

Philosophy Research Group

Sources of Normativity in Contemporary Ethics and Metaphysics

Theme: 2021-2022

Members of this group engage with questions about the objectivity of philosophical arguments in ethics and metaphysics. In the past these questions provoked individual inquiries into the normative sphere of morality and the value of phenomenology in metaphysics. This year we expect these various strands will overlap in our research into Heidegger's post *Being and Time* avowal of the need to overcome the language of metaphysics and the aim of contemporary Kantians (Rawls and Korsgaard) to rethink the foundations of normativity in a changed world. As was the case for Kant, Hume's sceptical contention remains a spur to further thought: "The imagination, according to my own confession, is the ultimate judge of all systems of philosophy." [*Treatise of Human Nature*]

Membership

Ba Tran Khac, (PhD. Cand.): The title of the dissertation is *Gadamer's and Langer's Conceptions of Artistic Symbolism: Retrieving Art's Cognitive Status by Retrieving the Primacy of Artwork's Ontological Truth*. The dissertation's research is directly linked to his main concern in philosophy, namely, a phenomenological approach to philosophical questions, including questions of metaethics.

Christopher Gruber, (PhD. Cand.): He is writing a dissertation on the development, execution, and interpretation of the phenomenological method of Martin Heidegger's *Being and Time*. Previously, he has worked in the areas of religious existentialism and the dialogical philosophies of Martin Buber, Gabriel Marcel, and Emmanuel Levinas.

Simon Haokip, (PhD. Cand.): The broad context of his dissertation is the sources of normativity in metaethics. One recent moral debate focuses on whether moral judgments express "internal" or "external" reasons. The dissertation will extend this debate by focusing on Korsgaard's Kantian response and solution. The title of the dissertation is *The Sources of Normativity: A Critique of Korsgaard's Reconstruction of Kant's Concept of Autonomy as Reflective Endorsement and Self-constitution*.

Aondoaseer Iornyume, (PhD. Cand.): The dissertation's title is *Human Rights and Cosmopolitanism in Light of John Rawls' Theory of Justice* and its point of departure is Rawls' understanding of moral and political philosophy from a Kantian perspective. His thesis will evaluate how Rawls' conception of justice can take shape in the cosmopolitan context of intensified demands for human rights and equity in the contemporary world.

Stephen Louis, (PhD. Cand.) His dissertation deals with the innovative work of Linda Zagzebski concerning the classic idea of moral exemplars. The title is *A Quest for Admirable Virtuous Moral Exemplars: A Cross-Cultural Exemplarist Approach to Character Education*. Other research interests include virtue ethics, virtue epistemology, normative ethics, and Indian philosophy.

Basley Malenda, (PhD. Cand.): He is just beginning dissertation research on Heidegger's critical confrontation with Nietzsche's writings in the 1930's. His aim is to assess how Heidegger's critical interpretation of Nietzsche's texts led to the re-examination of his own metaphysical project.

Paul Musango, (PhD. Cand.): His dissertation, *From Kehre to Ereignis: Heidegger's Developing Methodology after Being and Time*, deals with the transformation of Heidegger's thinking the truth of being in the decade after 1927.

Attila Tóth, (Lic. Cand.): The title of his licentiate thesis is *Die von jenseits des Seins unbedingt gebietende Normativität der Ethik: Die wechselseitige Beziehung zwischen Kant und Levinas*. His argument will examine the relation between Kant and Levinas in attempting to ground normative ethics beyond traditional ontology.

Terry Walsh, (Coordinator): His interests span German Idealism, metaphysics, religious experience, metaethics; and 19th and 20th century critiques of reason.

SCHEDULE OF PRESENTATIONS (October-May 2021-2022)

October 28: Organizational Meeting
November 18: Aondoaseer Iornyume
December 16: Christopher Gruber
January 27: Paul Musango
February 24: Basley Malenda
March 24: Attila Tóth
April 28: Stephen Louis
May 26: Simon Haokip