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7th Arthur Pap Lecture

Francesca Biagioli

is Associate Professor of History of Philosophy at the University of Turin. Previously, she has been a postdoc at the University of Vienna and at the Zukuftskolleg-University of Konstanz, and a visiting fellow in the Pittsburgh Center for Philosophy of Science. Her research focuses on different traditions within the neo-Kantian movement including Marburg neo-Kantianism, critical realism, the Neo-Friesian School, and on the epistemological views of philosopher-scientists such as Hermann von Helmholtz, Henri Poincaré, Hermann Weyl, Federigo Enriques. She has published the monograph *Space, Number, and Geometry from Helmholtz to Cassirer* and articles in journals including *HOPOS*, *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science*, *British Journal for the History of Philosophy*, *Philosophia Mathematica*.

Abstract

A priori knowledge in the Kantian sense is characterized as being independent from experience, insofar as it is necessary for the possibility of experience in general. This notably includes the fundamental principles of geometry and physics. With scientific changes such as non-Euclidean geometry and relativistic physics, there arose the question whether the Kantian a priori ought to be revised in the light of the best current theories or replaced by pragmatic considerations or conventions. This talk will offer a review of the progressive relativization of the Kantian a priori from the Marburg School of neo-Kantianism to Hans Reichenbach's early work. It will then use Pap's taxonomy to differentiate among these early relativizing strategies and to contrast them with attempts to relativize the Kantian a priori in contemporary philosophy of science.

Francesca Biagioli
(University of Turin)

The Relative Necessity of the Kantian A Priori: Cohen, Cassirer, and Reichenbach

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5 pm

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