Perspectives about Truth III
(November 15-16, online)

Truth is a central notion in various fields. Through this conference, we aim to provide an opportunity for researchers from different fields to debate truth and other related notions. In order to achieve constructive discussions, the topics are going to be organized on panels; this way, the participants can engage researchers with similar interests and common readings.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:
Mircea DUMITRU (University of Bucharest)
Matti EKLUND (Uppsala University)
Paul HORWICH (New York University)
Dana JALOBEANU (University of Bucharest)
Amie THOMASSON (Dartmouth University)

Panel 1: Truth and other semantic notions (Organiser: Paula Tomi, Adrian Luduşan)

In analytic philosophy, various truth theories aim to define truth and provide a complex and comprehensive explanation. From substantive theories of truths (coherence, correspondence) to deflationary ones, they all seem to have both strengths and weaknesses. We are interested in presentations that engage with questions regarding truth and other semantic notions. Some sample research topics might include, but are certainly not limited to:
- **How can truth be defined?**
- **What are the links between semantic notions?**
- **Can semantic deflationism be epistemologically and metaphysically thin?**
- **How is truth presented in different philosophical traditions?**

Panel 2: Modal truth (Organisers: Mihai Rusu, Alexandru Dragomir)

Despite the extraordinary development of modal logic and the pervasiveness of modal notions in contemporary philosophical analysis, modal truth remains controversial. While not many philosophers would maintain nowadays that modal notions are useless or insignificant, the nature and source of modal truth, especially metaphysical modal truth, is disputed. Some philosophers believe that modal truth is inextricably linked to our mental capacities (such as conceivability, imagination or intuition), while others argue that modal truth is independent of minds and that we may come to know modal facts by knowing facts about essences or by making various kinds of inferences starting from our knowledge of actual objects. This panel aims to

address main issues concerning modal truth and modal knowledge, such as:

- **What is the nature and source of modal truth?**
- **What are the "ingredients" of our modal assertions? Are there merely possible objects or everything is actual? Are there modal facts?**
- **How do we acquire modal knowledge? Is modal knowledge fundamental or derivative?**
- **How can we understand essences?**
- **What are the most promising contemporary accounts of modal knowledge?**
- **How can we solve modal disagreement?**
- **How can modal logic be used to model and shed light on core philosophical problems?**

Panel 3: <u>Truth in/of the Anthropocene (Organiser: Ciprian Bogdan)</u>

The concept of „Anthropocene" is meant to capture the effect of human activity on Earth systems which radically alters the way our planet works (Crutzen and Stoermer 2000). However, Anthropocene also challenges our representations about society and nature inherited mostly from XIXth century and based on the underlying assumption of an ontological divide between a socialized and politicized realm, on the one hand, and a passive and inert natural one dominated by mechanical causality, on the other (Bonneuil and Fressoz 2013). While continental philosophy has been more willing to trespass (or simply ignore) this divide, analytic philosophy has mostly remained faithful to it by advancing different social ontologies based upon the distinction between „social facts" and „physical facts" (Searle 1995). In this context, our panel will address several questions without being limited to them:

- **Is the Anthropocene a real challenge to our (philosophical) assumptions about truth?**
- **How should social ontology look like in the context of the Anthropocene?**
- **Where is the new "frontier" between society, politics, and nature?**
- **Has the Anthropocene itself turned into a new metanarrative?**
- **How should we conceptualize the different scales (from local to global) through which people relate to the Anthropocene?**
- **How should we articulate the relationship between philosophy and social sciences more generally, on the one hand, and hard sciences, on the other, in this new context created by the Anthropocene?**

Panel 4: <u>Truth and Ethics (Organiser: Mircea Toboșaru)</u>

Understanding truth equates to the understanding of our ethical relation to truth. Do we owe the truth to our peers and to ourselves? Does it have intrinsic value, so that it is our duty to seek, expand, and affirm it? Is there such a thing as moral truth different from scientific truth? If so, what is their relation? Do our current moral practices depend on a strong notion of moral truth? Would they collapse if it disintegrates under philosophical analysis? This panel seeks to explore the horizon of such concerns, but also other subjects relevant to the connection between truth and ethics.

Panel 5: <u>What do we do with the hard truths? Ethical and theoretical challenges for the anthropology of unpleasant realities (Organiser: Ciprian Tudor)</u>

Social scientists may sometimes encounter evidence which could contribute to a negative representation of the people involved in their research. Perhaps some popular stereotypes have some truth to them, or perhaps they discover new truths that could damage the reputation of their subjects and ethnographic collaborators. What is there to be done about such hard, inconvenient truths? Should researchers try harder to see the error of their data or interpretations? Or should they keep such ideas to themselves as an ethical act of preventing marginal groups from being further discriminated against? Or, conversely, should they disclose everything that comes up in empirical research as a commitment to truth irrespective of the social outcomes of their research? Are "hard truths" an obstacle or a challenge to rethink methodology, theory and the social use of science?

This panel invites contributions from researchers who faced the problem of dealing with "hard truths" in their writing, academic conversations, collaborations with state or non-governmental agencies, or engagement with the general public. We are interested in the personal experience of ethical dilemmas, the dynamics of social engagement around "hard truths", the negotiation of positionality both with academics and informants, as well as any other forays into the issue of uncomfortable truths. The panel is open to any empirical and/or theoretical contributions coming from anthropology and other social sciences that deal with controversial issues.

Panel 6: <u>Truth in Mathematics, its Applications, and Education (Organiser: Matheus O. de Andrade)</u>

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Mathematics has its foundations deeply linked to classical notions of truth, logic, and philosophy. Over the last century, mathematics has demonstrated an uncanny predictive power when applied in the natural sciences, enabling unprecedented scientific and technological progress —a phenomenon E. Wigner called "The Unreasonable Effectiveness of Mathematics". However, classical notions of mathematical truth have been challenged by constructivist and socio-critical approaches, which maintain that mathematics is not a universal body of knowledge but rather a product of individuals' practices within socio-cultural contexts. These different epistemological views are charged axiologically, raising important questions about the notions of truth and validity in mathematics, its role in society and education, as well as the identity of mathematics educators and practitioners. We are interested in perspectives that address this debate (nicknamed "The Math Wars" in the US) from diverse notions of truth. Some research topics might include, but are not limited to:

● **What are the properties, powers, and effects of mathematical knowledge and notions of truth in science and society?**

● **How can pure mathematics, mathematical modelling, and mathematics education dialogue and negotiate notions of truth and its real-world impacts?**

● **What are the bases of legitimacy of mathematical truths in high-stakes and high-uncertainty situations of public interest?**

● **How can discussions of the notion of truth inform the teaching and learning of mathematics?**

Panel 7 (Invited panel): <u>Theories of truth in Early Modern Philosophy (Organiser: Dana Jalobeanu)</u>

Seventeenth century is extremely rich in reflections on the nature and essence of truth. Are there such things as intellectual intuitions? Do we have innate ideas? And, if yes, are they true or false? (merely idols and superstition, as Francis Bacon would have put it). Is Truth manifest or hidden? A property of the world, or a property of our theories? Early modern philosophers formulate versions of a correspondence theory of truth, but also coherence theories of truth. There is also an interesting and less usual strand of 'productive' theories of truth, originating probably in discussions about the nature of (Aristotelian) principles. The panel aims to display, discuss and analyse some examples of this rich diversity. But we are also interested in the interplay between early modern theories of truth, epistemology, metaphysics and morals.

<u>**Abstract submission:** if you would like to present a paper or work in progress, please send an abstract (with 5 key words and a short bibliography) no longer than 500 words (bibliography not included) until</u> **October 25 at perspectivesabouttruth[at]gmail.com. We will kindly ask you to mention the panel that suits best your abstract.**

There are no participation fees.

The official language is English.

Our tentative deadline for abstract submission is October 25, 2024. However, contributors are encouraged to make submissions as soon as they are ready to do so. You will receive an email of acceptance latest November 5th. For any questions, please, do not hesitate to write us.

Some selected presentations will be invited to be published in some special issues.

Organizing Committee:
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