Analytic Asian Philosophy

Self-knowledge for Selfless Persons
Christian Coceru (College of Charleston)

Abstract

Much of the contemporary debate on self-knowledge is focused almost exclusively on those specific aspects that grant self-knowledge epistemic privilege (e.g., infallible access to our attitudes, the guarantee that reason can serve as a reliable vehicle of self-knowledge, etc.), given the common assumption that some type of immediate acquaintance with its own mental states must place the subject in a special epistemic position. This first-person authority view, which on some accounts could be just a matter of socio-linguistic practices, does not necessarily require that the self-attribution of authority be epistemically grounded. Critics of the first-person authority view have singled out this problematic aspect of the self-attribution relation either to cast doubt on the distinctiveness of self-knowledge (Wright 1998) or to challenge the self-intimation thesis, which asserts that conscious mental states are inherently luminous or self-presenting (Williamson 2000). This paper provides a new defense of the first-person authority view by articulating an epistemic constraint on phenomenal consciousness that draws on a classical debate in Indian Buddhist philosophy about the scope of nonegological conceptions of self-knowledge.

On Prasajyapratiṣedha
Two Special Ways of Using Negation in Bhāviveka and Candrakīrti
Wen-Fang Wang (National Yang Ming University)
Hsun-Mei Chen (National Taiwan University/Kyoto University)

Abstract

The famous Madhyamaka philosopher Nāgārjuna has a very special way to argue against his opponent: he often argues and concludes that a certain thesis of his opponent should be rejected while at the same time denies that he has therefore

endorsed the negation of the thesis of his opponent. This special way of argumentation has a tremendous influence upon both later Indian Buddhist philosophers and has invoked two different interpretations, the Prāsaṅgika and the Svātantrika, about what exactly this special way of arguments is. In this paper, the authors explore how Candrakīrti and Bhāviveka, two representors of Prāsaṅgika and Svātantrika respectively, had different understandings of *prasajyapratiṣedha.* Based on philological and philosophical investigations, the authors argue in the paper that while Bhāvivek's way of using *prasajyapratiṣedha* in the Svātantrika arguments actually would admit the negative conclusions he proposed, Candrakīrti's way in Prāsaṅgika argument would not admit any statements. Therefore, the Prāsaṅgika interpretation, according to which a Mādhyamika, one who advocates Madhyamaka ideas, should simply reject his opponent's thesis by drawing absurdity from it and should at the same time refrain from making any conclusion, is the right one about Nāgārjuna's way of argumentation as shown in *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā.*

Nishida's logic of place and metaphysical grounding
Naoya Fujikawa (The University of Tokyo)

Abstract

A key idea of Nishida's logic of place is that to be (an object) is to be within a place. In this talk, I propose that his logic of place is properly understood as a theory of metaphysical grounding by taking an object being within a place as grounded in the place. More precisely, I claim that his logic of place is parafoundationalism, an inconsistent version of foundationalism, according to which the fundamental element that grounds everything (absolute nothingness) is ungrounded but grounded in itself. I also discuss how this interpretation expands the landscape of the contemporary debate on the nature of grounding.