

UK-Japan Special Conference

Aspects of Early Modern British Philosophy

Organized by *the University of Oxford* and
Japanese Society for British Philosophy,
under the auspices of *Musashino University*

Date: 11th and 12th September 2019.

Venue: St Peter's College of the University of Oxford

Programme

11 September

9:00-10:15am

Hiroyuki Yorozuya (Assistant Professor, Hiroshima Institute of Technology)
“Hume, Causation and Agentive Experience”

10:15-11:30 am

Jonathan Cottrell (Lecturer, University of Edinburgh)
“Interpreting Hume on Mental Representation”

11:30 am

Coffee

11:45am-1:00pm

Shigeyuki Aoki (Associate Professor, Chuo University)
“Locke versus Berkeley revisited – an interpretive essay on historiography”

1:00 pm

Lunch

2:15-3:30pm

Ruth Boeker (Assistant Professor, University College Dublin)
“Shaftesbury on Liberty and Self-Mastery”

3:30 pm

Tea

3:45-5:00 pm

Masaki Ichinose (Professor of Musashino University, Emeritus Professor of UTokyo)
“Locke on language and its privateness”

12 September

9:00-10:15am

Clare Moriarty (Visiting Research Associate, King's College London)
“Berkeley and Anti-Mathematicism”

10:15-11:30 am

Tomokiyo Nomura (Regular Lecturer, Shumei University)
“Let others think for you: Berkeley and Assent”

11:30 am

Coffee

11:45am-1:00pm

James Harris (Professor, University of St Andrews)
“Between Locke and Filmer: Hume on allegiance”

1:00 pm

Lunch

2:15-3:30pm

Taro Okuda (Professor, Nanzan University)
“Hume's Moral Sentiments and Moral Particularism”

3:30 pm

Tea

3:45-5:00 pm

Peter Kail (Associate Professor, University of Oxford)
“Berkeley and the Material Attitude”

Contact

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Abstracts

●“Hume, Causation and Agentive Experience”

Hiroyuki Yorozyua (Assistant Professor, Hiroshima Institute of Technology)

In the contemporary philosophy of action, David Hume has widely been assumed to defend the causal theory of action. Under this assumption, some philosophers argue that, given his theory of causation, Hume’s account of human agency is untenable. The aim of this presentation is to resist this understanding of Hume. I will argue that Hume’s theory of causation does not make his account of human agency implausible. I will also show that we need to focus on the qualitative feature of agentive experience in Hume’s view.

●“Interpreting Hume on Mental Representation”

Jonathan Cottrell (Lecturer, University of Edinburgh)

Some of Hume’s central arguments in the *Treatise* concern what our perceptions can and cannot represent. The past two decades have seen an explosion of literature aiming to reconstruct the theory of mental representation that (it is assumed) underlies these arguments. This paper argues that, in fact, Hume nowhere offers a theory of mental representation that is both (i) consistent with *Treatise* Book 2’s theory of the passions (specifically, with the theory of sympathy presented in “Of the love of fame” taken together the view, presented in “Of the influencing motives of the will”, that passions are non-representational); and (ii) fit to underwrite the *Treatise*’s arguments about what our perceptions can and cannot represent. But this is no cause for concern because Hume needs no such theory for the purposes of his mature philosophy, as presented in the *Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects*.

●“Locke versus Berkeley revisited – an interpretive essay on historiography”

Shigeyuki Aoki (Associate Professor, Chuo University)

What is it that philosophy should make "advance" or "progress"? In this paper I would like to discuss the interpretative debates on the first two philosophers from the British Empiricists trio - Locke, Berkeley, Hume. Then I argue that philosophy (apparently) makes progress when, with hindsight, some "abstraction" - weaving through the arguments in one vector - is adopted as a historiographical method.

●“Shaftesbury on Liberty and Self-Mastery”

Ruth Boeker (Assistant Professor, University College Dublin)

The aim of this paper is to show that Shaftesbury’s thinking about liberty is best understood in terms of self-mastery. Since he does not offer a detailed and systematic treatment of liberty, I begin by analysing Shaftesbury’s reflections on questions concerning human choice. Human choice is the theme of a painting entitled *The Choice of Hercules* that he commissioned and of the so-called story of an amour, which addresses the difficulties of controlling human passions. Jaffro distinguishes three notions of self-control that are present in the story of an amour. Although I agree with many aspects of Jaffro’s interpretation, I question his

conclusion that self-control in the Stoic sense is best reserved for “moral heroes”. I propose an alternative developmental interpretation and show that one advantage of my interpretation is that it takes seriously that for Shaftesbury philosophy is meant to be practical and help us improve our lives. I end the paper by examining Shaftesbury’s concept liberty. I argue that rather than trying to situate Shaftesbury’s view within debates among compatibilists and incompatibilists it is more promising to understand his concept of liberty in terms of self-mastery and thus regard it as a version of positive liberty.

●“Locke on language and its privateness”

Masaki Ichinose (Professor of Musashino University, Emeritus Professor of UTokyo)

It is well known that Locke understands significations of words as nothing but ideas in the minds of speakers. Thus, it might be natural that Locke’s theory of language is interpreted as a kind of the private language theory in a Wittgensteinian sense. However, Locke clearly admits the possibility of communication through language between us. How should we solve this seemingly contradictory argument of Locke? My strategy in interpretation of Locke is that; we accept the literal connotation of Locke’s claim that significations of words lie in ideas of speaker’s mind, so, in that sense, Locke clearly takes meaning of words to be somehow private. However, its privateness is not the privateness in the sense of private language, but the privateness in the sense of private property. I will confirm and bolster up this interpretation through examining the relation between notions of idea and person by considering Locke’s arguments in his Second Treatise of *Two Treatises of Government*. My understanding would connect Locke’s theory of language with the notion of intellectual property like patents.

●“Berkeley and Anti-Mathematicism”

Clare Moriarty (Visiting Research Associate, King's College London)

The “mathematization of nature” was regarded by both natural philosophers of the period and subsequent historians as a dominant influence upon the scientific revolution that began in the late 16th century. Galileo had described a universe “written in a mathematical language”, and following the successes garnered by the mathematization of branches of the physical sciences—notably astronomy, mechanics and optics—it was natural that a program of mathematization was seen by many as a promising strategy in other disciplines.

The term “anti-mathematicism” refers to a hostility towards the mathematization of other disciplines that flourished in some 18th-century scholarship. Eric Schliesser has defined it in terms of “reservations about the authority and utility of the application of the mathematical sciences”. Increasingly, scholarship on this phenomenon is providing a valuable way to assess philosophical sympathies and dispositions in the early modern period. Anti-mathematical sentiment may concentrate on the application of mathematical methods in disciplines where the anti-mathematician believes they do not belong. It may evaluate the standards of rigour advocated by mathematics and regard them as unduly burdensome for more socially-grounded subjects. It may be suspicious of the rational authority conferred on those specializing in mathematics and logic, and it may worry

about how that status translates into other scholarly domains. That Berkeley's philosophical instincts are anti-mathematical will be unsurprising to anyone who has studied his philosophy, and especially so to those familiar with his candid remarks on mathematics in his Trinity College notebooks.

In this paper I characterise the central features of Berkeley's anti-mathematical philosophy, and argue that his views about mathematics are distinctive and radical even among contemporaries with similar philosophical sympathies. Berkeley's mathematical antipathy is a special case, and is at times deeply ideological in a way that clarifies important themes in his broader philosophical project.

●“Let others think for you: Berkeley and Assent”

Tomokiyo Nomura (Regular Lecturer, Shumei University)

The Meaning of Meaning which was published by Ogden and Richards in 1923 was a gigantic milestone for scholars studying Berkeley's semantics. From then on, in the latter half of the 20th Century, many scholars maintained that Berkeley developed an emotive theory of meaning. In the beginning of 21st Century, however, a few scholars like Williford and Jakapi who were mainly based on the seventh dialogue in *Alciphron* started to attack this predominant tendency.

This attack accuses interpretations derived from Ogden and Richards in terms of truth value. Usually an emotive theory of meaning asserts that terms which have emotive meaning does not have truth values. Suppose, as many scholars in 20th century thought, Berkeley developed this type of emotive theory. According to the seventh dialogue in *Alciphron*, Berkeley sates that terms in natural science or mathematics have emotive meanings. Then, Berkeley has to commit to absurd assertions like these terms in natural science or mathematics do not have truth values. This indicates there are something wrong with this predominant interpretation.

In this presentation, I want to take a small step forward. Leaving from the term like 'truth value' which Berkeley never heard of, and bring the issue back to the context of the seventh dialogue in *Alciphron*. In the seventh dialogue in *Alciphron*, *Euphranor* summarizes a discussion concerning meaning by saying that by admitting there are significant words even though they do not suggest ideas, regulates passions or conducts, 'consequently' grant there are assents without ideas. By analyzing this relationship between meaning and assents showed in this summary, I will crystalize a theory of knowledge which focuses on knowledge as a conduct, and leaving from epistemic individualism towards socially opened epistemology.

●“Between Locke and Filmer: Hume on allegiance”

James Harris (Professor, University of St Andrews)

In this paper I seek to construct an intellectual ancestry for Hume's treatment of allegiance in Book 3 of the *Treatise* and the political essays written immediately after the Jacobite rebellion of 1745. I argue that Hume is, in effect, trying to find a middle way between the theories of John Locke, on the one hand, and Sir Robert Filmer, on the other. I pay particular attention to the relationship between Hume's and Filmer's approaches to

the problem of political obligation, and argue that there is more of an affinity between Hume and Filmer than has hitherto been appreciated.

●“Hume's Moral Sentiments and Moral Particularism”

Taro OKUDA (Professor, Nanzan University)

In *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Hume said: “To have the sense of virtue, is nothing but to feel a satisfaction of a particular kind from the contemplation of a character. The very feeling constitutes our praise or admiration. We go no farther; nor do we enquire into the cause of the satisfaction. We do not infer a character to be virtuous, because it pleases: But in feeling that it pleases after such a particular manner, we in effect feel that it is virtuous.”(T3.1.2.3) This famous passage may enable us to interpret that Hume's moral philosophy takes a kind of moral particularism. Here I shall show this interpretation and raise Humean moral particularism as an alternative Humeanism in metaethics.

●“Berkeley and the Material Attitude”

Peter Kail (Associate Professor, University of Oxford)

Berkeley's philosophy attempts to give substance to the Pauline doctrine that it is in God ‘in whom we live, move and have our being’ by offering an account of the natural world as a system of signs through which God is in constant communication with us, rather than one comprising mind-independent physical objects governed by blind causal mechanisms. Whilst holding that this later view is conceptually defective, he nevertheless recognises that this latter conception is present in ordinary thought and behaviour, which raises the question of just how Berkeley understands, and can account for, this ‘material attitude’.