INTERNATIONAL PHILOSOPHICAL
CONFERENCE

Language, Mind, and Knowledge

PROGRAM & BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

June 18–20, 2014

Conference Program

All sessions take place at the Centre for Croatian Studies of the University of Zagreb, Borongaj Campus

Wednesday, 18 June 2014

10:00–10:30 *Opening of the Conference*

> Josip Talanga, *Head of the Centre for Croatian Studies, University of Zagreb*

> Davor Pećnjak, *President of the Society for the Advancement of Philosophy*

Session 1

10:30–11:10 Marián Zouhar, *Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovak Republic*
In Search of Faultless Disagreement

11:10–11:50 Lukáš Bielik, *Slovak Academy of Sciences, Slovak Republic*
Intuitions, Models, and Assessment of Semantic Theories

11.50–12:30 Dušan Dožudić, *University of Zagreb, Croatia*
At the Brink of Millianism: Proper Names and World-Indexed Properties

12:30–14:00 *Lunch Break*

Session 2

14:00–14:40 Joško Žanić, *University of Zadar, Croatia*
Externalism, Naturalisability of Content, and Research Programs in Semantics

14:40–15:20 Mirela Fuš, *University of Rijeka, Croatia*
Social-Kind Pejorative Concepts as Recognitial Files

15:20–15:40 *Coffee Break*

Session 3

15:40–16:20 Martina Blečić, *University of Rijeka, Croatia*
The Semantic and Moral Evolution of Slurs

16:20–17:00 Tibor Bárány, *Budapest University of Technology and Economics, Hungary*
Intensionality, Intuitions, and (Verbal) Irony

Thursday, 19 June 2014

Session 4

10:00–10:40 Boran Berčić and Luca Malatesti, *University of Rijeka, Croatia*
The Inconceivability Argument

10:40–11:20 Miklós Márton, *Eötvös Loránd University, Hungary*
Consciousness and Intentionality: A Methodological Survey of the Theories about their Relationship

11:20–11:40 *Coffee Break*

11:40–12:20 Zoran Škoda, *Ruđer Bošković Institute, Zagreb, Croatia*
Semantics of Noncommutative Geometry

12:20–13:00 Sandro Skansi, *Zagreb, Croatia*
Proof Theory and Descriptive Complexity

17:00 *Guided sightseeing of Zagreb for participants*

Friday, 20 June 2014

Session 5

10:00–10:40 ZVONIMIR ČULJAK, *University of Zagreb*, *Croatia*
On the Vagueness of "Know"

10:40–11:20 ŽELJKO MANČIĆ, *University of Belgrade*, *Serbia*
Epistemic Contextualism and Skeptical Paradox

11:20–12:00 ANA BUTKOVIĆ, *University of Zagreb*, *Croatia*
Philosophical and Rational Intuition

12:00–13:30 *Lunch Break*

Session 6

13:30–14:10 GORAN RUJEVIĆ, *University of Novi Sad*, *Serbia*
Mathematics of Intuition and Imagination

14:10–14:50 MÁRTA UJVÁRI, *Corvinus University of Budapest*, *Hungary*
Mereological Principles in Philosophy

19:00 *Conference Dinner*

Abstracts

Intensionality, Intuitions, and (Verbal) Irony

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In the philosophical literature it is commonly supposed that "symptoms" of linguistic intensionality–failure of substitutivity of coreferential terms or predicates, failure of quantifier exportation, failure of existential generalization, and availability of nonspecific readings–can be explained by the occurrence of certain expressions in the sentence. These expressions (propositional attitude verbs, modal expressions, certain adverbial modifiers, etc.) create intensional contexts: our anti-substitution intuitions and intuitions about the failure of existential generalization and about non-specificity are invoked by linguistic elements within the syntactic/semantic scope of these expressions. However, so-called "simple sentences" (analyzed first by Jennifer M. Saul in 1997) do not contain intensional expressions, yet coreferring names cannot be substituted in them *salva veritate*. (For example: 'Clark Kent went into the phone booth, and Superman came out'–'Clark Kent went into the phone booth, and Clark Kent came out'.) Semantic accounts of the phenomenon aim to show either that the names in question, contrary to what we might initially think, are not coextensive (Pitt 2001; Moore 1999; Moore 2000); or that the logical forms of "simple sentences" contain hidden indexical elements which block the substitution of co-referring names (Forbes 1997; 1999; 2006). Pragmatic accounts hold that anti-substitution intuitions should be thought of as products of pragmatic mechanisms–for example, the two sentences trigger different conversational implicatures (Barber 2000). According to "the mistaken evaluation" account provided by David Braun and Jennifer M. Saul (2002) and Saul (2007) our intuitive judgments about the truth values of "simple sentences" are incorrect, and these mistaken judgments are to be explained

by some complex psychological or cognitive processes. In my presentation I offer a pragmatic explanation of the phenomenon of "simple sentences" which is based on the so-called pretense account of verbal irony (cf. Currie 2006; 2011). By uttering a "simple sentence" the speaker *makes as if* she did not know that the names in question are co-referring, while she takes it for granted that members of the audience are aware of this fact–and also that they know that the speaker is aware of it as well. The person who speaks ironically adopts two (or more) epistemically (or otherwise) incompatible perspectives simultaneously; uttering "simple sentences" is but one way–a rather intricate way–to speak ironically. A major advantage of my account is that by applying it to the phenomenon of "simple sentences" we can withdraw our everyday anti-substitution intuitions (in a way that Saul's psychological explanation or Barber's pragmatic account cannot) without making dubious assumptions about the conventional use of proper names (Pitt, Moore) or the logical form of "simple sentences" (Forbes).

The Inconceivability Argument

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David Chalmers's conceivability argument involves three main assumptions. The first one is that we can *ideally conceive* a *zombie world*. This is a world that is a physical duplicate of our world where there are, in particular, zombies. These are individuals that are our physical duplicates but that lack conscious experiences. The second premise is that from the conceivability of a zombie world we should derive its possibility. Finally, the third premise is that materialists must embrace the thesis that a zombie world is impossible. Therefore, the argument leads to the conclusion that the possibility of a zombie world is damaging to materialism. In this paper we offer what we take to be a novel combination of two criticisms against the conceivability argument. We will first argue that, independently from the truth of physicalism, zombie worlds are impossible. The core premise of our argument is a modally strong formulation of the principle of uniformity of nature. According to this principle, if certain event of a type *A* causes an

event of type *B*, and we take all the other conditions and the laws of nature to be fixed, it is necessary that if another event of type *A* occurs then an another event of type *B* occurs. Then we will argue that the impossibility of zombies undermines their conceivability. Specifically, we will criticise Chalmers's understanding of two-dimensional semantics that underlies his conceivability argument.

Intuitions, Models and Assessment of Semantic Theories

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Nowadays, the evidential role of intuitions is discussed intensively in many areas of philosophy. However, the issues on the methodology of semantic theories (theories of meaning) are rather neglected. Nevertheless, the question of methodological comparison and assessment of semantic theories is substantive for various areas of the philosophy of language. It is the issues of evaluation of semantic theories where intuitions come into play. Hence, it is claimed that semantic theories work – either implicitly or explicitly – with (at least) two kinds of models: the language-model and the model of meaning. Such kinds of models usually differ in different theories of meaning. We believe that it is the distinctive trait of models to represent only several specific properties of an object being modelled. The question of what properties to choose for the model-construction is rather complex one. However, we argue that an important source for semantic models of language and meaning comes from (possibly different) intuitions about language and meaning. Even if we do not construe intuitions as infallible beliefs or seemings, we claim that they may play an evidential role in philosophical theories including semantic theories. After displaying the positive role of intuitions in constructing models of language and meaning, we consider two distinct sources of conflict between semantic theories. The first possible conflict may arise when there are strictly opposite intuitions about language and meaning in different semantic theories (e.g., "Linguistic meanings are material objects" contra "Linguistic meanings are abstract entities"). On the other hand, any two semantic theories may

differ in how adequately they model some common ground of shared intuitions about language and meaning. We claim, as a conclusion, that as far as there are no overwhelming (and semantically independent) reasons for rejection of one of the conflicting intuitions about language or meaning, it is much more productive to focus on those semantic theories which share a common ground of intuitions.

The Semantic and Moral Evolution of Slurs

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One of the most important questions related to slurs (pejoratives used to derogate members of a specific group, as defined by Hom) is whether they are a semantic or a pragmatic phenomenon, that is, whether they have a propositional content or they are merely expressive terms. I would like to suggest that slurs – at least the ones of figurative origin which follow Genter's *career of metaphor hypothesis* – are born as a pragmatic phenomenon, but that they become semantic. They start as the result of an explicit and conscious inference, then they resemble a conversational implicature (the phenomenon inaugurated by Grice), evolve into something close to a conventional implicature (Grice)/explicature (Sperber)/implicature (Bach) and at the last stage of their evolution their meaning is semantically fixed and their interpretation is unconscious. Once the slur becomes a semantic phenomenon, this pragmatic-semantic cycle can restart and a new, positive or neutral meaning can arise. In order to explain all the intricacies related to slurs, especially their expressive and their descriptive components, we need to approach them both synchronically and diachronically. This approach will not only rely on the evolution of the meaning of the word, but also on the evolution of the way the hearer and the speaker process it, that is, it will depend on whether its interpretation goes on at the personal or at the sub-personal level. This kind of systematization will be backed up by Recanati's schema concerning the inferential layers of language. Generally speaking, whether the derogation is part of their meaning or not will depend on the evolutionary stage at which we are using and analyzing a

particular slur. In addition, different speakers, or communities of speakers, can use the same slur at different levels of its evolution. In order to figure out how to treat the use of a slur we need to determine at which stage it is used in a particular occurrence. Finally, I suggest that the natural evolution of a slur is towards a non-derogatory, neutral, or sometimes even positive meaning. Insisting on the derogatory meaning of slurs and prohibiting their use (as philosophers such Anderson and Lepore do) we are holding back their linguistic and moral evolution. Contrary to our good intentions, doing so will reinforce the negativity associated with them.

Philosophical and Rational Intuition

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According to the received view, intuitions are, in epistemological and methodological sense, important as a source of a priori evidence in contemporary analytic philosophy. There is, however, an apparent ambiguity in the usage of the term 'rational intuition', which by some rationalists covers a so-called philosophical or classification intuition as well. This ambiguity makes difficult to understand what is actually asserted about intuitions and what is disputed. Contemporary rationalists frequently describe rational intuition by means of *necessity* and *abstractness* concepts, without clearly indicating why they do so. In this paper I will try to show that rationalists' accounts are deficient due to the fact that they fail to justify and explain the use of these concepts and also fail to distinguish among other properties standardly attributed to intuitions. Consequently, they unintentionally exclude an important type of intuition from their accounts of rational intuition, namely the philosophical or classification intuition for which they claim that it is of special interest to philosophy and an important source of a priori justification and knowledge.

On the Vagueness of "Know"

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Epistemic contextualists usually interpreted the predicate "know" either as an *indexical*, comparable to the expressions like "I", "here" or "this", or as a *gradable* term, like "tall or "flat". Mark Heller (1999), however, categorized "know" as a broadly *vague* term. In this paper it is argued that "know" does behave or can be considered as a vague term, rather than only as indexical or gradable. In contrast to Heller's contextualist interpretation, it is argued that the vagueness of "know" can be explained in a non-contextualist manner: "know" behaves as vague within *a single* context, independently of inter-contextually *variable* epistemic standards. Accordingly, the fact that "know" has no well-defined extension and admits borderline cases has not to be considered as indicative of the vagueness contextually conditioned.

At the Brink of Millianism: Proper Names and World-Indexed Properties

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Fregeans hold that proper names express identifying properties in virtue of which they refer to a particular object – the one that satisfies such a property. And it is this property, rather than the object referred to itself, that enters the semantic content of sentences they are part of; so identifying properties make the meaning of a name. Anti-Fregeans deny this, and argue that the semantics of proper names has to be built on a different ground – typically, on a version of a causal theory of reference. Fregeans, it is commonly believed, would have a hard time dealing with numerous

counterexamples to their theory offered by Kripke, Donnellan, and others who initially motivated the anti-Fregean "revolution" in the 1970s. On the other hand, Fregeans can easily deal with semantic puzzles, such as Frege's identity puzzle, the puzzle of empty names, (negative) existential statements, and the puzzle of substitution failure in intensional contexts, which initially motivated Frege and Russell to discard a simple Millian "denotation without connotation" conception of (ordinary) proper names. These semantic puzzles appear to be a stepping-stone for any anti-Fregean striving to restore the Millian conception. All this led to a frustrating condition with both Fregeans and anti-Fregeans trying to accommodate and/or explain away insights and objections of the rival side. In order to resolve this problem Plantinga argued that a better Fregean view could be offered once the anti-Fregean insights were taken into account and built into a Fregean view. In what follows I will consider Plantinga's view, I will state its merits, point to its problems, and then try to see how a proponent of his view might deal with these problems.

Social-kind Pejorative Concepts as Recognitial Files

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In this paper, I wish to discuss and put together two, at least at first glance, philosophical ideas that might not seem related. More precisely, my aim is to bring closer Miscevic's new theory of pejoratives with Recanati's work on the mental files framework. Let me first briefly sketch out Miscevic's position within the theories of pejoratives. In his forthcoming paper Miscevic offers his own position on pejoratives. Very briefly, there have been two dominant traditions of the theories of pejoratives, i.e. expressivist (Frege) and semanticist (Dummett). According to Frege the negative part we find in pejoratives belongs not to the semantic content, but to the speaker's attitude expression, whereas on the other side Dummett had the notion of the pejorative's negative influence on the truth value. Miscevic takes Dummett's truth-conditional semanticists side (as opposite to non-truth conditional, e.g. Williamson, Potts), but also embraces Wiliamson's

rejection of Dummett's inferentionalism and instead defends the conceptual, the opposite, side of the truth-conditional semanticists side horn. Furthermore, he distinguishes his theory from Hom's *descriptive* one, and, finally, he gives a truth-conditional pluralist alternative and offers his theory in terms of "negative hybrid social kind term". I move now to describe shortly Recanati's theory of content and reference. His position falls under a nondescriptivist approach and gives an indexical model which he formulates in terms of mental files. Reference is determined relationally, not satisfactionally, and occurs via mental files. Furthermore, according to Recanati there are relatively stable mental files he calls "recognitial files". The specificity of the recognitial files is on one hand the "familiarity" relation, which gives them stability, whereas on the other hand they fit into the Recanti's "indexical model". Thus construed, indexical files are based on specific contextual relations. Any epistemically rewarding relation will do if it pertains the relation to the object and determination of reference of the file, which is a sort of a mental equivalent of singular term. Linguistic expressions inherits the reference of the associated mental file which serves as the vehicle of singular thought. The key bridge-point to Miscevic and Recanti, as I want to show, is Recanati's idea of construing natural kind concepts as recognitial files. I want to show how this open a possiblity for the following argument:

P1: Natural kind concepts are recognitial files (i.e. encyclopedic files, and they refer singualry).

P2: Social kind concepts are recognitial files as well Natural kind concepts. (SkpC)

P3: Pejoratives belong to a cluster of Social kind concepts in language.

P4: SkpC refers singularly.

We can further formulate this in the context of pejoratives. Social kind *type* term has certain predicate properties, and in case of pejoratives it has the pejorative content. When one refers, one refers via a social kind token term, and has the characteristics of Recanati's "token-reflexive demonstrative relation" his mental file theory relies on. For instance, in order to refer singularly to an object while using a pejorative, the object has to fall under the social kind type term of a certain term one applies to that object. Namely, if you call someone "Cigan", the person has to belong to the social kind type concept of "Cigan", in order for one to successfully refer to that

person. Consequentially, the force of pejorative is out of reach in cases where there is no matching between social kind type and the object's or person's belonging to it as being its token.

Epistemic Contextualism and Skeptical Paradox

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Skeptical paradox represents a set of epistemic claims which seem correct when we consider them separately, but inconsistent when considered together. Philosophical skeptic shall appeal to this inconsistency and attempt to lead us to doubt in all of our knowledge claims. One of the solutions for this unpleasant situation has been offered by epistemic contextualists, who maintain that truth evaulation of our epistemic claims should be based on the epistemic contexts of their utterance. Each of these contexts bring certain epistemic standards that need to be satisfied in order to declare knowledge claims true or false. It is commonly assumed that weaker or "lower" epistemic standards are easier to satisfy. The situation gets much more complicated if we appeal to "higher" epistemic standards which are harder or impossible to satisfy. Roughly speaking, according to epistemic contextualists, philosophical skeptic prefers to rely on the higher epistemic standards. They believe, however, that she is not consistent with this effort, because skeptic will usually apply higher standards even to knowledge claims which require lower standards, ie. to knowledge claims which we, in ordinary circumstances, evaluate in relation to the lower standards. Therefore, rougly said, the main contextualist strategy of defending our ordinary knowledge claims from the skeptic's attacks argues that she is not allowed to confuse or misuse these contexts. Disputes between contextualists and their opponents produced a new debate regarding validity of the epistemic closure principle. Fred Dretske argued that the role of this principle in epistemology is questionable, which is why we need to find another way to deal with skeptic. However, it seems that the price we need to pay is to high if we decide to follow his suggestion, since, as it is argued, most of us would agree that the principle seems intuitivelly

valid after all. This is one of the main reasons why Mylan Engel decided to accept the principle, but to argue against epistemic contextualism. He believes that contextualism implies several counterintuitive consequences: asymmetry of contexts, relativisation of knowledge etc. Unlike contextualist and Dretske's approach, he believes that the paradox is actually a result of logical fallacy (equivocation) committed by skeptic. Gail Stine points out the same fallacy, which she believes the skeptic is making because of misuses of the epistemic contexts, but she suggests we should both accept the epistemic closure principle and epistemic contextualism, which will equip us with better strategy to defeat skeptic by using his own weapons. My main objective will be to examine the arguments for and against epistemic contextualism and the epistemic closure principle, and then to investigate which is the best approach for resolving the skeptical paradox: the contextualist strategy or non-contextualist strategy which preserves the epistemic closure principle and argues that the paradox is actually based on severe logical fallacies.

Consciousness and Intentionality: A Methodological Survey of the Theories about their Relationship

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The two most prominent candidates for the role of the mark of the mental are intentionality and phenomenal consciousness. While traditionally they were treated separately, in the last two decades there has been an intense debate about their relationship. In my talk, I would like to investigate the theoretical positions in this debate from a methodological, argumentation-theoretical point of view. More closely, I have three interconnected aims in the talk. Firstly, I would like to give a short survey of the theories about the relationship between intentionality and phenomenal consciousness. There are several different questions to which these theories try to answer. So we can speak of separatism and non-separatism, depending on whether we think that all mental states have both features, or no. We can speak of representationalism and "phenomenal intentionality research program"

(Kriegel), depending on whether we think that phenomenal consciousness is grounded in intentionality or vice versa. We can distinguish weak and strong representationalism, depending on whether we hold only a supervenience thesis, or some stronger one. At least we can distinguish pure and impure representationalism, depending on whether only the representational content, or the content plus the representational mode, are involved in these stronger relations. However, they are considerably mixed up in the relevant literature concerning what are the exact questions to which theorists try to answer, and how to answer them. My second aim is to point out these fallacies. Many theories try to answer a question on a basis of arguments which provide answer only to another question. For example, some theories aim to answer the question about reduction on the basis of a mere correspondence, or the question about entailment on the basis of an established supervenience. Moreover, many theories make their claim true merely by definitions which, in turn, make their solutions trivial. For example, some philosophers define intentionality as a part of the phenomenal character of the relevant experience by stating that intentionality is about "how the world seems to the subject" (Crane). It is not surprising that they claim that intentionality is to be understood as a form of consciousness. On the other hand, impure representationalists often see the different intentional modes on which phenomenal properties are partly grounded as different phenomenal modes of representing an intentional content (Chalmers), the latter maneuver makes their claim empty. In the third part of the talk, I will try to argue that these fallacies are not accidental. Intentionality and phenomenal character are two quite distinct concepts on two quite distinct levels. When we attribute phenomenal properties to a state, we refer directly to a feature we are directly aware of. In contrast to this, when we attribute intentionality, we commit ourselves to the view that it is worth to take the relevant state as having a special structure, i. e. as having content, conditions of satisfaction, intentional mode and so on. In this sense, phenomenal concepts are observational concepts while intentional concepts are theoretical ones.

Mathematics of Intuition and Imagination

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Descartes' notion of *mathesis universalis* appears chiefly in his writings about methodology, yet his capital methaphysical work, the "Meditations on First Philosophy", is completely devoid of such a concept. In the very first meditation, the entirety of mathematical knowledge is subjected to methodic doubt and found that even these evident mathematical truths may wholly depend on the whims of a hypothetical omnipotent evil demon. This has lead many scholars to conclude that Descartes had abandoned the early idea of *mathesis universalis* in his later works. Ernst Cassirer claimed that the epistemological aspect of Descartes' philosophy is inextricably linked to its metaphysical aspect, and that epistemology also has precedence over metaphysics, as metaphysics can never discover, only subsequently confirm and verify the principles of science. Because *mathesis universalis* cannot be reduced to particular mathematical disciplines, and is instead understood as a general science of order and measure, we find it justified to distinguish two different aspects of immediate mathematical knowledge – one based on intuition and one based on imagination. The singular intuitive mathematics is the one that can provide a metaphysical account of necessity for its claims (in other words, it is a clear and distinct perception), whereas all other particular mathematics of imagination are but a garb of this original mathematics. How can this distinction be reconciled with the fact that mathematical truths fail the test of methodic doubt in the "Meditations"? To answer this, we must first hearken to Descartes' project of analytic geometry, which unifies (without reduction) the disciplines of algebra and geometry into one cohesive system, all the while instating the method of analysis as the universal method for solving all mathematical problems. Analysis is the method of assuming the solution and then working from that towards the elements that have been given, from which the assumed solution indeed becomes clear and distinct. This thought process of assuming the solution is nothing other than intuitively grasping the object in such a way that the intuition is clear and distinct, i.e. its necessity is metaphysically certain, whereas previous, non-analytical methods entailed imagining the solution as a representation in accordance with the particular

mathematical discipline that was in question. For Descartes, this meant that the truth was not grasped intuitively, but by imagination, which, although immediate and evident in itself, could not provide its own metaphysical foundation. Descartes believed this to be the reason why ancient geometers could not produce universal solutions to certain problems. According to that, mathematical truths can indeed be called into doubt insofar as they are truths of mathematics of imagination. However, intuitive mathematics, i. e. *mathesis universalis*, shares the same reason of knowing as the one indubitable truth of *cogito, ergo sum*, and that is a clear and distinct perception by intuition. Therefore, even though the "Meditations" make no explicit mention of *mathesis universalis* per se, it is in no way a sign of Descartes' rejection of that idea. Quite the contrary, it seems ever more its confirmation.

Proof Theory and Descriptive Complexity

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Is a proposition harder to prove than to verify? This seemingly innocent and philosophical question can rightly be considered one of the most important scientific questions of the 21st century. We will present in detail the question of P vs NP (Cook 1971, 2000), the consequences, the unexpected answers and the attempt to answer this question through logic, more precisely descriptive complexity (Immerman 1999), by presenting several propositions which reformulate the question of P=NP into the question of equality of second order logic with Horn formulas only (equivalent to P) and of second order logic with only existential quantification (equivalent to NP (Fagin 1974)). A proof will be given of several lemmas that are needed to make applications of proof theory to descriptive complexity possible, but the main question still remains open.

Semantics of Noncommutative Geometry

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Intuition of space is vastly generalized in a concept of noncommutative space. Space is first replaced by some category of object which live on that space, and then one replaces further this category by some other category of object which live on some imaginary would-be space. For this program to be successful one needs to choose a very good category of objects. It is known that for usual commutative spaces so-called categories of certain objects called sheaves has internal non-classical logic, namely a version of intuitionistic logic. That level of logical formalization is yet not achieved in noncommutative case, but the geometry is very rich.

Mereological Principles in Philosophy

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The relevance of mereology for philosophy a perennial theme. In particular, the part-whole relation is applied recently to colocated qua-objects of different sortals: say, a statue and its constituting piece of clay. Koslicki (2008) claims that only the lump is part of the statue, moreover, its proper part, but not vice versa since the statue has an immaterial part not shared by the lump. She backs her claim by appealing to (WSP), the weak supplementation principle. Donnelly (2011) is critical with the asymmetry argument. I point out that the asymmetry argument trades on the equivocity of the very notion of "part". In the Aristotelian-scholastic tradition Koslicki's neo-Aristotelianism appeals to, "part" shows up with various meanings not all of them admitting the mereological reading of "part" her argument hinges on. The absurd consequence ensues that the lump can also be shown to have an immaterial part not shared by the statue. I also show that the presumed immaterial parts cannot be proper parts of composites; only their

improper parts. Thus they fail to fall under (**WSP**). My ultimate goal is to disentangle the mereological and the philosophical threads by showing what goes with what without taking sides either with the mereologist or the traditional metaphysician.

In Search of Faultless Disagreement

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It is sometimes claimed that disagreements about personal taste can be faultless because it is possible for two speakers to believe or judge contradictory propositions without committing any mistake. For example, when Ann says that opera is beautiful and Ben responds that opera is not beautiful, it is admitted that both of them can be right while contradicting one another. The phenomenon of faultless disagreement is often invoked as one of the best arguments supporting relativism about truth. The aim of the talk is to show that faultless disagreements in this sense cannot exist. It seems that the idea of faultless disagreement is just a product of an insufficiently specified definition; when everything is said and done properly, faultless disagreements disappear. It is argued that the two speakers may either disagree with one another about matters of personal taste or commit no fault in their beliefs, but not both. Furthermore, in certain situations that are usually described as instances of faultless disagreement it can be shown that the speakers are capable to express mutual agreement in some sense. To derive these conclusions, a detailed argument based on various kinds of agreements and disagreements between speakers is developed.

Externalism, Naturalizability of Content, and Research Programs in Semantics

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The paper considers (causal) semantic externalism as a potential basis for a research program whose aim is to naturalize content, and claims that externalism has not and cannot deliver in this respect. Two kinds of research programs in semantics are distinguished, namely description programs and naturalization programs. The naturalization programs are based either on externalism or on internalism: the former claims that naturalizing meaning will at least partly be concerned with cashing it out in terms of causal relations between the organism and its environment, whereas the latter claims that whatever is described whilst studying meaning must ultimately be naturalized as something that is in the head, a neural structure. Externalism is criticized in its diachronic and its synchronic variety, and it is concluded that, for the purposes of a feasible naturalization program, organism-environment relations should not be seen as constitutive of content, but only as potential props for eliciting content, which should be seen as a mental/neural structure. A feasible naturalization program in semantics seems therefore to be this: to find out how certain mental structures, viz. those described by the best description program, are instantiated in the brain.

Our Previous Conferences

2013 *Zagreb Applied Ethics Conference 2013* (Zagreb, Croatia)

2012 *Identity in the Context of Practical and Theoretical Philosophy* (Dubrovnik, Croatia)

2011 *Zagreb Applied Ethics Conference 2011* (Zagreb, Croatia)

2010 *Metaphysics, Language, and Morality* (Zagreb, Croatia)

2010 *International Workshop on Aristotle's* De Caelo*, Book I* (Zadar, Croatia)

2009 *David Hume in Historical and Contemporary Context* (Zagreb, Croatia)

2008 *Perspectives on Russell* (Zagreb, Croatia)

2008 *Philosophy and Religion* (Zagreb, Croatia)

2007 *Descartes and Contemporary Philosophy* (Samobor, Croatia)

2006 *John Stuart Mill and his Philosophical Legacy* (Samobor, Croatia)

2005 *Freedom and Equality in Contemporary Philosophy* (Samobor, Croatia)

2004 *Belief, Justification and Knowledge* (Zagreb, Croatia)

2003 *Plato on Goodness and Justice* (Zagreb, Croatia)

2003 *Schelling's Philosophy of Mythology* (Zagreb, Croatia)

2002 *Contemplating Art* (Varaždin, Croatia)

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