linnebo & Pettigrew's (2014) unpacking of this slogan led them to articulate in model-theoretic terms a Fregean-based form of non-eliminative structuralism (LP-structuralism). On close examination, however, LP-structuralism fails as an adequate structuralist account even for rigid structures. Schiemer & Wigglesworth (2019) pinpoint the model-theoretic rendering of LP-structuralism as the main cause of its shortcomings, and set out to correct and vindicate it by a modal reconstruction of it (SW-structuralism). I will argue that although SW-structuralism successfully solves some of the problems of LP-structuralism, it does not address core issues of non-eliminative structuralism, and proceed to show how their modal reconstruction could be altered in order to meet the challenge of the automorphism test, thus extending the application of non-eliminative structuralism to non-rigid structures. In the process, some insights on the nature of positions in pure/abstract structures will emerge.

**Essence, necessity, and knowledge of necessity. Some remarks on the current debates on essentialism**

**Mihai Rusu (Babeş-Bolyai University)**

Finean essentialism is the view that modal truths are grounded in and explained by essences. This type of analysis has been first proposed by Kit Fine, in a seminal paper, (Fine 1994), and it has been upheld by other modal metaphysicians, such as E.J. Lowe and Bob Hale. Finean essentialism appears to be, in many respects, the most promising strategy for explaining necessary truth, but recently, it has come under attack by various philosophers, such as Bovey (2022), Mackie (2020), Noonan (2019), Romero (2019), and others. These critiques have already received some replies, such as Wallner (2019) and Wallner and Vaidya (2020). Generally, essence skeptics argue that either

essentialist truths are themselves necessary, therefore the essentialist analysis proves circular or infinitely regressive, or essentialist truths, being non-modal, are devoid of the modal force that is needed to explain modal truth. I will examine some arguments from both sides of the debate and aim to show that the metaphysical notion of essence can be defended from the most salient objections of anti-essentialists. Nevertheless, some insights from the current essentialism debate appear to reveal some worrying epistemological misgivings of essentialism.

## **On the possibility of Gettier cases for modal knowledge**

**Alexandru Dragomir (University of Bucharest)**

Gettier (1963) cases are used to argue against the classic tripartite definition of knowledge (knowledge as justified true belief). They are cases in which an epistemic agent has a belief that is both justified and true, but intuitively cannot be taken to count as knowledge (see Feldman, 2003; Pritchard, 2007; Turri, 2012). Modal epistemology is the field of philosophy that tackles questions regarding the sources of our knowledge of modalities (possibility and necessity) and what offers justification for beliefs about what is possible or necessary [In this paper I will be interested only in metaphysical (as opposed to epistemic, logical, physical, deontic etc.) modalities (possibility and necessity)]. Part of the tradition in modal epistemology is to consider conceivability as a guide to metaphysical possibility. As such, if an agent can conceive that P, then the agent is justified to believe that P is metaphysically possible. In this paper I will discuss the possibility of constructing Gettier cases for our knowledge of metaphysical modalities.

The structure of my presentation will be as follows:

1. In section 1 I will present and discuss a slight adaptation of one of Gettier's (1963) original cases. My focus will be on identifying the necessary traits of Gettier cases, and for this purpose I will extensively use Zagzebski's work in (1994).
2. Section 2 will be devoted to presenting the connection between conceivability and possibility (Chalmers, 2002; Geirsson, 2005; Gregory, 2010; Kripke, 1980; Menzies, 1998; Yablo, 1993; Kung, 2010), with a focus on pointing that conceivability offers justification for modal beliefs (beliefs about the modal status of propositions) and explains modal knowledge.
3. In the third section I will:
  1. Defuse a general objection to the possibility of Gettier cases for modal knowledge; the structure of this objection is the following:
    - (3.a.1) What justifies modal beliefs is conceivability. (Premise)
    - (3.a.2) What accounts for modal truth is, as well, conceivability. (Premise)
    - (3.a.3) The condition of justification and the truth condition are the same. (From 1, 2)
    - (3.a.4) Gettier cases are possible only if the two are distinct. (Zagzebski, 1994)
    - (3.a.5) Therefore: There can be no Gettier cases for modal knowledge. (Conclusion)
  - (b) Propose a scaffolding for Gettier cases for modal knowledge and show why it fails, and, finally,
  - (c) Present what I believe to be a successful Gettier case for modal knowledge.



## **New actualism and truthmakers**

**Mihai Alexandru Petrișor (University of Bucharest - undergraduate)**

This presentation focuses on the challenge launched by Williamson's account of possible worlds for truthmaking theory. Specifically, Williamson raises the following problem: since modal logic should validate both the Barcan formula and its converse (the domain of objects must be fixed across all possible worlds and, therefore, everything exists necessarily), truthmaker theorists are committed to some objectionable metaphysical theses: i) there are no contingent truths, and ii) contingent falsehoods cannot have something to make them true (Williamson, 1999; 2013). i) is simply implausible, and ii) either gives way to incoherence or invalidates Truthmaker Maximalism. I discuss two ways to avoid these issues, by analyzing two different proposals: 1) the adoption of a metaphysical framework that grounds contingent, world-free truths, on necessary, world-bound views (Yip, 2015), and 2) the rejection of the Barcan formula, as its implication of necessary existence seems implausible (Hayaki, 2006). I argue that the former proposal, despite its many virtues, is unsatisfying, and I lean in favor of the latter.

### **Panel 8**

#### **Truth and Metaphysics - A Continental Approach**

**Organizer: Horia Pătrașcu**

#### **Adevărul ca evidență și efectele metafizice și epistemologice ale acestei înțelegeri la începuturile filosofiei moderne**

**Viorel Vizureanu (University of Bucharest; Philosophy and Psychology Institute of Romanian Academy)**

Prezentarea noastră are un dublu scop: pe de o parte, să reliefeze distincția dintre două tipuri de adevăr, numite de noi „cu rest”, respectiv „fără rest”; pe de altă parte, să prezinte mai detaliat, prin anumite caracteristici esențiale, cel de-al doilea tip de adevăr. Toate aceste elemente vor fi evidențiate plecând de la filosofia modernității timpurii, în special de la cea a lui René Descartes. Primul tip sau model de adevăr ar mai putea fi numit și metafizic sau „pe verticală”, întrucât este un adevăr care implică în mod necesar relația cu transcendența (Divinul, Dumnezeu etc.), trimite în mod necesar și imediat la un adevăr metafizic superior („restul” invocat de noi). Cel de-al doilea model de adevăr ar putea fi numit la rândul său epistemologic sau „pe orizontală”. Acesta trimite în mod necesar la alte adevăruri de același tip, mai exact la „rețeaua” de adevăruri din care face parte. Chiar dacă l-am numit „fără rest” (metafizic), observăm aici manifestându-se plenar un rest epistemologic. Trebuie subliniat însă că ceea ce avem în vedere este ponderea metafizicului, respectiv epistemologicului – ambele tipuri de adevăr trimit și la celălalt element, dar doar într-un mod mai slab sau mediat. Din punct de vedere istoric această cotitură în gândirea adevărului este produsă în mod semnificativ la Descartes prin adoptarea unui unic model ca „tipar” pentru toate celelalte adevăruri, cel al adevărului matematic (acest aspect este, de altfel, strâns legat de faptul că

metoda unică impusă întregului spectru al ființei abordat în filosofie este preluată din matematică, așa cum este declarat explicit în *Discurs*). Plecând de la această constatare vom aborda în final unele trăsături explicite (evidența, certitudinea absolută etc.) sau explicite (auto-suficiența, modelarea realității, raționalizarea mișcării etc.) ale acestui ultim model alethic.

## Relația dintre conceptul de adevăr și conceptul de libertate

Horia Pătrașcu(Politehnica University of Bucharest)

Unul dintre cele mai mari obstacole întâmpinate de filosofia raționalistă (vezi disputa dintre Leibniz și cartezieni) îl reprezintă conflictul dintre *necesitatea* pe care o implică existența rațiunii și libertatea voinței și acțiunilor (umane sau divine). Putem schimba, după bunul plac, rezultatul unei adunări, precum 2 plus 2? Nu va trebui să acceptăm că suma lor e 4, oricât ne-am dori să fie 5 sau 6 sau 0? Dostoievki în *Omul din subterană* se revoltă împotriva acestei necesități, împotriva constrângerii de a fi acceptată pe care o exercită orice evidență. Sigur, exemplul poate să pară un pic absurd, de ce ne-am dori ca 2 plus 2 să facă 5? Presupunând că un asemenea om există, ar trebui să-l declarăm irațional și, pe cale de consecință, imposibil de a fi liber. (De altfel, societatea umană condiționează *exercitarea liberă a actului de voință de funcționarea facultăților mentale*, un om dovedit ca fiind iresponsabil, irațional – este pus sub interdicție, i se limitează sau chiar anulează dreptul său la libertate, considerat în condiții normale un drept fundamental.) Și totuși – dacă să presupunem că aceste două cifre și rezultatul lor ar avea o relevanță „existențială”, ar însemna ceva pentru noi, de pildă, în calitate de studenți am răspunde corect la două subiecte a câte două puncte fiecare și nu am ști răspunsul la celelalte, nu ne-am dori, ca măcar odată în viață doi și cu doi să facă cinci, să obținem nota de trecere? Mai mult, mai grav decât atât, dacă rezultatul ar face diferența dintre sănătate și boală, dintre viață și moarte, dacă două pungi de sânge ar ridica hemoglobina doar cu o valoare de doi pentru un pacient transfuzat și, cu chiu și vai, abia reușim să mai facem rost de alte două pungi – reușind să o ridicăm la 4, când valoarea limită de supraviețuire este 5, oare nu ne-am dori din tot sufletul ca doi și cu doi să facă cinci? Exemplele pot continua și oricât le-am extinde toate ar arăta că omul este o ființă rațională și deopotrivă volitiv-afectivă, iar aceste două dimensiuni au naturi diferite și intră, cum am văzut, adesea în conflict.

Pe de o parte omul își *dorește* să cunoască adevărul și într-adevăr pare că acesta este idealul lui natural (cel puțin așa gândeau filosofii greci antici, precum Aristotel care spunea că omul tinde, aspiră spre înțelepciune – așa cum piatra tinde spre centrul pământului, iar flăcările tind să revină la locul lor de obârșie – soarele, focul ceresc) câtă vreme ceea ce află îi *adeverește* năzuințele. Suntem fericiți când adevărul coincide cu voința, de aceea una dintre cele mai mari plăceri ale omului este plăcerea de a avea dreptate (Schopenhauer a și scris o carte intitulată *Arta de a avea întotdeauna dreptate*). Când avem dreptate – ne bucurăm pentru că simțim că cele două facultăți ale noastre, voința și rațiunea, coincid foarte rar, întâlnirea dintre ele fiind mai curând de domeniul excepției. Dorința de adevăr – este o dorință specială, o dorință a cărei realizare înseamnă de cele mai multe ori contrazicerea, frustrarea sau chiar desființarea tuturor celorlalte dorințe.

Pentru Platon, orice greșală (morală sau epistemică) este o eroare, provine din ignoranță. Dacă omul ar cunoaște cu adevărat binele, nu ar putea alege răul, astfel încât el nu este niciodată vinovat decât indirect – prin aceea că nu și-a exersat capacitatea rațională, pentru că nu și-a deschis sufletul la învățăturile celor mai știutori etc. Dacă ar fi făcut-o nu ar mai fi putut niciodată greși pentru că, prin definiție, răul nu poate fi ales. Cu alte cuvinte, pentru Platon (și pentru o îndelungată tradiție filosofică și religioasă ulterioară, întemeiată pe doctrina lui) răul nu are ființă, răul nu există

cu adevărat. Noi alegem răul crezând – în mod iluzoriu – că este un bine, fiind înșelați de aparența lui de bine. Dar numai binele există. Or, paradoxul se reface cu întreaga forță: cum poți alege dacă nu ai o singură posibilitate, dacă numai un singur termen există cu adevărat, nu există opțiune, nu există alegere, deci nu există libertate. De fapt acesta este riscul implicat de orice doctrină care susține existența obiectivă a Ideilor, a Formelor pure, a unui adevăr absolut: negarea libertății. Faptul a fost sesizat de Karl Popper care face o critică serioasă filosofiei lui Platon în primul volum din *Societatea deschisă și dușmanii ei*. Idealismul este un realism al ideii, idealistul crede în realitatea obiectivă, materială cumva a ideilor, a numerelor, proporțiilor, armoniei, frumuseții, dreptății etc. Or această realitate te obligă la un acord al minții sau, cum s-a spus, la o corespondență a minții și a sufletului cu ea, libertatea pierzându-și practic importanța în asemenea sisteme, reducându-se după cum am văzut la o simplă aparență înșelătoare. Nu există decât un singur lucru de ales: Ideea, adevărul, binele, deci libertatea nu există. (Nu întâmplător, libertatea a fost accentuată de sofiști, cei care negau posibilitatea cunoașterii, negau existența unui singur adevăr.)

### **Relationship and interpretation in L. Pareyson**

**Emilio Sierra García (Universidad CEU San Pablo University and School of philosophy Madrid)**

In this lecture, the question of truth will be presented through the interpretative and artistic process of the philosopher L. Pareyson. Throughout the history of thought, various theories of truth have been proposed, and the question of truth has been linked to the question of being, of finding a true 'is' that agrees with the things that are and appear, and with the way human beings understand them. At present, for example, analytic philosophy with its rationalist-objectivist roots has wanted to propose and discover truth in the theory of predication. This would limit the scope of philosophy to logic since predication consists only of subject and predicate. The latest debates on the question of truth, which always lead to the question of how I can know (Kant), place us before the impossibility of understanding man's consciousness as an external or internal relation to things or to himself. Truth for Pareyson starts from existence, following Kierkegaard and contrary to Hegel, and constitutes existence as the force of thinking, the seat of truth. We can affirm that existence is sign and truth, inner dwelling thrown into otherness. The truth of philosophy dwells in the bosom of existence as a relation to being. Truth dwells in the bosom of the existence of man who, in the formation and interpretation of the work of art, discovers a truth different from that of the judgement and the predicate. Truth is not only in close connection with intelligence, but also with freedom and being with which man exists in co-relation. Truth is not only a judgement (Kant), an experience (Hume), a presence (Thomas Aquinas) or a desolcultation (Heidegger). It is a relation of interpretation that proves that only in the interpretative process does the human quest and its openness to being reach fulfilment in the relation to truth.

Pareyson's proposal will trace a path that situates truth beyond the contrast between historicism and ahistorical truth, between relativism and objectivism. In it we will see a return to the Greek matrix of truth that realises a hermeneutics by and for the person in which knowledge is a drama through the person-truth link. Hermeneutics for Pareyson is the solution to Hegel, which makes it possible to save truth as infinite and inexhaustible and to relate it to the original freedom and God of philosophy as opposed to ideologies.

## **“Committed to Making a Difference” Alfred North Whitehead’s Critical Posthumanist Notion of Metaphysics, Truth and Theory**

**Isabella Schlehaider (Department of Philosophy, University of Vienna; Institute for Art Theory and Cultural Studies, Academy of Fine Arts Vienna)**

In comprehending metaphysics as historically embedded and consequently situated practice, Whitehead argues in favor of a situated and pragmatic understanding of metaphysics. He therefore – like poststructuralist or critical posthumanist theory – rejects the classical claim and notion of metaphysics, linking it to foundation, certainty and universal truth: „Philosophers can never hope finally to formulate these metaphysical first principles.” (PR 4) After all, for Whitehead, any foundationalist metaphysical claim is a display of philosophical naiveté: „In philosophical discussion, the merest hint of dogmatic certainty as to finality of statement is an exhibition of folly.” (PR xiv) In light of various difficulties – methodical and practical problems with the ‚derivation’ of first principles, the „elliptical” (PR 13) character of language and the restrictedness of empirical experience –, only an „asymptotic approach” (PR 4) to metaphysical principles is possible. That’s why for Whitehead metaphysics is an interminable endeavor and metaphysical principles never can be more than conjectures, ‚metaphors’ after all. Accordingly, speculative Philosophy has to be led by the „method of the ‚working hypothesis”” (AI 222) and metaphysics has to present a hypothetical and not a definite conceptual system. Metaphysical premises continuously have to be verified within an area of experience and the conceptual framework and, if necessary, be rejected or revised. This radical reformulation of speculative-metaphysical thought leaves no room for claims to ultimate groundings, certainty and absolute truth. Accordingly, for Whitehead much more important than deductive or inductive lines of argument is the production of (self-)evidence even though it is ultimately impossible to reach that goal: „[...] in philosophical writings proof should be at a minimum. The whole effort should be to display the self-evidence of basic truths.” (MT 48) For that reason, much more important than the truth or falsity of theoretical concepts is their relevance, their ability to produce „consequential meanings” (Haraway 1997: 273) respectively „important knowledge” (PR 3). In my talk, I want to further clarify Whitehead’s pragmatic-empiristic and therefore situated understanding of (metaphysical) truth as well as its proximity to critical posthumanist notions of truth. With his concept of truth, Whitehead, like critical posthumanism, radically rejects the „god trick” (Haraway 1988) of the humanistic scheme of thought. Still, neither Whitehead nor critical posthumanism put the case for an easy relativism. They don’t postulate, to speak with Deleuze and Guattari, „a relativity of truth, but, on the contrary, a truth of the relative” (Deleuze/Guattari 1994:130).

### **Self-consistency: Symmetry and Mirroring Connections Between Chew's Physics and Leibniz's Metaphysics**

**Ramona Ardelean (Politehnica University of Bucharest)**

The scientific paradigm which I relate to in this presentation about self-consistency as mirroring connections between Chew's physics and Leibniz’s metaphysics, is quantum mechanics, whose “cognitive revolution” consisted of replacing the classical principle of separability with the principle of nonseparability or global intercorrelation. According to this intercorrelation, highlighted at quantic or subatomic level, the part cannot be separated from the whole, because every part has a global and instantaneous connection with the whole universe, reason for which the foundation of the world cannot be the part (elementary particles), but the whole, logically and ontologically considered prior to the part, i.e., self-consistent. Through this, the principle of global intercorrelation elucidates and validates some of the oldest philosophical/metaphysical problems

and intuitions about the unity or self-consistency of the world. An example in this sense is the bootstrap theory of the American physicist Geoffrey Chew, which presents such striking symmetries or similarities to the metaphysical system of Leibniz's Monadology that the two intertwine and mirror each other, like twin souls, to the point where it can be stated that if Chew's bootstrap theory represents the explanatory physical level of Leibniz's metaphysics, then, analogously, Leibniz's Monadology represents the explanatory metaphysical level of Chew's physics.

## **Panel 9**

### **What do we do with the hard truths? Ethical and theoretical challenges for the anthropology of unpleasant realities**

#### **The morality of mistrust, corruption, theft, and other true negative stereotypes on Romanian villagers**

**Radu Umbreş (National School of Political and Administrative Studies SNSPA)**

Public discourse in Romania often revolves around the problems of low trust in institutions and generalised distrust in fellow Romanians. These representations add to many negative images about rural Romanians said to engage in electoral bribery, theft or mismanagement of public goods, and, generally speaking, acting in ways which do not suggest a civic spirit. Although I wished that my ethnography of a Romanian village would have challenged such stereotypes, the evidence suggests that there is more than a kernel of truth in describing rural society as atomized, riddled with patrimonialism and disengagement, without public accountability or participation to local governance. The recording of these interpretations in an anthropological account raises ethical questions about the responsibility of ethnographers towards their informers in particular, and about the political and social implications of describing problematic behaviours of marginalised citizens in general. This paper will suggest that honest reporting is a necessary principle for anthropologists but only coupled with empirical and theoretical analysis of mechanisms and causes which analyse moral behaviours from a non-moral, scientific point of view. Finally, I will suggest that various departures from transparent ethnographic description for moralistic purposes are likely to misfire and will end up creating more prejudice against the studied populations while lowering the credibility of the entire discipline.

#### **Truth-value and values of truth. A reflection**

**Ana Chiritoiu (Central European University)**

My paper addresses the challenges of writing up "hard truths" in relation to the merits of doing so. In my work with a Roma group who describe themselves as "Thieves," these challenges became particularly urgent, since, on the one hand, the livelihoods and self-image of the people I worked with were central to my analysis, while, on the other hand, Roma are a socially excluded minority. "Thieves" is as much an ethnonym as it is a slur and, occasionally, an occupation. Disclosing it to the public risks confirming the bias that a large swath of the public already holds

against “Gypsies;” and yet, keeping it secret would falsify my analysis to the point of rendering it vacuous (and useless). Differently put, if the ultimate value of science is the truth, what is the value of the truth we need to disclose? Does the greater social good (or harm) caused by our disclosures trump the professional obligation to make them? The paper reflects on these quandaries in the context of my fieldwork in a Roma neighborhood on the margins of a southern Romanian town. For my interlocutors, what is crucial about their activities is not whether they are “right” or “wrong” (they all can agree that stealing is wrong, for instance), but whether they display “talent,” “capability,” or “risk.” My paper seeks to bring these worldviews—that of “truth” and “the good” along with that of “capability”—into dialogue, in order to find whether the values of ethical scientific conduct can be brought to overlap with those of the people we work with.

### **Native American Epistemology Through Dreams**

**Joel Alvarez (University of South Florida)**

Dreams for Native Americans is a source of epistemology and a way to obtain one’s identity. For this reason, Native Americans would take their dreams or vision seriously since they could provide important information. Such information about dreams can provide the individual with a power that a spirit has bestowed on them or a direction one should take in their life. Additionally, dreams can mean misfortune, prophecy, luck, or even have a symbolic meaning. Thereby, dreams or visions are an essential component of Native American everyday living. They learn and know things from the real world because of the information they gather in the world of dreams. Therefore, with what Native Americans believe about dreams, the focus of this paper is what exactly is the philosophical and religious epistemology perspective of the Native Americans through dreams.

### **Knowledge of the Other between partial truths and painful dilemmas. Some insights from an feminist anthropologist’s standpoint**

**Iulia Hasdeu (HES-SO Switzerland)**

When I started to study anthropology by the end of the 90s, I was very interested to bring into my theoretical framework the feminist epistemology developed by Donna Haraway, with her ideas about *situated knowledges*, her deconstruction of the powerful subject-object relationship and the consideration of the *care* and the *ethnical* into the production of knowledge (Haraway, 1988). It seemed to me that my marginal position as a woman, a feminist with an East European life and academic experience was fed by the post-structuralist and political position she articulates. The *standpoint theory* (Harding, 1991) was also crucial for me in order to understand how my interpretation about Roma women representations and practices (that I was supposed to understand during my ethnographic fieldwork in South Romania) have to be considered as (just) partial truths, emerged in the collaboration with « my » (sic !) fieldwork. Many of my insights can then be put into ‘feel&field-work’ that anthropology brought to my attention all those years.

My talk in this panel try to answer the following question in order to actualize my thinking about the ‘field truths’ : how and why by complicity, sisterhood and care with/for my Roma informants I silenced some ‘truths’ ? / manage this silence is it a painful moral dilemma?

## **Truth Comes in a Box. A Joyous Epistemology of Extreme Poverty.**

**Cătălin Berescu (Research Institute for Quality of Life, Romanian Academy)**

And in that box, there is a set of smaller boxes that reveals the structure of that particular truth, or sometimes just the fact that any reality can be shaped. There are at least two metaphors that thrive around the box, one is the "outside the box" slogan, that assumes that what is inside the box is not enough, and that the person that is able to introduce that something that is missing is a much welcomed agent of change. The second one is the "Jack in the box", that I will address later.

Leaving aside the agenda of the "outboxers", there are things to be said about the nature of the solidified knowledge that can be assimilated with truth. The compact truth, or the box, is a piece of software that is often used as a piece of hardware, i.e. a well-defined chunk of knowledge that is built at the intersection of whatever we can collect as objective truths, and of a mixture of socially constructed things like values and beliefs. Both are incomplete, so there is always the possibility to think "outside of the box", which is almost always just about putting one more thing in the box, according to the specific needs of the most recent contributor to the debate. In other words, it is *useful* truth, one that for sure serves a policy, and during that process has to be frozen, to take a perfect shape, to be boxed. Formalizing it is essential for any policy maker, and knowledge, which is soft and unstable by nature, must become a tool that can be used to shape the world. This is what typologies do: as soon as data is collected it has to be sorted. My examples will display some very not innocent, somehow obtruse (obtuse+abtruse) ways of sorting.

A second issue with the truth in the box is that of the surprising nature of that sort of truth, in which the truth is used as a rhetorical device – the Jack in The Box. It has two sides, the ethical dimension and the performative dimension, both having to do with the magic embedded in any mechanism that suddenly reveals something. The "real" truth and the "scary" truth were already there, but hidden. Unveiling them is a moral operation, and it shows both the competence and the rightful position of the hermeneutical agent.

What is of great interest for me is the subset of boxes that can be found in every larger container, for example, in the framing of marginalized housing areas where we always operate with various typologies. Each of the subsets/types is supposed to contain the description of an objectively accessed world, yet we sometimes fail to draw a line in between some widely used concepts like *slum* and *ghetto*. The contribution will deal with the validation of knowledge in regards with the question of the typologies used in the grey literature on planning for marginalized areas.

### **Situated truths, embraced truths. Post-fieldwork reflections**

**Ciprian Tudor (Politehnica University of Bucharest, National School of Political and Administrative Studies SNSPA)**

Over a decade ago, during a field work trip I took with a community of *Rudars* (who used to go every summer on a slow journey with their wagons from Campulung to Constanta and back), I was faced with a situation that raised an anthropological question and prompted for decisions regarding the truth that an anthropologist is presumably expected to pursue.

Specifically, it was about understanding the very ethnic and social identity of the *Rudars* in that community. Initially, both the Roma (but non-*Rudar*) activist who facilitated my access to the community and the informant I was to accompany along the way from Campulung to Constanta developed an identity narrative revolving around the idea of Roma solidarity, irrespective of "kin" or ethnical and language subgroup.

Thus, initially, my informant (who was also the Elder of the group, a figure respected by all members of that *Rudar* community), had admitted, while talking with Roma rights activists, that his community shared a Roma identity. However, one month later, when we set camp on our way right outside a village in Calarasi, the Elder told me, after a lengthy conversation, that *Rudars* were not Roma, but Dacians, descending from the free Dacians, who had never been subdued by the Romans.

Exactly the same evening when the Elder had delivered me for the first time his Dacian identity narrative, our caravan was attacked by a large group of Roma people (who were living at the edge of the village next to which we had camped), because, in their opinion, the caravan of covered wagons belonged to “nomadic, backward, and bad Gypsies” who would impair their image of settled, “civilized Gypsies” in the eyes of the Romanian villagers. After negotiations conducted “the Gypsy way”, as the Elder referred to them, the Roma people in that village left us alone, on condition that we decamped next morning.

What proved to be both problematic and relevant after that fieldwork was the partial, contextual, and situated manner in which the Elder would embrace or deny his “true” identity as being *Rudar*, Roma, and even Gypsy, depending on circumstances, on the interlocutor or on his own interests. In this paper, I seek to enlarge upon some of the implications that a truth of this kind, which is rather difficult to reveal, can have for the work of an anthropologist, especially when the researcher aims to understand the emic perspective of the studied community.



## **Organizers:**

**Beatrice Balgiu** (Politehnica University of Bucharest)

**Romulus Brâncoveanu** (University of Bucharest)

**Teodora Chiciooreanu** (Politehnica University of Bucharest)

**Daniela Cotoară** (Politehnica University of Bucharest)

**Adrian Luduşan** (Babeş-Bolyai University)

**Horia Pătraşcu** (Politehnica University of Bucharest)

**Andrei Simionescu-Panait** (Politehnica University of Bucharest)

**Mircea Toboşaru** (Politehnica University of Bucharest)

**Paula Tomi** (Politehnica University of Bucharest; University of Bucharest)

**Ciprian Tudor** (Politehnica University of Bucharest)