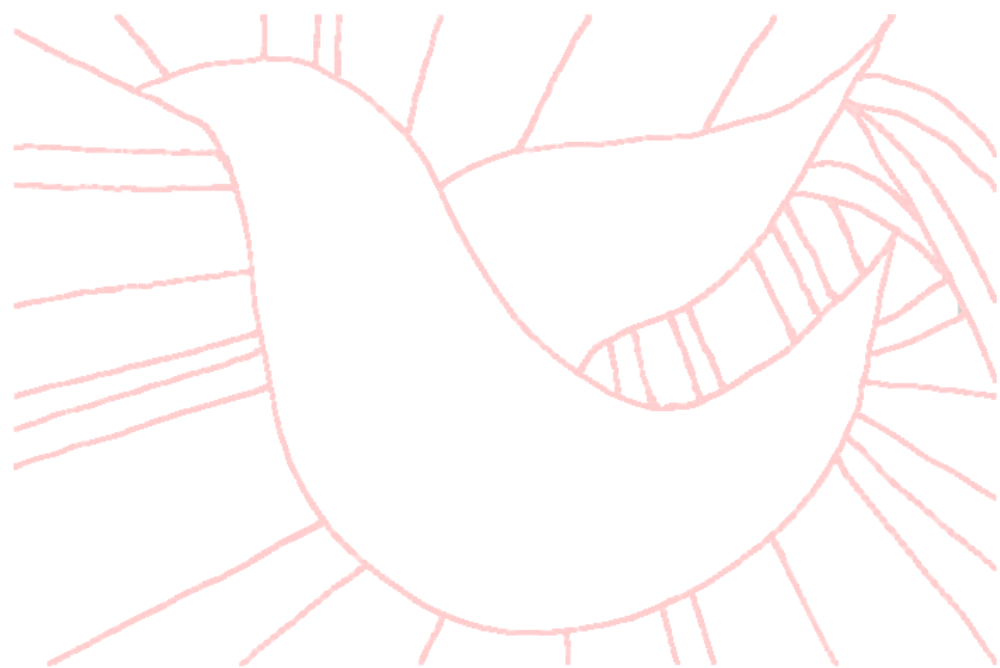


**The Idea(l)**

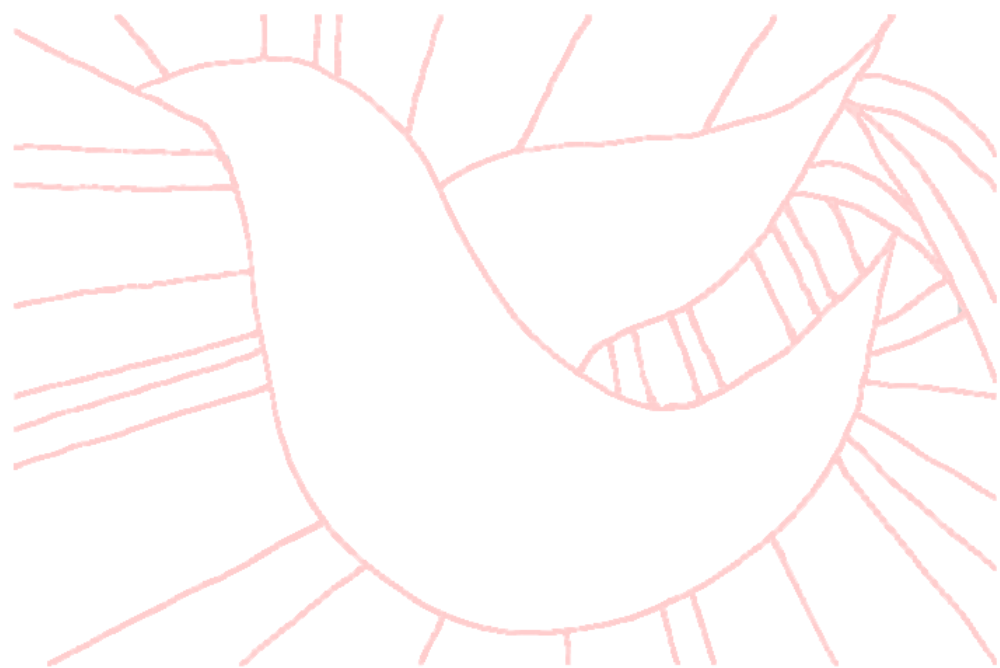


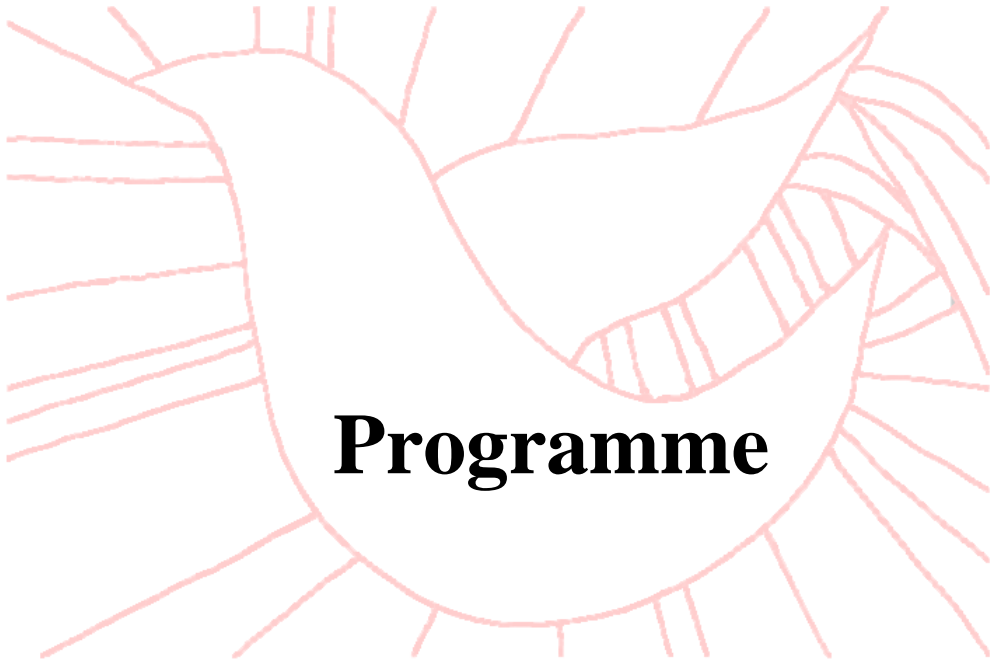
## The Idea(1)

In the *Crisis of the European Sciences*, Husserl points out that scientific objectivity, as it gradually took shape through the modern sciences in the form of a mathematization of nature, rests on a "fateful omission", the one namely of forgetting to inquire back into the subjective-historical, dynamic and living context out of which it first of all emerged. This omission is of the essence, so he says, because without it, modern science would not have been able to realise what it has until this day. The production of objectivity intrinsically rests on the possibility to exclude that which is seen, from there on as historically subjective. Its fate is sealed in these terms, and it thus determines as such a specific space in which the necessary, the possible and the contingent are mutually defined. Descartes was perhaps the first to have pointed out this intimate connection, in acknowledging the need for a subjectivity – albeit as a *res cogitans* – in the midst of an overwhelming machinery of production of objectivity. Kant, however, more poignantly bears witness to this intimate relation between subjectivity and objectivity. In our view, he is the philosopher *par excellence* for having explored, throughout his three *Critiques*, but also in his pre-critical works, the idea that there can be no objectivity without subjectivity, and vice versa, that there can be no subjectivity without objectivity. It is indeed through the developments in modern science that subjectivity can appear in its capacity to contribute to the constitution of objectivity, as well as in its capacity to fail in this endeavour. And vice versa, it is through the articulation of subjectivity that objectivity can appear as intrinsically dependent on very specific subjectively grounded constitutive procedures. Most of the time, Kant has been read from a determinative, constitutive angle, and has as often been turned into a static, detached, and even obsessive thinker. His aim is considered to be to determine the limits and the range of the newly identified cognitive capacities as a neutral referee, without having to genuinely try them out. A divergent perspective is possible, however, that attempts to argue for a more dynamic view on objectivity, one in

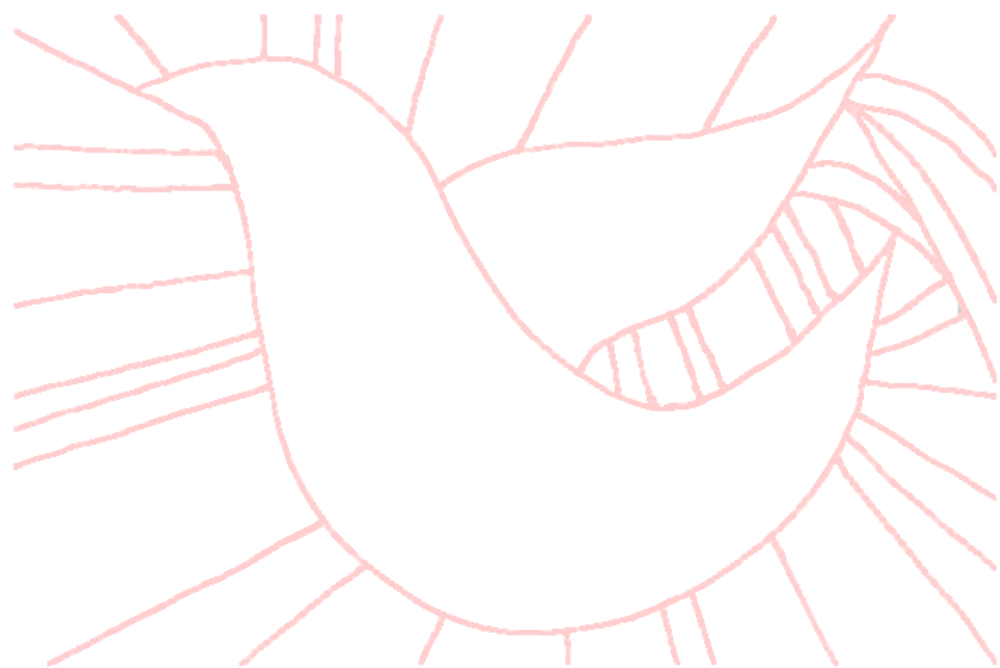
which objectivity is not seen as ultimately detached and static, but in which it is on the contrary the precarious and ever questionable result of dynamic processes of co-constitution. In this regard, there is certainly much to be learned from Kant's third *Critique*, because that is the place where Kant most explicitly deals with the issue of coconstitution, and faces this problem in terms of the ways in which objectification encounters failure or disappointment (*Enttäuschung*). In the third *Critique*, his basic question is indeed the one about the meaning of a determinative or constitutive ambition, in the principled absence of the means to carry it through. What does this principled resistance, the encounter with an impossibility, that Kant so stubbornly exposes through the beautiful, the sublime and the living, mean? What is its place in his critical system and in critical thinking generally? What are its implications for a conception of objectivity that is, perhaps too hastily, conceived of in terms of neatly acquired and well defined capacities of subsumption under universal concepts? What are its implications for a conception of subjectivity that is, perhaps too quickly also, conceived of in terms of the subjective-relativecontingent. Clearly, Kant's work, and most definitely his third *Critique*, is incompatible with a marked and static opposition between two terms, the subjective and the objective, leading to an oppositional space of subjectivism versus objectivism. But does this mean that the issue of resistance and failure, in the process by which objectivity and subjectivity are time and again codetermined and co-defined, is already sufficiently articulated? Is the figure of the "fateful omission" Husserl is referring to, and by which he also points at the historical dimensions of objectivity as well as subjectivity, already sufficiently explored? The aim of this three-day international workshop is to present and exchange various critical viewpoints on objectivity and subjectivity, and to more specifically focus on the various interpretations of necessity in its relation to contingency. This approach on the matter can find inspiration in Kant's third *Critique*, that works out the idea that the need and the possibility to articulate the distinction between objectivity and subjectivity emerges to the extent that something *resists* the anticipative procedures of a living,

actively engaged being. This need and this possibility are by him interpreted from within the background of contingently based feelings of pleasure and displeasure, that Kant considered as the constraining and enabling context – the horizon – within which eventually all processes of cognition and morality are to be situated, and in relation to which the faculty of judgment has a specific unifying role to play. But this source of inspiration should certainly not be considered as the only possible one. Husserl's gesture to extrapolate the coconstitutive relation between objectivity and subjectivity to history is but one example of objectivity seen from a dynamical, contingently, historically and subjectively grounded background, the lifeworld. The meeting is certainly open to explore other backgrounds. To realize that end, we invite speakers from different disciplinary backgrounds – physics, mathematics, biology, psychology, ... – and embedded in quite divergent philosophical contexts – continental/analytical, in as far as this distinction is a relevant one. This meeting is not in the first place about critically, exegetically, discussing Kant's texts. Its aim is rather to inquire whether, and in what sense, a return to Kant and to neo-Kantianism can be important to open certain unsuspected perspectives on objectivity (and subjectivity). We conjecture that this approach can be relevant for (i) a contemporary reading of basic texts in the tradition of transcendental philosophy, (ii) a conception of objectivity that can have a relevance in current philosophy and in philosophy of science in particular, (iii) for the development of a transcendental viewpoint in philosophy of science, supplementing and challenging current dominant analytical viewpoints.





# **Programme**





**Thursday May 27th, 2010**

9.00-10.00: Registering

**Opening**

Chair: Gertrudis Van de Vijver (Ugent, Centre for Critical Philosophy)

10:00-10:15: Welcome by Freddy Mortier, Dean of the Faculty of Literature and Philosophy

10:15-10:30: Welcome by Erik Weber, Head of the Department of Philosophy and Moral Sciences

10:30-11:00 Gertrudis Van de Vijver: Welcome and general presentation of the topic

11:00-11:15: Coffee Break

11:15-12:00: Frank Pierobon: Opening Conference: A shift in paradigms: Kant's intuition and Newton's science

12:00-12:15: Brief discussion

**Objectivity and (co-)constitution in the natural sciences**

Chair: Eric Schliesser (Ugent)

14.00-14.30: Filip Kolen (Centre for Critical Philosophy): Symmetry: the co-constitutive between

14:30-15:15: Michel Bitbol (CREA, Paris): On the clarity of Quantum Mechanics from a Kantian Standpoint

15:15-15:30: Coffee Break

15:30-16:15: Maarten Van Dyck (Ugent): The mathematization of nature as a historical and philosophical problem

16:15-17:00: Norman Sieroka (ETH Zürich, Sw.): A Post-Kantian Approach to the Constitution of Matter

17:00-17:45: Discussion

Facilitator: Liesbet De Kock (Centre for Critical Philosophy)

18:00: Reception at City Hall

**Friday May 28th, 2010**

**The living as a "pièce de résistance"**

Chair: Peter Reynaert (Antwerp University, Belgium)

9:30-10:00: Joris Van Poucke (Centre for Critical Philosophy): The place of biological theory in the critical enterprise

10:00-10:45: Lenny Moss (University of Exeter, UK): Life, Detachment and Transcendental Philosophy

10:45-11:00: Coffee Break

11:00-11:45: Joan Steigerwald (York University, UK): Natural purposes and the purposiveness of nature: The antinomy of the teleological power of judgment and its significance for the critical project

11:45-12:30: Discussion

Facilitator: Gertrudis Van de Vijver, Luis Ramirez Trejo (Centre for Critical Philosophy)

**Objectivity and (Inter-)Subjectivity in the Critical Tradition I**

Chair: Helena De Preester (Ugent, Centre for Critical Philosophy)

14:00-14:30: Emiliano Acosta (Centre for Critical Philosophy): Forms of inter-subjectivity in Kant's political writing "An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?" (1784)

14:30-15:15: Mario Caimi (Un. of Buenos Aires, Argentina): The logical structure of time according to the chapter of Schematism

15:15-15:30: Coffee Break

15:30-16:15: Arran Gare (Swinburne University of Technology, Australia): From Kant to Schelling on the Subject, the Object and Life

16:15-17:00: Paul Cobben (University of Tilburg, NL): Hegel's critical reception of Kant's conception of objectivity

17:00-17:45: Discussion

Facilitator: Boris Demarest (Centre for Critical Philosophy)

19:00: Conference Dinner: De Gouden Klok

**Saturday May 29th, 2010**

**Objectivity and (Inter-)Subjectivity in the Cultural Sciences and Humanities**

Chair: Jeroen van Bouwel (Ugent)

9:30-10:00: Anton Froeyman (Centre for Critical Philosophy): The other as a condition of possibility of the problem of values in the humanities

10:00-10:45: Hans-Herbert Kögler (Un. Of North Florida, USA): Interpretation as Reflective Judgment. A Hermeneutic Critique of Objectivity

10:45-11:00: Coffee Break

11:00-11:45: Arnaud Dewalque (ULiège): Producing Objectivity Under Assumption of Values?

11:45-12:30: Discussion

Facilitators: Franc Rottiers, Henk Vandaele (Centre for Critical Philosophy)

**Objectivity and (Inter-)Subjectivity in the Critical Tradition II**

Chair: Paul Cruysberghs (KULeuven, Belgium)

14:00-14:30: Sergueï Spetschinsky (ULB, Belgium): Reflexive Objectivity. Reason and Races in Kant

14:30-15:15: Jacinto Rivera de Rosales (University of Madrid, Spain): Reformulating the Refutation of Idealism by Kant

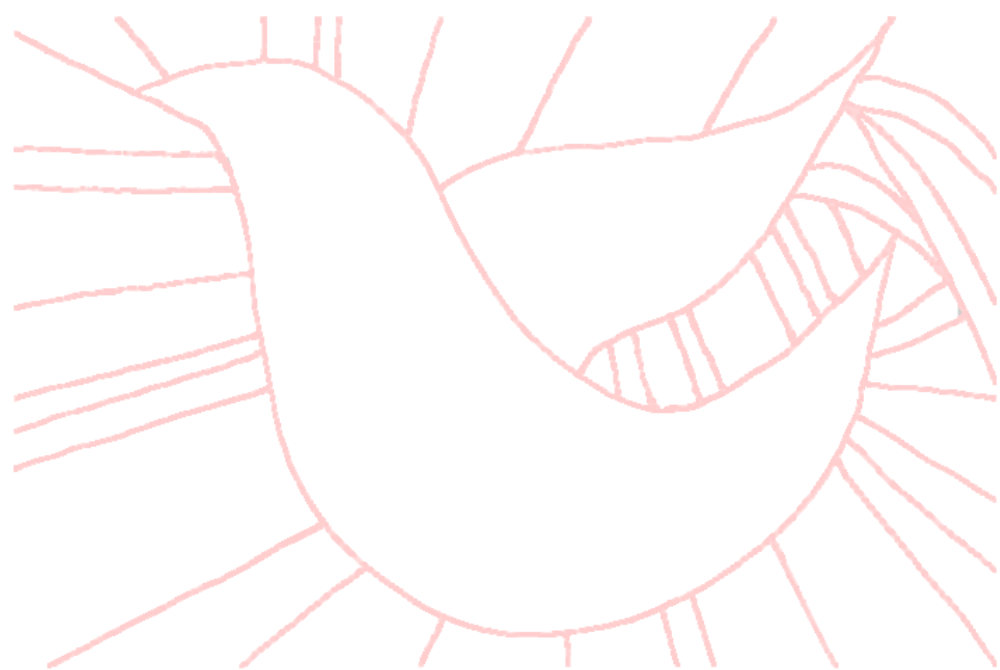
15:15-15:30: Coffee Break

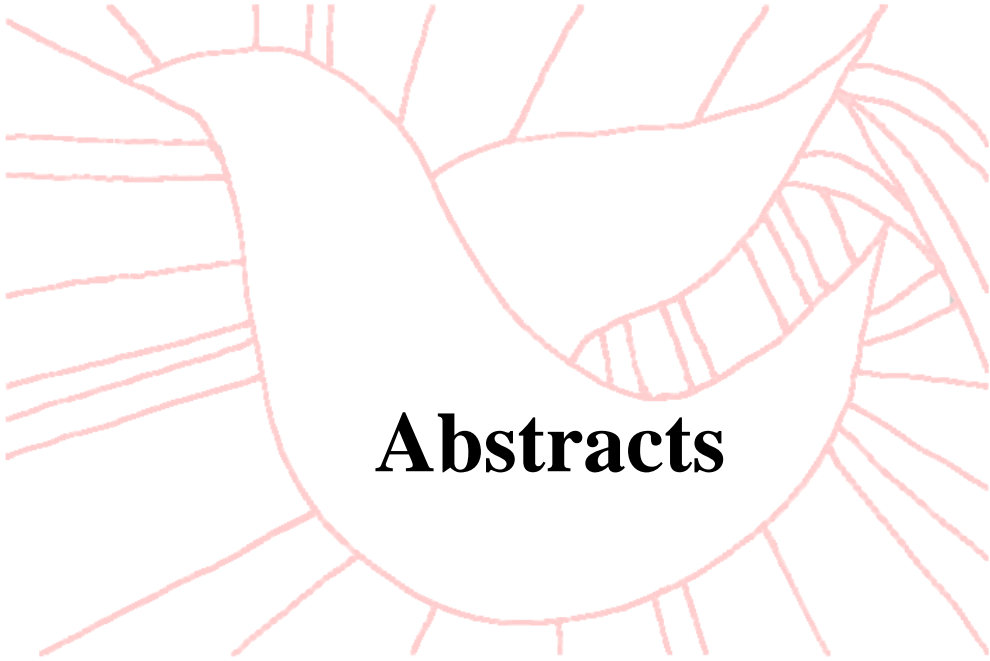
15:30-16:15: Sasa Josifovic (Cologne University, Germany): How much contingency does Kant's theory of self-consciousness consider and how much does it tolerate?

16:15-17:00: Discussion

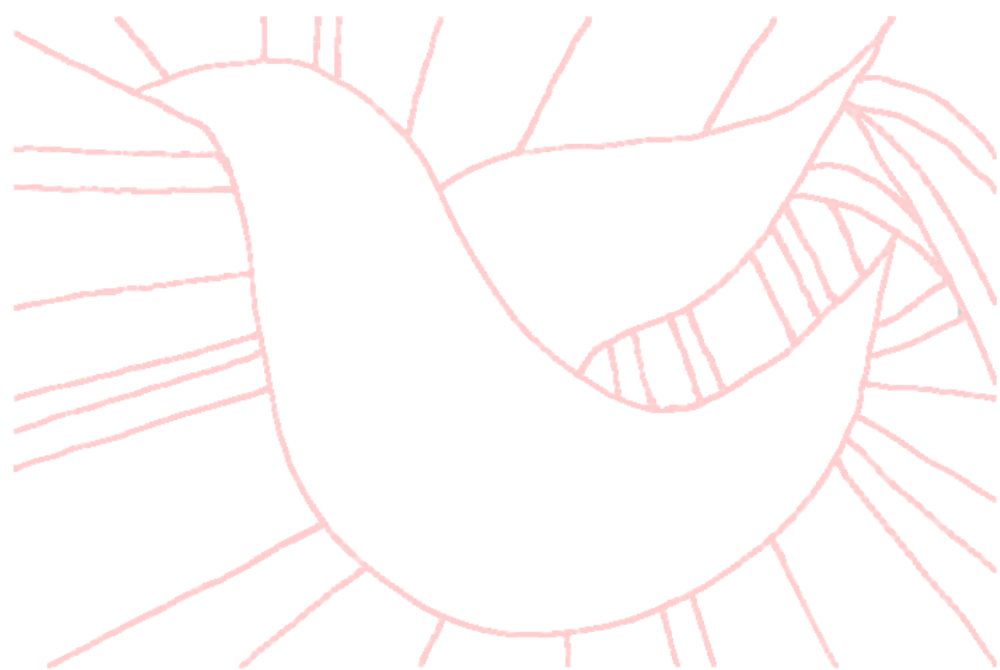
Facilitator: Eli Noé (Centre for Critical Philosophy)

17:00-17:45: Koichiro Matsuno (Nagaoka University of Technology, Japan): Closing Conference: Naturalizing the Kantian Regulative Principle





**Abstracts**



**Emiliano Acosta:** *Forms of inter-subjectivity in Kant's political writing "An Answer to the Question: What Is Enlightenment?" (1784)*

One should be surprised by the fact that in his *Aufklärungsschrift* Kant regards *laziness* and *cowardice*, and not *ignorance*, like the majority of his enlightened predecessors and contemporaries state, as the principal impediments for Enlightenment.

Behind Kant's decision to concentrate his analysis of what Enlightenment is supposed to be on the two above-mentioned attitudes (existentials) of the individual to its world (Umwelt), we can find a conception of the different forms in which subjectivity and inter-subjectivity can develop, have historically developed and must historically develop. The aim of the present paper is to reconstruct these different conceptions of co-constitution between individuals (inter-subjectivity as domination, on the one hand, and inter-subjectivity as open and free exchange of political perspectives between cosmopolitan subjects, on the other hand), in order to support my thesis that the concept of inter-subjectivity as discussion, conflict and dissent is not only more in line with his idea of reason and its historical development, but also necessary to comprehend the core of Kant's political writings between 1784 and 1795.

**Michel Bitbol:** *On the clarity of Quantum Mechanics from a Kantian Standpoint*

Instead of either formulating new metaphysical images (as realists would do) or rejecting any metaphysical attempt (as empiricists would do), the case of quantum mechanics might well require from us a complete redefinition of the nature and task of metaphysics. The sought redefinition can be performed in the spirit of Kant, according to whom metaphysics is the discipline of the boundaries of human knowledge. This can be called a "reflective" conception of metaphysics.. In this paper, each one of the most popular "interpretations of quantum mechanics is shown to be naturally

associated with a variety of Kant-like reflective metaphysics. Then, two well-known "paradoxes" of quantum mechanics (the measurement problem and the EPR correlations) are reformulated by way of this reflective attitude, and are thereby "dissolved". Along with this perspective, quantum mechanics becomes one of the most elegant and understandable theories of the history of physics in addition to being one of the most efficient. The only point that must be elucidated is why it looks so difficult culturally to accept a reflective and non-ontological standpoint on physical theories.

Michel Bitbol is director of research at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (France) and Associate lecturer at University Paris I, Pantheon-Sorbonne. His research is primarily in the Philosophy of Modern Physics, Philosophy of Mind, History of Physics and Philosophy of Science. He is best known for developing a neo-Kantian approach to philosophical questions concerning quantum mechanics. He has also worked closely with Francisco Varela on problems from the Philosophy of Mind and takes interest in Buddhist Philosophy. In English, he has published *Schrödinger's philosophy of quantum mechanics* and edited (in collaboration with Jean Petitot and Pierre Kerszberg) *Constituting Objectivity: Transcendental Perspectives on Modern Physics*.

**Mario Caimi:** *The logical structure of time according to the chapter of schematism*

Usually, when studying schematism, we devote an almost exclusive attention to the study of the modifications that the categories suffer when combined with time. Instead, we have focused our attention on the determinations that time receives when combined with the categories. Departing from the definition of the transcendental schemata as "determinations of time", an attempt is made to establish the various determinations that time receives from each one of the categories, as these perform the determination of time



in schematism. The categories of quantity allow us to think of time as a series of homogeneous unities; the categories of quality show each instant of time as a receptacle able to receive the different intensities (degrees) of the real; the categories of relation establish a rule-dependent order on the flow of time; finally, the categories of modality determine the whole of time forming a collective unity that gathers or embraces each one of the instants of time preserving its specificity (its individual features).

Mario Caimi is professor at the university of Buenos Aires (Argentina). His work focuses on the philosophy of Immanuel Kant. He is the author of *Kants Lehre von der Empfindung in der Kritik der reinen Vernunft. Versuch zur Rekonstruktion einer Hyletik der reinen Erkenntnis* (Kant's doctrine of sensation in the Critique of pure Reason. Attempt at a reconstruction of a Hyletics of pure Knowledge) (1982), *La metafísica de Kant. Reconstrucción de la argumentación del escrito de Kant "Los progresos de la Metafísica desde la época de Leibniz y de Wolff"* (Kant's Metaphysics. Reconstruction of the argumentation of Kant's work "What Real Progress Has Been Made by Metaphysics in Germany Since the Time of Leibniz and Wolff?") (1989), and has translated the Critique of Pure Reason in Spanish. He is also a member of the advisory board of the journal Kant-Studien.

**Paul Cobben:** *Hegel's critical reception of Kant's conception of objectivity*

The free subject is not determined in relation to the object, but is autonomous, i.e. it determines itself. In the Critique of Judgment, this creates the room to elaborate a relation to the object that, although it is not knowable, can nevertheless be characterized as a relation that is fundamentally distinguished from the subject/object relation in the phenomenal world: a subject/object relation that is not structured according to given categories and, in particular, does not give appearance to a causally structured nature. I understand that this

conference is inspired by the question whether Kant leaves room to alternative conceptions of objectivity here especially. In my lecture, I will follow another road. For the free, noumenal subject introduced by Kant, seems, on the one hand, to shed new light on Kant's distinctions in the Critique of pure Reason. Especially the curious, independent status that Kant ascribes to the transcendental subject may be understood, if it is founded in the noumenal subject. On the other hand, it must in that case also be concluded that the contradiction in which the transcendental subject is involved, cannot be solved. How can it be understood that a transcendental subject whose existence is not dependant on its acts of synthesis, is, in these acts, nevertheless dependent on categories that contradict its independence? After all, the categories are deduced from forms of judgment, i.e. from judgments of the sensibly given world. Is the independence of the transcendental subject not only safeguarded if it produces the categories out of itself?

Jürgen Habermas tries to solve these problems through the introduction of a radical separation between what he calls "truth" and "objectivity", between the object of cognition and the object of experience. Through this operation, the categorical structure of our knowledge is separated from our experience. Categorical structures are transformed into grammatical structures that correspond with the way in which the historical speech community puts reality in order. The object of experience is reduced to a kind of thing-in-itself, that only guarantees that the world that is interpreted by the speech community is indeed an objective one, i.e. a world that exists in itself. It requires few argumentation to admit that Habermas's approach raises more problems than it solves. It is true that independence of the quasi-transcendental subject of the speech community seems to be guaranteed, but it remains totally unclear how the relation to the objective world interpreted by this subject can still be conceptualized. Therefore, I will not focus on Habermas, but rather on Hegel's attempt to overcome the contradiction in Kant. His approach is opposed to Habermas's: he does not advocate the separation between objectivity and truth, but rather their internal unity. In Kantian terminology, this

means that he tries to overcome the separation between the noumenal and phenomenal world.

Paul Cobben is professor of philosophy at the University of Tilburg (The Netherlands). His main interests lie in the philosophies of Hegel and Habermas and the relation of their political thought to the issue of multiculturalism. Amongst his most notable publications are *Postdialectische Zedelijkheid* (Postdialectical Ethicity) (1996), *Das endliche Selbst. Identität und Differenz zwischen Heideggers Sein und Zeit und Hegels Phänomenologie des Geistes* (The finite self. Identity and Difference between Heidegger's Being and Time and Hegel's Phenomenology of the Spirit). (1999), *Das Gesetz der multikulturellen Gesellschaft. Eine Aktualisierung von Hegels Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts* (The Law of the multicultural Society. An actualization of Hegel's Elements of the philosophy of Right) (2002), *De multiculturele staat. Twaalf dialogen over het goede leven* (The multicultural State: Twelve dialogues on the good life) (2003) and *Hegel-Lexikon* (Hg) (2006). He is also the chairman of the Centrum voor Duits Idealisme.

**Arnaud Dewalque:** *Producing Objectivity Under Assumption of Values?*

In recent studies some sociologists and philosophers of science supported the view that the assumption of values plays a significant role in the production of scientific knowledge. Arguing that this view can be traced back to the Southwestern neo-Kantian school, I will discuss the epistemology of Heinrich Rickert, who is commonly regarded as one of the main representatives of this school, and sometimes even as its "leader". Roughly speaking, his way of dealing with scientific judgments is based on four theses: (1) objectivity is the result of a constituting process; (2) this constituting process is deeply rooted in the concrete subjectivity of epistemic agents; (3) concrete subjectivity is first and foremost characterized by the assumption of values; (4) those values exert a normative constraint on the judicative

activity of the epistemic agent. In this paper I will focus on (3) and (4) insofar as those theses provide us with an interesting alternative to Husserl's Life-World Theory and other similar views.

Arnaud Dewalque is professor at the University of Liège (Belgium). The main topic of his research is existential judgment in German Philosophy from Kant to Husserl. His PhD dissertation was on Rickert's Theory of the Categories.

**Anton Froeyman:** *The other as a condition of possibility of the problem of values in the humanities*

In this talk, I will try to sketch the space of thought which serves as a condition of possibility for the problem which Hans-Herbert Kögler and Arnaud Dewalque describe. I will argue that the discussion on the constitutive role of values for science presupposes a specific concept of subjectivity and intersubjectivity, namely a conception which has two different aspects. One I associate with the philosophy of Herder, the other with Kant. Both of these philosophers plea for a turn of philosophy towards subjectivity, although in a very different way. This turn opens up the possibility of studying cultural differences in an intersubjective way rather than an objectivist one. Therefore, both Kant and Herder can be said to have made significant and necessary steps towards the development of the humanities. However, I will argue that, in order to understand the discussion about the role of values in the humanities, neither of these two is sufficient in itself. Instead, we need both Kant and Herder's perspectives on the subject at the same time, combined in a specific notion of the other, in order for the discussion on the role of values in the humanities to make sense.

**Arran Gare:** *From Kant to Schelling on the Subject, the Object and Life*

Recent research has shown that Kant was not an isolated genius putting forward a complete system of philosophy. In fact his philosophy evolved through a constant struggle to meet the criticisms of his contemporaries, and to the end of his life Kant was struggling to overcome deficiencies in his earlier work. Many of the criticisms were directed at what were seen to be the unbridgeable dualisms in his philosophy. Critics questioned Kant's cognitive dualism, arguing that he had not demonstrated the applicability of a priori concepts to independently received sensations and so could not demonstrate that there could be objective knowledge of empirical reality. The Critique of Judgment was written in part in response to such criticisms. Accepting subjective and objective purposiveness justified ascribing purposiveness to some supersensible basis of experience, thereby explaining how the manifold of empirical laws could form a unity through intelligent design and at the same time how moral action is possible. To this end, it was incumbent on Kant to justify and provide the foundations for biology as a distinct science, the execution of which was a major contribution to the development of biology. However, despite his quest, Kant left teleology as regulative and not a constitutive principle of reflective judgment, and left a gulf between organic nature and inorganic nature. This failed to satisfy his critics, or himself. While a number of Kant's disciples grappled with the problem of relating concepts to the sensory manifold, reconciling freedom and necessity, and physics and biology, the most radical solution to the problems of critical philosophy was offered by Schelling. Accepting Fichte's argument that practical reason precedes theoretical reason and that the self-conscious 'I' could not be assumed but had to be explained as emerging through mutual recognition, Schelling argued that it is necessary also to appreciate that we are part of nature, and that it is necessary to explain how ideation can have emerged within nature. For Schelling, knowledge is not transcendental insofar as it determines nature for consciousness. Nature is

transcendental with regard to the production and producing of intelligence. As Schelling put it in First Outline of a System of the Philosophy of Nature, 'Nature is a priori'. What Schelling offers is a naturalization of the transcendental, thereby avoiding the dualism between nature and thought. This naturalization requires us to provide a natural history of our mind. Nature must be seen as capable of organizing itself, generating life and then mind. From this perspective, the organic is not divided from the rest of nature but is seen as a particular kind of self organization, which is the condition for the emergence of mind. Biology comes to take an even more central place in philosophy than in Kant.

In this paper I will examine and evaluate Schelling's proposal for a naturalization of the transcendental, focusing in particular on the implications for understanding life. This will be seen to involve not only a different view of life than that defended by Kant, but a different view of the relationship between philosophy, history and science, and between physics, biology and the humanities. I will argue that this is not only the most promising path for the development of transcendental philosophy; it is the most promising path for philosophy as such, and Schelling's effort to explain life has continuing relevance to current science.

Arran Gare is reader at Swinburne University of Technology. He is mainly known for his work in the fields of Environmental Philosophy and Process Philosophy, although he has published on many other topics as well. Recently, he has called for a revival of the "radical enlightenment". Amongst his books are *Beyond European Civilization: Marxism, Process Philosophy and the Environment* (1993) and *Postmodernism and the Environmental Crisis* (1995). He is the founder and director of the Joseph Needham Centre for Complex Processes Research.

**Sasa Josifovic:** *How much contingency does Kant's theory of self-consciousness consider and how much does it tolerate?*

Kant's theory of the human self was often identified with the pure apperception and it was claimed that it lacks a dynamic dimension that describes the interaction of the human self and the contingent manifold of intuition and experience that might play a decisive role in the process of self-constitution.

Considering Kant's core theory of self-consciousness developed in the Transcendental Deduction of the Categories I shall argue that Kant's theory of synthesis and knowledge is indeed based on an invariant structure of self-consciousness which he denotes as pure apperception, and which is a necessary condition for any kind of experience and subjective ontogenesis. But this core theory does not exhaust the whole Potential of Kant's theory of the human self which includes the dimensions of freedom, autonomy, aesthetical as well as contingent pleasure and last but not least religion, at all.

This presentation shall consider especially Rorty's critique on Kant's theory of the human self and defend Kant on the basis of the dynamic process of interaction of the core structures of our cognitive capacities with the given manifold of intuition and experience. It attempts to demonstrate that Kant's theory of the human self contains the necessary dynamic dimension which considers and describes the contingency of subjective historicity as well as the invariant structures of the underlying cognitive capacities.

Dr. Sasa Josifovic is research associate and currently assistant to the Chair at the Institute of Philosophy at the University of Cologne. His research interests are mainly in classical German philosophy. In 2007/2008 he published a book on Hegel's Theory of Self-consciousness in the Phenomenology of Spirit and in 2009 a chapter in another book on Hegel's *Phenomenology*, edited by K. Appel and T. Auinger. His current book project is concerned with „The Key Function of Control in Kant's Theory of Practical Freedom”.

**Hans-Herbert Kögler:** *Interpretation as Reflective Judgment: A Hermeneutic Critique of Objectivity*

At stake is the extent to which interpretive understanding in the human and qualitative social sciences can aspire to a shared binding form of objective meaning. The analysis will draw on existential-, philosophical-, and critical-hermeneutic insights to reassess the category of objectivity both as a value and product of human-scientific interpretation. Central will be two guiding assumptions. First, all reflective interpretation harks back and is grounded in a pre-reflective, holistic background understanding that entails formative factors of the respective social and cultural contexts. The "object" of understanding will thus always emerge as co-constituted by a referential intersubjective context beyond its direct reflective representation. Second, the constitution of meaning is understood along "expressivist" lines, such that the so-called content or object of interpretation must be seen as realized in the very process of taking account of it — rather than as pre-accomplished and pre-existing prior to the hermeneutic encounter.

The specific profile of our approach will be developed in three steps. In a first section, I will introduce a hermeneutic account of interpretive agency. Taking my cue from Dilthey's (problematic) attempt to combine (a) the groundedness of interpretation in a constitution-analysis of the interpretive agent, with (b) a defense of human-scientific objectivity, I will reconstruct how pre-reflective and reflective understanding are intertwined in both everyday and scientific interpretation. In a second step, I will reconsider the original Kantian idea of "reflective judgment" against the backdrop of this hermeneutic account of agency. At stake is the transformation that such a dialogical approach — given that hermeneutic agency is essentially derived from symbolically mediated perspective-taking — entails for interpretive reflexivity as a cognitive capacity for making objective judgments. Third, I will (a) apply the results of my discussion to the issue of value judgments in the human sciences, seen against the backdrop of the larger role of reflexive guidance of



action through human-scientific analysis, and (b) draw some conclusions about the different role of objectivity in different branches of scientific interpretation.

Hans-Herbert Koegler is professor at the University of North Florida. He specializes in Philosophy of Language, Philosophy of Culture, Social and Political Theory, Hermeneutics, Critical Theory and Philosophy of the Social Sciences. His works in English include *The Power of Dialogue: Critical Hermeneutics after Gadamer and Foucault* (1996) (a translation based on *Die Macht des Dialogs: Kritische Hermeneutik nach Gadamer, Foucault, und Rorty* (1992)) and *Michel Foucault* (2004). He is currently working on *Autonomie und Identität: Kritische Theorie und hermeneutische Kritik des Subjekts* (*Autonomy and Identity: Critical Theory and hermeneutic Critique of the Subject*).

**Filip Kolen:** *Symmetry: the co-constitutive between*

**Koichiro Matsuno:** *Naturalizing the Kantian Regulative Principle*

The Kantian regulative principle explored in the third Critique remains legitimate insofar as the Kantian space and time are maintained. The consequential implication is that the transcendental ego is responsible for imposing the organizational framework in the form of the regulative principle upon the material system that runs on the mechanistic doctrine. However, the principle does not work if the transcendental ego is absent on the scene for whatever reasons. The absence would become most acute once the natural emergence of the organization called biological beings is focused upon on the spot. In particular, if one pays legitimate attention to the natural origin of biological beings, naturalization of the regulative principle would badly be sought after by all means. One candidate for the present objective is a reshuffling of the contents of the first and the third Critiques. If causality as a connector of sequential events is taken as a basic premise prior to the notion of interaction as a condition for

guaranteeing the simultaneous coexistence of various events, one can perceive that the route toward what is called time may steadily be open. The necessary cost for the intended enterprise is appraisal of pre-predicative judgment framed in the progressive tense or in second-person description, whereas the Kantian regulative principle remains invincible within the stipulation of respecting predicative judgment anchored duly at third-person description in the present tense. Naturalization of the Kantian regulative principle is possible upon the sequential implementation of action and reaction framed in the pre-predicative judgment, that is to say, the material activity for fulfilling the law of action and reaction from within like a Leibnizian monad.

Koichiro Matsuno is currently professor Emeritus of biophysics in the Nagaoka University of Technology in Japan. He obtained his Ph.D. in physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1971. His research interests include chemical evolution, cell motility and evolutionary processes. He is the author of *Protobiology: Physical Basis of Biology* (1989) and *What is Internal Measurement* (2000), and the co-author of *Molecular Evolution and Protobiology* with K. Dose, K. Harada, and D. L. Rohlffing (1984), *The Origin and Evolution of the Cell* with H. Hartman (1992), and *Uroboros: Biology Between Mythology and Philosophy* with W. Lugowski (1998).

**Lenny Moss:** *Life, Detachment and Transcendental Philosophy*

From the merely stochastic presence of subatomic particles as described by a wave equation to the anthropogenesis of cosmopolitan socio-cultural "lifeworlds", "nature" can be seen to explore new and greater levels of "detachment". Detachment, so defined, entails a capacity to sustain an internal regime against the challenges of environmental perturbation, but detachment also requires compensation at a level that scales with the degree of detachment. Life, as we perceive it, corresponds to that level of detachment that begins with organizational closure (and the associated metabolism

required to sustain it). If Kant's Copernican Turn constituted a new level of philosophical reflection on the epistemology of cognitive detachment it was his renegade student Herder who had already laid the groundwork for a reflective philosophical anthropology of organismic detachment and compensation. If we are to take levels of natural detachment as indeed constitutive of forms of material existence, including forms of life, and the ostensible "purposiveness" of which Kant famously spoke as necessary and correlative compensation, then the terms of the transcendental philosophy must and can be radically reconfigured. We will consider both the consequences of this view for thinking about mechanism and teleology in contemporary philosophy of biology as well as its implications for a "soft naturalism" that allows for the dialectical reconciliation of empirical inquiry with that which issues from within the horizon of reflectively grasped, historically contingent "compensatory" self-understanding.

Lenny Moss is Associate Professor at the School of Humanities and Social Sciences (University of Exeter, Department of Sociology & Philosophy, affiliated with Egenis) where his research focuses on contemporary biology from the perspective of post-Kantian philosophical anthropology. Bringing together theoretical and conceptual studies in biology and the human sciences (and philosophy of science in general) and normative/critical studies in social theory, he contributes to an anthropologically informed Critical Theory. He is best known for his book *What Genes Can't Do* (2003), an influential critique on the concept of gene in current philosophy of biology.

**Frank Pierobon:** *A shift in paradigms: Kant's intuition and Newton's science*

Kantian thought is often addressed from the point of view of modern paradigms, especially as regards his conception of sciences and of mathematics. In fact, Kant is firmly committed to Euclidean

geometry, as evidenced by his conception of mathematical knowledge as a construction of concepts. There are consequences to this situation: while his mathematical competences were never disputed during his lifetime, the harshest of criticisms did come afterwards from mathematicians-philosophers (Bolzano, Russell, etc.). While Kant did not really see that the newest mathematics (such as Euler's) would draw their revolutionary powers from having severed their umbilical cord to intuition, his own theory of intuition (a bifacial entity combining transcendental idealism and empiric realism) remains fundamental in understanding not only his own philosophy, but also the evolution of modern sciences and even Husserl's diagnostic of a crisis undermining its very foundations.

Frank Pierobon is professor at the Institut des hautes études des communications sociales (IHECS) in Brussels (Belgium). He has published three books on Kant: *Kant et la fondation architectonique de la métaphysique* (*Kant and the architectonic foundation of metaphysics*) (1990), *Système et représentation – étude architectonique de la déduction transcendantale des catégories dans la Critique de la raison pure d'Emmanuel Kant* (*System and representation – architectonic study of the transcendental deduction of the categories in Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*) (1993) and *Kant et les mathématiques* (*Kant and Mathematics*) (2003).

**Jacinto Rivera De Rosales:** *Reformulating the Refutation of Idealism by Kant*

Heidegger opposes the Dasein to the supposedly isolated Kantian subject that would need proof of the reality of the world. The paper wants to show that it is not like that and thereby to liberate Kant of a widespread interpretation that disfigures it. The "Refutation of idealism" dialogues with precritical readers and doesn't prove the relation subject-object, but that of the internal with internal phenomenon inside the Analogies of the experience, which is where

Kant should have placed it, understanding the temporality of the external objects and the own space of the internal (the lived body).

Jacinto Rivera de Rosales is professor at the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (Madrid, Spain). He specializes in German Idealism and post-Kantian German philosophy. He is the author of *La realidad en sí en Kant (The Reality in itself in Kant)* (1988), *El punto de partida de la metafísica trascendental. Un estudio crítico de la obra kantiana (The point of departure of the transcendental metaphysics. A critical study of the kantian oeuvre)* (1993), *I. Kant: El conocimiento objetivo del mundo. Guía de lectura de la "Crítica de la razón pura" (I. Kant : The objective knowledge of the world. A reader's guide to the Critique of Pure Reason)* (1994) *Kant: la «Crítica del Juicio teleológico» y la corporalidad del sujeto (Kant: the "Critique of teleological Judgment" and the corporality of the subject)* (1998) and has translated works by Fichte and Schelling to Spanish. He is currently the vice-president of the Internationale Fichte-Gesellschaft.

**Norman Sieroka:** *A Post-Kantian Approach to the Constitution of Matter*

The investigation of conceptual developments by closely intertwining systematic and historical considerations can be viewed as a particularly post- and neo-Kantian legacy in philosophy. A starting point for this is Fichte's claim that philosophers must write a "historiography of the human mind" (and what Schelling and Hegel made of it). Or, later, Ernst Cassirer in works such as "Substanzbegriff und Funktionsbegriff" and "Philosophie der symbolischen Formen". In my talk I will apply this approach to theories of matter in modern physics. This exemplary case is meant to illustrate how one might thereby gain a deeper understanding (or for that matter: a "higher consciousness") of scientific concepts. In particular, I will discuss the historical wavering between understanding matter as being something passive or given, and taking matter to be active or becoming.

Strikingly enough, this wavering is closely related to the central concepts and issues of transcendental philosophy, like the "wavering of the power of imagination" (Schweben der Einbildungskraft), and the relation between intuition and concepts more generally.

Norman Sieroka is assistant-professor at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich. He focuses on the Philosophy of Physics and Mathematics, Metaphysics, Phenomenology, Early-modern philosophy and the Philosophy of Nature. He is co-author (along with H.G. Dosch and V.F. Müller) of *Quantum Field Theory in a Semiotic Perspective* (2005). His book *Umgebungen. Symbolischer Konstruktivismus im Anschluß an Hermann Weyl und Fritz Medicus* (*Environments. Symbolic Constructivism in continuity of Hermann Weyl and Fritz Medicus*) is forthcoming.

**Sergueï Spetschinsky:** *Reflexive, Objectivity, Reason and Races in Kant*

In *Reflexive Objectivity: Reason and Races in Kant*, I would like to reconsider the question of the objectivity of reason from the perspective of Kant's writings on human races. I intend to show how his discourse on races, which embarrassed many Kant interpreters by its obvious racism and scientific weakness, plays a necessary role in the constitution of the concept of reason. For the first time it is in these writings that the idea of determined empirical natures (like human bodies as belonging to a race), can be understood as if they are "purposive" (zweckmäßig), meaning, as if they are non-determined final causes. This opens to a perspective transcending xenophobia, where human beings are seen as a unique species, as moral persons deserving unconditional respect.

To think about the relationship between race and reason in Kant in order to think objectivity puts the latter into contradiction. What Kant understands as the objectivity of reason in both the theoretical and practical sides is doubly contradicted by his own thoughts on races: as theoretical/scientific reason, in the sense that Kant's raciology is

totally inaccurate scientifically (following the criteria of the Critique of Pure Reason), as well as practical/moral reason, in the sense that Kant's racism is immoral (following the criteria of the Critique of Practical Reason). And yet, strangely, it seems that the possibility to overcome such Kantian mistakes, is to be found in those very writings. Everything happens as if Kant the racist, intellectual precursor of 19th century scientific racism and colonisation, leads to Kant the Aufklärer, founder of the ideas of absolute primacy of the moral law, perpetual peace and fundamental rights inherent to humankind.

To analyze this paradox means to rethink the relationship between the particular and the universal. To think objectivity demands thinking its radical otherness, which means, to think about the transition between the a priori character of objectivity and the irreducible singularity of the particular, always tied to subjectivity.

Sergueï Spetschinsky is a PhD-student at the Université libre de Bruxelles (Belgium). His work is mostly in modern European philosophy and German philosophy in general. He is working on a dissertation on the notions of Universal, Action and Hope in Kant's Critical Works.

**Joan Steigerwald:** *Natural purposes and the purposiveness of nature: The antinomy of the teleological power of judgment and its significance for the critical project*

Kant's Critique of the Power of Judgment introduces two distinct notions of purposiveness for our judgments of natural objects — the concept of natural purpose guiding our judgments of living organisms and the principle of purposiveness guiding our judgment of the unity of nature. But these two notions of purposiveness work against each other in the third Critique, with the antinomy of the teleological power of judgment demonstrating that the conception of living organisms as natural purposes thwarts the attempt to regard nature in its diversity as a single system in harmony with our cognitive powers. My paper will

explore the antinomy of the teleological power of judgment, its lack of resolution, and its larger significance for Kant's critical project. The "Critique of the Teleological Power of Judgment" focuses on the epistemic limits of our knowledge of living organisms. Our study of these unique natural products demonstrates their remarkable organization and regularity, but they remain forms of natural order that are contingent in terms of the mechanisms of nature. We can account for their possibility only by appealing to a concept of reason, namely, the concept of purpose. But organisms do not fit within the domain of concepts of reason; they are formed by natural processes rather than on the basis of an extrinsic idea. As natural objects judged to be purposively self-organizing we must conceive of them as natural purposes. The concept of natural purpose does not offer an explanation of the organization and self-organizing capacities of living organisms, accounting for what eludes mechanical explanation, but is solely a concept of the reflecting power of judgment for its own ends, a means for us to identify and think about these unique natural products. If Kant argued that a priori concepts are the epistemic conditions necessary for any thought of an object in general, demonstrating the subjective conditions of all objective experience, his account of our judgment of natural purposes is doubly subjective, in that it does not provide an objective conception of these unique natural objects. Indeed, Kant did not provide a deduction of the concept of natural purpose because of its polymorphous character — the product of an activity of judgment that reflects upon purposiveness as a concept of reason but applying it to an object of experience, it is unclear which faculty could ground this concept.

What does this conclusion mean for the larger project of the Critique of the Power of Judgment and its argument that nature as a whole is in harmony with our cognitive powers? The Analytic of the teleological power of judgment concludes that reflections upon organisms as natural purposes suggest that all of nature is a system of purposes. The beautiful in nature also suggests that nature is purposive for our intellect. That we are able to generate a harmony of our cognitive faculties in a common sense that grounds the aesthetic power of



judgment and is the condition of cognition in general, and able to bring our intuitions of objects into relation to our understanding and to bring our cognitive faculties to bear on natural phenomena, suggests that natural objects are purposive for our cognition. The possibility of unifying empirical laws into a system of knowledge also suggests that nature as a whole might be purposive for our intellect. In the introductions to the third Critique Kant introduced a principle of purposiveness to guide our reflection upon the unity of nature in its diversity of empirical laws. This principle of purposiveness might seem to suggest that we can regard nature as if it is designed with our cognitive needs in mind. But the third Critique was explicit that it is not possible to derive a theology from theoretical reason, and that while physical teleology might induce us to look for a theology, it cannot produce one. The purposiveness of nature can at best suggest the unity of nature as grasped by an intuitive understanding, a form of cognition our discursive understanding cannot comprehend except figuratively. But the antinomy of the teleological power of judgment shows how living organisms appear to confound rather than support this principle of purposiveness. These unique natural products defy our understanding and elude our mechanical explanations, calling into question the assumption that nature can be grasped as an ordered whole under a single principle. If the possibility of these unique natural products can only be accounted for by appealing to a concept of purpose, and they thus must be conceived as natural purposes, they nevertheless call into question the principle of the purposiveness of nature in its diversity. The promise of a harmony between nature and our intellectual faculties is unfulfilled. The Critique of the Power of Judgment thus draws attention to an irreducible indeterminate element in the relation of our intellect to the world.

Kant's failure to resolve the antinomy of the teleological power of judgment is nevertheless a productive failure. It suggests that the Critique of the Power of Judgment offers a rethinking of judgment in critical philosophy, rather than providing closure to Kant's philosophical system, and that his legacy may be more complex than is commonly thought, by admirers and critics alike.

Joan Steigerwald is assistant-professor at the University of York. Her research interests lie with the cultural contexts of science, the history of the life sciences and environmental thought, German Romanticism, visual and literary representations of nature, epistemology of experiment and technology, and the roles of narrative in science. In 2006, she was guest editor for an issue of *Studies in History and Philosophy of Biological and Biomedical Sciences* on "Kantian Teleology and the Biological Sciences".

**Gertrudis Van de Vijver:** *Objectivity: its meaning, its limitations, its fateful omissions*

A brief overview is given of the research line adopted by the Centre for Critical Philosophy since the last 10 years. Starting from the problem of self-organization and complexity in the context of living systems, it is argued that a critical approach of objectivity is advisable to avoid the dualistic objectivism-subjectivism opposition. Kant's third *Critique* is shown to play a major role, on the one hand in delineating the constitutive nature of objectivity, on the other hand in showing its co-constitutive relation to subjectivity. Two major elements are at play here: the internal dynamical structure of the living system, and contingent the role of the feeling of pleasure and displeasure at play here. In as far as objectification is impossible, subjectivity emerges in the form of a supplementation to this impasse. On the basis of Husserl's *Crisis*, this idea of co-constitution is further explored and extrapolated to the natural and the cultural sciences.

**Maarten Van Dyck:** *The mathematization of nature as a historical and philosophical problem*

How do we find order in the ever-changing and fleeting appearances with which we are continually presented? How can we think change in a coherent way – i.e. without betraying the stringency of thinking as

an act guided by its own norms? This is one of the most basic questions that shaped Western philosophy as a field with its own set of characteristic problems to which any philosopher is forced to return. At the same time it is also a question that any "researcher" actually engaged in the search for order implicitly has to answer through her specific ways of going about in trying to achieve her aim. This is not to claim that she is necessarily aware of the nature of her engagement, nor that this need be more than a very tentative approach; but without some norm-bound practice the research cannot even get off the ground.

It is clear that these two perspectives – let's call them the meta-physical and the natural-philosophical – mutually interact and cannot always be neatly separated. In their most fruitful moments new kinds of natural-philosophical investigations can act as a kind of cognitive experiments in gauging the field of possible meta-physical answers, whereas these answers can in their turn further guide or inspire (or even help stabilize the basic framework of) the researches in the order of the natural world. Taking this interaction seriously implies that we should be careful in separating what we are used to call the history of science from the history of philosophy; but even more importantly, that we can only separate our interest in the most basic philosophical questions from the history of philosophy and science at our own peril. If we want to understand how we can think change in a coherent way, we can do no better than start by reflecting on the nature of the research practices in which we have engaged throughout history, and especially on how we have come to change their internal logic in our attempts to gain a better (or more suitable) grip on the ever-changing and fleeting appearances. It is only in the breaking-points, both big and small, with which the history of our thinking is replete that we can see the contours of the dynamics which truly characterizes the most fundamental nature of our human reason.

In my talk I will take up this suggestion by looking at the seventeenth century research project of the mathematization of nature. More specifically, I will uncover some of the strategies through which mathematicians and natural philosophers were exploring new ways of

thinking the causal structure of nature. While not explicitly starting from a reflection on the attractions and problems of transcendental philosophy, my historical narrative is still intended as a contribution to a better understanding of what a historicized version of such philosophy could look like.

Maarten Van Dyck is assistant professor at the department of Philosophy and Moral Science at Ghent University. His PhD-thesis was entitled *An archaeology of Galileo's science of motion*, and his present research is still driven by the same question that lay behind this dissertation: how can we understand the drive towards a mathematical philosophy of nature that became so prominent in the seventeenth century in a way that is sensitive to both the philosophical and historical challenges that arise from our simply phrasing this question as crucial to understand our own ideals of objectivity.

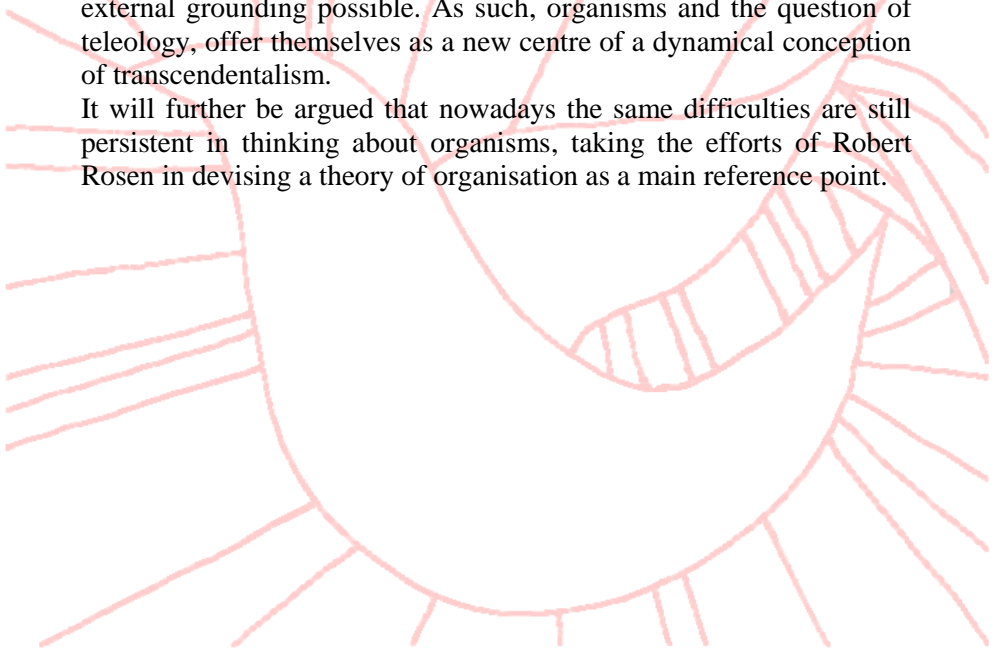
**Joris Van Poucke:** *The place of biological theory in the critical enterprise*

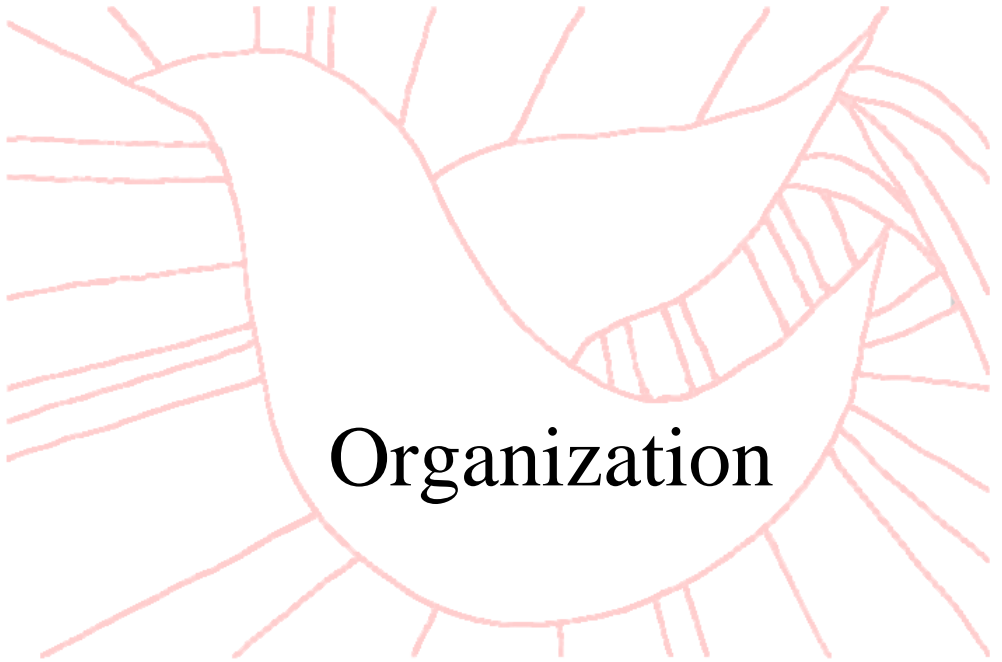
In the second part of the Critique of Judgment, Kant discusses the possibility of a biological science. His well known dictum “there will never be a Newton of a blade of grass” seems to imply that he dismisses that possibility, at least if that science is structured alongside objective science as exemplified by Newtonian mechanics. The a priori principle of judgment is a merely subjective, regulative principle and does not constitute knowledge. In this article, we will discuss that impossibility and the Kantian argumentation leading to that conclusion, but also, and that is more important, what *is* possible. At heart of the Kantian argumentation, there is a kind of circularity and also a peculiarity, which can be described as follows: In order to judge that a living system can never be objectified, Kant needs a biological theory of the organism that allows him to make that judgment. At the same time, that judgment is justified because of the nature, which is prescribed by the theory, of the organism as natural

purpose. The question, which presents itself with full force now, is where does this biological theory come from? In what sense can it be necessary to adopt this biological theory instead of a mechanical one? What is its relation to objectivity, and to philosophy interpreted as critique?

The subjective necessity of the teleological judgment, notwithstanding or perhaps because of the problems in justifying it, points to a responsibility, a commitment, for which there is never going to be an external grounding possible. As such, organisms and the question of teleology, offer themselves as a new centre of a dynamical conception of transcendentalism.

It will further be argued that nowadays the same difficulties are still persistent in thinking about organisms, taking the efforts of Robert Rosen in devising a theory of organisation as a main reference point.





**Scientific Committee**

Emiliano Acosta, Ghent University  
Paul Cruysberghs, Catholic University Leuven (KUL)  
Peter Reynaert, Antwerp University  
Jean Sebas, Université de Liège  
Gertrudis Van de Vijver, Ghent University

**Organizing Committee**

Emiliano Acosta  
Liesbet De Kock  
Boris Demarest  
Anton Froeyman  
John Gilbert  
Filip Kolen  
Eli Noé  
Franc Rottiers  
Luis Ramirez Trejo  
Henk Vandaele  
Elisabeth Van Dam  
Gertrudis Van de Vijver  
Joris Van Poucke

Financed by FWO Flanders

## The Centre for Critical Philosophy

The Centre for Critical Philosophy was founded in 2005. It originated in the FWO-research community “Evolution & Complexity”, which consisted mainly of philosophers and biologists. Its core interest was in the topic of self-organization and complexity in the evolution and development of living organisms. The Centre for Critical Philosophy pursues and deepens this interest from within a transcendental and phenomenological framework, inspired in the first place by Kant’s philosophy, and more specifically by his third *Critique*. On the one hand, its aim is to contribute to a transcendently inspired epistemology and philosophy of science. A much debated question here is how the transcendental perspective can be made relevant for a further understanding (objectification) of complex dynamical structures, at the biological as well as at the psychodynamic and, more recently, political and societal level. On the other hand, it devotes much attention to the detailed and critical study of the basic historical texts of these traditions, with a view to their actualization for contemporary philosophical debates (from both sides of the so-called continental-analytic split). Current research along these lines deals primarily with objectivity, in its relation to subjectivity, with as major sources of inspiration a.o. Kant and neo-kantianism, Fichte, Hegel, Husserl, Heidegger, Cassirer, Wittgenstein, Merleau-Ponty, Levinas, Rosen, Badiou, Rancière, Agamben.