

PHIL 5364: The Theory of Knowledge in Kant and Bolzano
(Winter 2016)

MEETS: Thursdays, 2:30–5:30, Desmarais 9143

Instructor

Paul Rusnock

Office: DMS 8101B

Office Hours: Tuesday, 10–12

e-mail: prusnock@uottawa.ca

Course web-site: <http://aix1.uottawa.ca/~prusnock/5364.html>

DESCRIPTION The early nineteenth century is often portrayed in histories of philosophy as the age of Post-Kantian idealism, a period dominated by German philosophers such as Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, all of whom were well-versed in the critical philosophy. Less well-remarked at the time, but no less important, was another of Kant's early readers, Bernard Bolzano. Born in Prague in the same year that the *Critique of Pure Reason* was published, Bolzano studied Kant's writings with his customary thoroughness. While recognizing Kant at various places for a variety of insights, however, he also came to be one of his most implacable critics.

Bolzano's objections were by no means narrowly focussed on Kant, for much of what he thought mistaken in Kant's system was also maintained by the majority of philosophers of the modern period, and in particular by the German idealists of Bolzano's day. They were also rooted in a rival philosophy of astonishing depth and scope, one which anticipates in many ways what much later came to be called analytic philosophy.

In this seminar, we will study the systems of these two thinkers, with special attention to the theory of knowledge. More specifically, we will look at their respective views on representation, truth, judgment, objectivity, analyticity, *a priori* knowledge, judgments of experience, and mathematical knowledge.

Evaluation:

- Contributions to the seminar 30%
- 2 Short papers, due **25 February** and **24 March**. 30%
- Final paper, due **22 April**. 40%

FINAL PAPER: You should choose a topic that allows for an interesting and substantive comparison of Kant and Bolzano on some aspect of the theory of cognition/knowledge. Some possible topics are:

- Truth
- Judgment
- The nature of ideas/representations
- Relations between ideas/representations and their objects
- Sensations, intuitions and concepts
- The analytic-synthetic distinction
- Mathematical and philosophical knowledge
- Apriority, necessity, and certainty
- Judgments of experience
- The nature of logic
- Knowledge, belief and opinion
- The foundations of the critical philosophy

Papers should approximately 20 pages long, exclusive of bibliography, in a reasonably sized (i.e., 11 or 12 point) font, with line spacing of 1.5. Notes and bibliography should follow the format specified by the *Philosophical Review*.

SHORT PAPERS: The two shorter papers are preparatory studies for the final paper. The first should briefly present a critical overview of Bolzano's views on the chosen topic, along with an indication of the relevant sources, and the second should do the same for Kant's views. Each should be 4–6 pages long, exclusive of bibliography, in a reasonably sized (i.e., 11 or 12 point) font, with line spacing of 1.5.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO SEMINAR: Students will be asked to give some short presentations on parts of the readings (the number and frequency will depend on the number of students enrolled), and to participate in discussion.

Primary Texts:

Texts marked with an 'E' are available as electronic books through the library. All others are on reserve at the Morisset Library.

WORKS BY KANT:

Theoretical Philosophy 1755–1770, D. Walford and R. Meerbote ed. and tr. (Cambridge UP, 1992). **B 2758 .W35 1992**

Critique of Pure Reason (Riga, 1781, 2nd ed. 1787); there are several English translations. I have placed the translation by Guyer and Wood (Cambridge UP, 1997) on reserve: **B 2778 .E5 G89 1998**

(E) *Prolegomena* (Riga, 1783); there are several English translations. I have placed Hatfield's (Cambridge UP, 1997) on reserve: **B 2787 .Z7 I483 1997**

Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View, Robert B. Louden ed. and tr. (Cambridge UP, 2006). **B 2794 .A62 E5 2006**

Lectures on Logic, J. M. Young ed. and tr. (Cambridge UP, 1992). **B 2758 .C35 V.9 1992**

(E) *Notes and Fragments*, Paul Guyer ed.; tr. C. Bowman, P. Guyer, and F. Rauscher (Cambridge UP, 2005).

WORKS BY BOLZANO:

(E) *Contributions to a Better Grounded Presentation of Mathematics* (Prague, 1810). English translation in *The Mathematical Works of Bernard Bolzano*, S.B. Russ ed. and tr. (Oxford UP, 2004).

(E) *Purely analytic Proof...* (Prague, 1817). English translation in *The Mathematical Works of Bernard Bolzano* (Oxford UP, 2004).

Theory of Science (Sulzbach, 1837), P. Rusnock and R. George ed. and tr. 4 Volumes (Oxford UP, 2014). **B 4805 .B653 W5613 2014**

On the Mathematical Method and Correspondence with Exner, P. Rusnock and R. George ed. and tr. (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004). **QA 8.4 .B6513 2004**

Schedule of Readings

14 January: Introduction

21 January: Bolzano on propositions, judgments, truth, and cognitions

MAIN TEXT:

- Bolzano, *Theory of Science*, Volume 1: §§1, 12, 15–29, 34–38

ADDITIONAL TEXTS:

- From *On the Mathematical Method and Correspondence with Exner*: “On The Mathematical Method,” §2; Correspondence with Exner (Propositions in themselves and their mental correlates are discussed at various places in the letters, see “Propositions–objective and subjective,” in the subject index).

28 January: Bolzano on ideas [*Vorstellungen*]

MAIN TEXTS:

- Bolzano, *Theory of Science*, Volume 1: §§46–56, 61–69, §91, no.1, §96, no.3

ADDITIONAL TEXTS:

- From *On the Mathematical Method and Correspondence with Exner*: “On The Mathematical Method,” §§2–5. “Essay in which a logical question raised by Professor Exner in his paper ‘On Nominalism and Realism’ is answered,” pp. 176–184 in *On the Mathematical Method and Correspondence with Exner*. The correspondence also deals with ideas and their objects at various points.

4 February: Bolzano on ideas [*Vorstellungen*], continued

MAIN TEXTS:

- Bolzano, *Theory of Science*, Volume 1: §§72–77
- *Theory of Science*, Volume 2: §133, 143
- *Theory of Science*, Volume 3: §§270–272, 277–278, 286–287

ADDITIONAL TEXTS:

- From *On the Mathematical Method and Correspondence with Exner*: “On the Mathematical Method,” §6; Correspondence with Exner (intuitions are discussed at various places in the letters; see also “Ideas–simple, singular” in the subject index).

11 February: Bolzano on inference and the mediation of judgments

MAIN TEXTS:

- Bolzano, From *On the Mathematical Method and Correspondence with Exner*: “On the Mathematical Method,” §8
- *Theory of Science*, Volume 3: §§300–302, 307–310, 314–315

ADDITIONAL TEXTS:

- Bolzano, *Theory of Science*, Volume 2: §§154–161 (This is a more detailed presentation of Bolzano’s Variation Logic, including the relation of relative probability [§161].)

25 February: Kant on representations [*Vorstellungen*]

MAIN TEXTS:

- *Critique of Pure Reason*, Transcendental Aesthetic, §§1–3 (B33–B45); A320/B376–377; A727/B755–A728/B756
- *Logic* ed. Jäsche, Introduction, V, VIII; Part I, §§1–16; Part II, §§99–109. (In *Lectures on Logic*, pp. 544–549, 564–569, 589–597, 630–635)

ADDITIONAL TEXT

- Rolf George, “*Vorstellung* and *Erkenntnis* in Kant.” (available on course web-site)

3 March: Kant on Representations (cont.)

TEXTS:

- *Notes and Fragments*, Reflections nos. 1676 (p. 34–5), 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2286, 2287, 2288 (pp. 40–41), 3955, 3957, 3958, 3961, 3963 (pp. 103–105), 3965 (p. 106), 4017 (p. 112), 4073 (p. 113), 4673 (p. 154f.), 5216 (p. 221), 5221 (p. 222), 5400 (p. 229), 5934 (p. 310–11)
- *Lectures on Logic*, pp. 28–29 (§14), pp. 352–55, 485–489
- *Anthropology from a pragmatic point of view*, Book I, §§3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 16, 28
- *Critique of Pure Reason*, A103–A110

ADDITIONAL TEXT

- Rolf George, “Kant’s Sensationism.” (available on course web-site)

10 March: Kant on judgment and truth

MAIN TEXTS: A. On Judgment

- *Critique of Pure Reason*, A 67/B92–A69/B94
- *Logic* ed. Jäsche, §§17–40 (In *Lectures on Logic*, pp. 597–609)
- “On the False Subtlety of the Four Syllogistic Figures,” §§1, 2, 6 (In *Theoretical Philosophy 1755–1770*, pp. 89–91, 102–105)
- *Notes and Fragments*, Reflections nos. 3042, 3043, 3044, 3045, 3046, 3047, 3051, 3053, 3055 (pp. 58–60), 3145, 3146 (p. 64), 3920, 3921 (pp. 94–95), 4634, 4636, 4638 (pp. 149–152), 5285 (p. 225), 5923 (p. 306), 5933 (p. 310)

B. On Truth

- *Critique of Pure Reason*, A57/B82–A63/B87
- *Prolegomena*, §49
- *Logic* ed. Jäsche, Introduction, VII (In *Lectures on Logic*, pp. 557–563)
- Prize Essay, 3rd Reflection, §3 (In *Theoretical Philosophy 1755–1770*, pp. 267–269)
- *Notes and Fragments*, Reflections nos. 2131, 2132, 2142, 2147, 2155, 2161, 2162, 2173, 2174, 2176 (pp. 36–38), 3942 (p. 100), 3977 (pp. 108–109), 4373 (p. 132), 5663 (p. 292)
- *Lectures on Logic*, pp. 455–457

17 March: Analytic and Synthetic

MAIN TEXTS:

- Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B10–B18; A150/B189f (“On the Supreme Principle of All Analytic Judgments”)
- Kant, *Prolegomena*, §§2–3
- Kant, *Logic* ed. Jäsche, §36–37 (In *Lectures on Logic*, pp. 606–607)
- Reflections (From *Notes and Fragments*): no. 3043 (p. 58), no. 3738 (p. 85), no. 3928 (p. 96–7)
- Bolzano, *Theory of Science*, Vol. 2, §§147–148, 197; Vol. 3, §367; Vol. 1, §65, nos. 10–12, §120.

ADDITIONAL TEXT:

- P. Rusnock, “Analyticity in Kant and Bolzano,” *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* **95** (2013) 298–335.

24 March: Judgments of Experience

TEXTS: Kant, *Prolegomena*, §§14–20

Bolzano, *Theory of Science*, Volume 3: §§303–305

31 March: Kant on Mathematical and Philosophical Method

MAIN TEXTS:

- Kant, “On the Distinctness of the Principles of Natural Theology and Morals,” First, Second and Third Reflections. In *Theoretical Philosophy 1756–1770*, pp. 248–269
- Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A708/B736–A738/B766
- Kant, *Prolegomena*, §§6–13

7 April: Bolzano on mathematical method

MAIN TEXTS: Bolzano, “On the Mathematical Method,” §§10–14.

Bolzano, *Theory of Science*, Volume 3: §305, nos. 1–7.

ADDITIONAL TEXTS:

- Bolzano, “Contributions to a Better-Grounded Presentation of Mathematics,” Appendix: “On the Kantian Theory of the Construction of Concepts through Intuitions.” In Russ ed. and tr., *The Mathematical Works of Bernard Bolzano* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 132–137.
- “Purely Analytic Proof. . . .” In Russ ed. and tr., *The Mathematical Works of Bernard Bolzano* (Oxford, 2004), pp. 253–277. This is one of Bolzano’s best-known and most influential mathematical works, an example of the way he thought mathematics should be done.
- J. A. Coffa, “Kant, Bolzano and the emergence of logicism,” *Journal of Philosophy* **79** (1982) 679–689.
- J. A. Coffa, *The Semantic Tradition from Kant to Carnap* (Cambridge UP, 1991), Chapter 2: “Bolzano and the Birth of Semantics.”