

**The Varieties of Idealization**  
The Special Symposium  
at Xth Polish Philosophical Congress  
**Collegium Iuridicum Novum**, Al. Niepodległości 53,  
Poznań, Poland  
Thursday, September 17, 2015, 16.00 - 18:00  
Friday, September 18, 2-15, 11:30 – 14:00

Idealization is gradually better and better recognized method of theory-construction in the natural and the social sciences as well as in different branches of the humanities. However, the recognition of different kinds of idealization and its impact on theory building is usually posed less clearly. Therefore, the main problems of the symposium will be identification of different traditions of idealization in natural and social science, their impact on strategy of building of theory and adopted way of explanation. We are welcomed proposals which will be led analysis in four dimensions:

- (i) historical – presentations will be devoted to interpretation of the work of pioneers of modeling method in natural and social sciences; e. g.: Galileo, Darwin, Marx, Weber, Pareto and others
- (ii) methodological – these presentations will be devoted to different aspects of idealization, e. g. ontological status of scientific models, varieties of model-building and concretization, peculiarities of modeling in different branch of science and humanities.
- (iii) reconstructive – the purpose of these presentations will be analysis of methodological structure of different theories and concepts in the sciences and the humanities, e. g. concept of rationality, theory of value, etc.

**Program of the symposium**

Thursday session (I), September 17, 2015, 16:00–18:00  
Audytorium Max., first and second floor

16:00-16:10: **Krzysztof Brzechczyn** (Adam Mickiewicz University), *Introduction*

16:10-16:40: **Francesco Coniglione** (Catania University), *Historical Aspects of the Idealization*

16:40-17:00: **Krzysztof Brzechczyn** (Adam Mickiewicz University) *Modelling Method in Historical-Comparative Sociology. An attempt at an Explication within the Conceptual Framework of Idealizational Theory of Science*

17:00-17:20: **Maurycy Zajęcki** (SWPS Poznań) *In the Search for Qualitative Idealization. Remarks on the (Postulated) Mode of Purely Qualitative Idealization*

17:20-18:00: **Discussion**

**Friday session, September 18, 2015, 11:30 – 14:00**  
**Beta Hall, II /III floor**

11:30 – 12:00: **Mieszko Ciesielski** (Adam Mickiewicz University), *On Reduction in the Idealizational Theory of Science; a Case Study of the Relationship between the Concept of a Rational Act and the Concept of a Habitual-Rational Action*

12:00-12:30: **Krzysztof Kiedrowski** (Adam Mickiewicz University), *The Method of Idealization and Concretization in the Negativistic Unitarian Metaphysics*

12:30-13:00: **Andrew D. Thrasher** (George Mason University) *Reconstructing Meaning in a Postmodern Age: Fundamental Ontology, Sacred Secularity, and the Opening of Faith*

13:10-14:00: **Discussion**

**ABSTRACTS:**

**Francesco Coniglione, *Historical aspects of idealization***

It is important to highlight some significant junctions of the history of philosophy, because we are convinced that the methodology of idealization has deep historical roots in philosophers and scientists, although there was often not fully aware of it. The main points made are: (a) that the principal way of viewing abstraction which has dominated the history of thought and epistemology up to the present is influenced by the original Aristotelian position; (b) that with the birth of modern science a new way of conceiving abstraction came into being which is better characterized by the term idealization, the name that was later, in fact, to be used by scientists to describe their scientific activity; (c) that, however, on account of the influence of empirical and inductive philosophy, scientists have often not had sufficient methodological awareness of this new way of viewing abstraction; (d) that this new concept of abstraction has frequently been expressed in the framework of philosophies that lie outside the mainstream of contemporary epistemology or even exhibit marked anti-scientific tendencies; (e) that the theme of idealization has been taken up again in the last few decades and a great contribution in this direction has been made by the so-called Poznan school of methodology.

**Krzysztof Brzechczyn,**

***Modeling Method in Historical-Comparative Sociology. An attempt at an Explication within the Conceptual Framework of Idealizational Theory of Science***

The aim of this presentation is to explicate the basic types of comparative analysis used in historical-comparative sociology, within the conceptual

framework of the idealizational theory of science (ITS), and to determine the usefulness and place of the comparative method in the structure of the idealizational theory. In the second chapter some classifications of comparative analysis are presented. Analysis of comparative methods used in States and Social Revolutions and what methodological discussion it stimulated is outlined in the third chapter. Chapter fourth presents the basic ideas of the idealizational theory of science. Chapter fifth explicates the basic types of comparative analysis within the conceptual framework of the theory and defines the place of that method in the idealizational theory. In the last chapter, I consider the status of historical-comparative sociology in the light of the vision of the development of science provided by the idealizational theory.

**Maurycy Zajęcki,**

***In the Search for Qualitative Idealization. Remarks on the (Postulated) Model of Purely Qualitative Idealization***

Idealizational approach to science (IAS) is very well developed for quantitative theories. For such theories it is possible to give rigorous explication of the notion of significance and nomological structure of phenomena. IAS was also used to build qualitative theories. While doing so, researchers used per analogiam quantitative theories. It created several theoretical problems. Recursive idealization proposed by Izabella Nowakowa describes only narrow fragment of procedures based on idealization in qualitative contexts. I propose more generalized schemes of qualitative idealization which are based on criterial analysis. I distinguish two variants of criterial idealization: (i) pure criterial qualitative idealization and (ii) mixed criterial-recursive qualitative idealization. Theoretically there is a third possible variant: (iii) pure recursive qualitative idealization. The construction of definitions is an important element of formulating theses in qualitative theories. Those definitions are not autonomous. Their shape is ruled by theories themselves (their nomological structures). In qualitative contexts nomological structure can be represented in the form of collision rules, which describe all possible criterial contradictions in the

universes of theories. Qualitative theories which has been intuitively formulated in the paradigm of IAS have great explanatory potential. It shows that there should be a methodological justification for analogues between quantitative and qualitative theories. The scheme of criterial idealization may be such justification. This scheme is very general. Languages which are used in the humanities to build qualitative theories vary a lot. Therefore, we can expect, qualitative theories built in the paradigm of IAS in different branches of the humanities might differ in many aspects.

**Mieszko Ciesielski,**

***On Reduction in the Idealizational Theory of Science; a Case Study of the Relationship between the Concept of a Rational Act and the Concept of a Habitual-Rational Action***

the paper discusses the issue of a reduction relationship between theories of action within the conceptual framework of the idealizational theory of science. The analysis of the relation between the concept of a rational act and the concept of a habitual-rational action leads to the conclusion that not all necessary conditions for the occurrence of a reduction relationship are fulfilled in the discussed case. Although the two theories are conceptually compatible, they differ with respect to their hierarchization of essential factors, so there is essentiality disagreement between them. In the light of the idealizational theory of science, for a reduction relationship to occur between two theories, essentiality agreement between them is required. That conclusion becomes, in turn, the starting point for a critical analysis of essentiality agreement between theories as a necessary condition for a reduction in the field of humanities. The article ends with a postulate of weakening that condition with respect to theories formulated in the social sciences and the humanities, due to the methodological specificity of this domain of knowledge, for example, the qualitative and less precise language and the fundamental difficulty of conducting repeated experiments with particular factors, which influence the studied phenomenon, being effectively isolated.

**Krzysztof Kiedrowski,**

***The Method of Idealization and Concretization in the Negativistic Unitarian Metaphysics***

The basic purpose of this paper is to present a reconstruction, criticism and reinterpretation of one of the constructional methods used by Leszek Nowak in building negativistic unitarian metaphysics. Nowak's statement, that the basic method used by him is the method of idealization and concretization is unsustainable for the following reasons: postulated by Nowak structure of metaphysical doctrines fails to comply with the procedure of concretization on the grounds of the unitarian metaphysics, the sequence of models is in several cases arbitrary, the order of the notions introduced to the conception is to a

certain extent arbitrary, and the method used does not lead to decreasing of the degree of the speculativeness of the system.

In this article I propose to consider the above-mentioned method as a method of abstraction and disabstraction, and to characterize the different way of understanding the method of idealization and concretization. As a result of these procedures the content of 'Being and Thought' is regarded as the speculative first model of the negativistic metaphysics.

**Andrew D. Thrasher,**

***Reconstructing Meaning in a Postmodern Age: Fundamental Ontology, Sacred Secularity, and the Opening of Faith***

This paper offers an analysis of contemporary and postmodern continental ontology that argues for the opening of faith as a constitutive element in understanding the meaning of being. This paper addresses the thought of the early Martin Heidegger, and the thought of Jean-Luc Nancy, Charles Taylor, and Raimon Panikkar and their philosophical implications in understanding a sense of identity, self, and meaning. The thought of Raimon Panikkar is dominant throughout the text and offers an opening to the ontological question that posits an everyday relationship with God as a source of the sense of self, identity, and meaning. My article builds from what I call a relational ontology that posits everyday relationships as constitutive to a sense of self. What I argue is a Panikkarean, evangelical, and continental articulation of the postmodern need for meaning, a historical critique of modern ontology, a theological critique of the secularization thesis, and a Christian interpretation of how God can be known as a source of meaning in everyday life. This paper offers a historical, methodological, and reconstructive analysis of the ontological question through a Panikkarean lens that opens the ontological question to faith as a constitutive lens through which one can have an ontological sense of meaning. What I offer through interpretations of Heidegger, Nancy, Taylor, and Panikkar is a methodological approach to the meaning of being that is historically grounded in the thought of each philosopher to establish an ontological sense of value. In my paper I address the postmodern mentality and its need for meaning. My goal in this paper is to open up the sacred/secular divide to reconstruct an ontological sense of meaning that allows the space in which God can be seen in everyday life. What I offer is a contemporary historical analysis of the need for meaning, a methodological approach derived from figures in phenomenology, French transcendentalism, and inter-religious dialogue, and a reconstructivist approach to the ontological question in response to the nihilism of meaning that is so dominant in postmodern culture. What I offer is a methodological idealization for the need for God and an ontological analysis of various figures in the humanities that opens the sacred/secular divide to the need for faith and its relationship to the ontological question.