

International Conference

European Pragmatism: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives

Organizer: Institute Vienna Circle, University of Vienna.

Vienna, April 19-21, 2018

Pragmatism is not only a philosophical movement, but a broader perspective on science, life and our way of being in the world. According to two of its most outstanding representatives, namely Peirce and James, pragmatism is a 'method', meaning a way of addressing problems. A peculiar feature of pragmatism lies with its pluralism, which is responsible for the widespread opinion that pragmatism cannot be forced into a clear-cut definition. In this vein, A.O. Lovejoy distinguished thirteen kinds of pragmatism and F.C.S. Schiller gave it seven definitions. That said, pragmatists of different orientation share a concern for methods, practice and action, and assign a crucial role to prediction and belief. The dominant narrative is that pragmatism originated in the U.S. and it is primarily associated with an American movement, but its influence expanded very rapidly over Europe where it flourished, giving rise to a number of different perspectives. Moreover, one can identify pragmatist philosophers and currents at the same time in Europe – independently, or in interaction with North American pragmatism from Peirce, James up to Dewey. In the philosophy of science we encounter a strong convergence of European Logical Empiricism (e.g., R. Carnap, O. Neurath, M. Schlick, H. Reichenbach) and American Neo-pragmatism (e.g., Ch. Morris, C.I. Lewis, W.V.O. Quine).

The purpose of the workshop is a reassessment of the breadth and peculiar features of an European pragmatism, and the extent to which it was influenced by American pragmatism or emerged in interaction with American pragmatism since Ernst Mach, Wilhelm Jerusalem, or Tadeusz Kotarbinski. The distinctive character of various national European traditions (esp. in Central Europe, UK, Nordic Countries, France, Italy and Poland) will be highlighted together with the work of a number of authors belonging to one or other of them. A special session will be devoted to Frank P. Ramsey in this regard.

Confirmed Speakers:

Natalie Ashton (Wien), Anna Brozek (Warsaw), Rosa Maria Calcaterra (Rome), Hans-Joachim Dahms (Berlin), Christian Damböck (Wien), Pascal Engel (Paris), Massimo Ferrari (Torino), Maria Carla Galavotti (Bologna), Mathias Girel (Paris), Monika Gruber (Vienna), Martin Kusch (Vienna), Robert McKenna (Vienna), Christoph Limbeck-Lilienau (Vienna), Giovanni Maddalena (Univ. Molise), Kevin Mulligan (Geneva), Cheryl Misak (Toronto), Elisabeth Nemeth (Vienna), Matthias Neuber (Tübingen), Sami Pihlström (Helsinki), Donata Romizi (Vienna), Friedrich Stadler (Vienna), Johannes Steizinger (Vienna), Bastian Stoppelkamp (Vienna), Claudine Tiercelin (Paris), Thomas Uebel (Manchester).

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