

Toyama International Philosophy Lecture

Lecturer

Tyko Schuff (Doctoral Fellow, Munich Center for Mathematical Philosophy)

Time

14 July 2025, Monday

14:00 – 15:30

Venue

Room 501, 5th floor, Building 33, Toyama Campus, Waseda University

Title

“Weak Kleene Grounding and Revenge”

Abstract

In a theory like Kripke’s, any diagnosis of the status of pathological sentences as ungrounded must take place in a meta-language. The expressive resources necessary for carrying out the diagnostic project cannot be introduced into the object language on pain of triviality. In this way, as Kripke himself pointed out, the ghost of Tarski’s hierarchy is still with us. The reason for this limitation is often referred to as the revenge phenomenon. When we try to introduce resources into the object language which would allow us to express the relevant semantic notions, new paradoxes ensue in the form of so-called strengthened liar sentences. Our proposal is to present and defend a theory of truth that is based on a strict conception of grounding. We arrive at this view of grounding after considering certain intuitions about the transparency of the truth predicate and the Russellian idea that every concept has a range of significance.

What sets this particular view of grounding and truth apart from its many relatives in the literature is an unusual degree of resilience against the revenge phenomenon. Our account therefore suffers considerably less expressive limitations than its alternatives. At the center of our discussion are the usual strengthened liar sentences. Using the axiomatic theory WKF (Schindler 2014), which is a weak Kleene variant of Feferman’s DT, we will illustrate on a case by case basis how it is that a weak Kleene theory can accommodate these challenges and thus consistently contain both its own truth-predicate as well as its own neither-true-nor-false-predicate in the object language, thereby achieving a higher degree of semantic closure than rival theories of truth. Unsurprisingly though, this robustness against revenge-claims and the heightened degree of semantic closure comes at an unpleasant cost.

Contact

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No registration is required, and everyone is welcome!