This book offers a bridge into the critical understanding of modern Chinese art through its encounter with the world beyond China’s borders. It demonstrates Chinese art’s interconnections with Western cultures while exploring its inherited cultural traditions and internal historical change. The first section deals with the cross-cultural trajectories of individual Chinese artists who travelled from China to the West and then returned. In the second section, the focus shifts from the movement of individual artists between cultures to the process by which specific genres of Western art have been interpreted by Chinese artists. The final section illuminates the encounter of cultures via visual representations of Macau and Hong Kong.

In contrast to the neoclassical economic presumption in favour of markets, this chapter argues that organizations, not markets, should be taken as our default assumption. This argument is based on information processing grounds. The chapter distinguishes between Zen and Market Knowledge. The first is embodied and hard to articulate and the second abstract-symbolic. In human evolution, the first type of knowledge came first, and, on any pragmatic definition of knowledge, it still incorporates most of what we mean by the term. The chapter takes codification and abstraction as the two data processing activities that lead to
the articulation of knowledge into an abstract-symbolic form. It then
develops a conceptual framework, the Information-Space or I-Space to
show how far the articulation of knowledge leads to its being shared.
Whereas an unlimited sharing of information and knowledge leads to
market-oriented outcomes, a more limited sharing leads to organizational
outcomes. A market-oriented economics has tended to look to physics for
its models; the field of organization theory has tended to look to biology.
A more organization-oriented economics would thus look more to biology
for its models.

Problems from Locke
J. L. Mackie

In this book, Mackie critically examines various philosophical problems
raised in John Locke's An Essay Concerning Human Understanding.
Mackie carefully considers Locke's treatment of these problems, but
also proposes his own resolution of the related issues in contemporary
philosophy. In the course of these discussions, Mackie also proposes
his theory of a realism combined with a moderate empiricism. In Ch.
1, Mackie considers the distinction between primary and secondary
qualities and argues that they might still have some legitimate
application. In Ch. 2, he also defends a version of Locke's representative
theory of perception. In Ch. 3, Locke's theory of substance is examined
and compared with the theories of more recent philosophers, such
as Saul Kripke. In Ch. 4, Mackie defends Locke's theory of abstraction
against Berkeley's criticisms and suggests his own revision of the theory
considered in relation to the problem of universals. In Chs. 5 and 6,
Mackie examines and revises Locke's consideration of identity over time
and personal identity. Finally, in Ch. 7, Mackie critically discusses Locke's
rejection of innate ideas and considers the possibility of a reconciliation
of innate ideas and empiricism.

Circles Disturbed
Apostolos Doxiadis and Barry Mazur (eds)

This book brings together important thinkers in mathematics, history,
and philosophy to explore the relationship between mathematics and
narrative. “Circles disturbed” reflect the last words of Archimedes before he was slain by a Roman soldier—“Don't disturb my circles”—words that seem to refer to two radically different concerns: that of the practical person living in the concrete world of reality, and that of the theoretician lost in a world of abstraction. Stories and theorems are, in a sense, the natural languages of these two worlds—stories representing the way we act and interact, and theorems giving us pure thought, distilled from the hustle and bustle of reality. Yet, though the voices of stories and theorems seem totally different, they share profound connections and similarities. This book delves into topics such as the way in which historical and biographical narratives shape our understanding of mathematics and mathematicians, the development of “myths of origins” in mathematics, the structure and importance of mathematical dreams, the role of storytelling in the formation of mathematical intuitions, the ways mathematics helps us organize the way we think about narrative structure, and much more.

The Philosophy of Information
Luciano Floridi

Published in print: 2011 Published Online: May 2011
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199232383.001.0001
Item type: book

This book brings together the outcome of ten years of research. It is based on a simple project, which was begun towards the end of the 1990s: information is a crucial concept, which deserves a thorough philosophical investigation. So the book lays down the conceptual foundations of a new area of research: the philosophy of information. It does so systematically, by pursuing three goals. The first is metatheoretical. The book describes what the philosophy of information is, its problems, and its method of levels of abstraction. These are the topics of the first part, which comprises chapters one, two and three. The second goal is introductory. In chapters four and five, the book explores the complex and diverse nature of several informational concepts and phenomena. The third goal is constructive. In the remaining ten chapters, the book answers some classic philosophical questions in information-theoretical terms. As a result, the book provides the first, unified and coherent research programme for the philosophy of information, understood as a new, independent area of research, concerned with (1) the critical investigation of the conceptual nature and basic principles of information, including its dynamics, utilization, and sciences; and (2) the elaboration and application of information-theoretic and computational methodologies to philosophical problems.
This chapter examines the links between object perception and object memory. It begins with a discussion of how objects are perceived and come to be represented over experience. It describes the perceptual nature of the particular information stored in long-term memory (LTM) that allows us to recognize, identify, categorize, and perform perceptual skills on visual objects. Two themes weave their way throughout this chapter. One theme concerns the role of abstraction in perception and memory. The second theme is how to carve up perception and memory into functional systems.

Why Questions? What Explanations?

John Levi Martin

Chapter 1 introduces the problem by beginning with the difference between “first person” and “third person” explanations. The former refer to the world that we inhabit as individual actors; the latter are an explanatory construct that we generally only employ when discussing others. In the social sciences, we not only privilege the latter, but we tend to think that explanations that rest with the former are somehow inadequate or second rate, if not somehow threatening the discipline itself. The great theory, on the other hand, not only does not rely on first person accounts, it transcends them, it ignores them, it may even obliterate them. That is because the great theory is one that is general, and the general theory is one that involves the linking of concepts that are relatively abstract. When two substantively disparate phenomena are explained jointly as instances of one and the same abstraction, we are satisfied that we have done a masterful job of explanation. This is especially true when we can link two or more abstractions with a relationship of causality between them.
Beyond Assimilation
Nicholas Cook

in The Schenker Project: Culture, Race, and Music Theory in Fin-de-siècle Vienna

Published in print: 2007 Published Online: September 2008
Publisher: Oxford University Press
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195170566.003.0006
Item type: chapter

Often seen as the summation of Schenker's work but in fact an extreme development of its tendencies towards abstraction, Free Composition (1935) can be understood as a form of “inner emigration”, a withdrawal from an increasingly tolerable sociopolitical situation; this is illustrated by a comparison between Free Composition and Adalbert Stifter's novel, The Indian Summer. It is this tendency towards abstraction, as well as the emigration during the 1930s of many of Schenker's (predominantly Jewish) pupils to North America, that enabled Schenker's theory to take root in the positivist atmosphere of post-war American academia. In its Americanized form, Schenkerian theory lost contact with the social and arguably even the musical values that had originally informed it.

The purpose of this book is to recapture these dimensions of Schenker's thought and so argue for more broadly conceived Schenkerian practice.

Representing Social Actors
Theo Van Leeuwen

in Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Analysis

Published in print: 2008 Published Online: May 2008
Publisher: Oxford University Press
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195323306.003.0002
Item type: chapter

This chapter presents a framework for analyzing how the participants of social practices can be, and are, represented in English discourse. It outlines and exemplifies the social and critical import of the categories of this framework and details the realization of each category. After discussing the discursive exclusion of social actors and the role social actors can play in discourse, the representation of social actors as groups (assimilation) and as individuals (individualization), the ways in which actors can be categorized (e.g. functionalization, categorization, relational identity) and the metonyms and abstractions that can conceal human agency behind institutions (institutionalization) or behind the means of action (instrumentalization) is addressed. A newspaper
Representing Social Action
Theo Van Leeuwen

in Discourse and Practice: New Tools for Critical Analysis

This chapter investigates how social actions can be, and are, represented in English discourse, describing the social and critical relevance of the analytical categories it presents as well as providing a detailed realization statement for each category. Key domains include the distinction between actions and reactions and the distinction between material and semiotic action. Special attention is paid to abstraction and generalization in the representation of social actions, and to symbolization and inversion. A newspaper article about immigration is analyzed to bring out the potential of the methodology for purposes of critical discourse analysis.

Psychology I
Jon McGinnis

in Avicenna

This chapter first looks at Avicenna’s account of the cause of the activities associated with a living body, a cause that he identifies with the soul. After brief comments on the powers of the so-called vegetative soul, the discussion turns to the powers of the animal soul, such as perception via the external senses, namely, hearing, sight, smell, touch, and taste, with a particular focus on the power of vision and the role Avicenna sees light playing in vision. It next considers the so-called internal faculties or senses, such as imagination, memory, and the like. Here, the focus is on Avicenna’s criteria for deducing his list of the various kinds of internal faculties, with particular attention to his discussion of the compositive imagination and cogitative faculty in humans.
Because it unfolds through time, conceptualization (and hence linguistic meaning) is inherently dynamic. There are numerous natural paths that it tends to follow, and which tend to coalign in linguistic structure. In one kind of path, a salient reference point provides mental access to a target. Certain basic grammatical phenomena are analyzed in terms of reference point relationships, including possessives, pronominal anaphora, topic constructions, and trajector/landmark organization (subject and object). A subject differs from a discourse topic by being structurally internal to a clause and conceptually intrinsic to the clausal process. Trajector and landmark are characterized dynamically as the first and second reference points evoked in building up to the full conception of a profiled relationship. This explains their general grammatical accessibility as well as their role in certain specific constructions. The mental world we construct is grounded in our experience as creatures with bodies who engage in motor and sensory interactions (embodiment). In constructing it, we transcend direct experience through abstraction, conceptual integration, and subjectification: the application of mental operations immanent in certain conceptions to situations for which their occurrence is extrinsic. Examples include fictive motion, fictive change, and the covert invocation of imagined scenarios. Mental simulation is a fundamental aspect of conception and linguistic meaning. Subjectification is an important factor in grammaticization (the evolution of grammatical elements from lexical sources). Many grammatical notions are subjective counterparts of basic aspects of everyday experience. Grammar reflects the means of disengagement through which we transcend immediate experience and construct our mental world. It is thus a key to conceptual analysis.
Cognitive Grammar represents one approach to cognitive linguistics, which in turn belongs to the functionalist (as opposed to the formalist) tradition in linguistic theory. Its central claim is that grammar is meaningful. More specifically, grammar forms a continuum with lexicon and is fully describable as assemblies of symbolic structures (form-meaning pairings). Lexicon varies with respect to the complexity of expressions and the degree of specificity of the meanings symbolized. Grammar varies along the same dimensions, being distinguished from lexicon primarily on the basis of being more schematic in regard to form as well as meaning. Cognitive Grammar is a usage-based approach, in which linguistic structure is seen as emerging by abstraction from usage events, i.e. the reinforcement of what is common across multiple instances of language use in interactive contexts. The theory is highly restrictive in what is posited, limiting linguistic units to structures that are either directly apprehended as parts of occurring expressions or else derive from such structures by the general cognitive phenomena of schematization and categorization.

Abstraction of Mental Representations: Theoretical Considerations and Neuroscientific Evidence
Kalina Christoff and Kamyar Keramatian
in Neuroscience of Rule-Guided Behavior

Published in print: 2007 Published Online: September 2007
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195314274.003.0007

Humans are unique in being able to follow rules at a high order of abstraction—or complex systems of abstract rules that are themselves related in an abstract way. This chapter presents findings that provide evidence for specific involvement of the human lateral prefrontal cortex in enabling not only the flexible switching of rules, but also the process of establishing automaticity at high levels of abstraction. Results regarding such automaticity are discussed in a cognitive and social neuroscience context. These lateral prefrontal cortex regions are typically considered specific to controlled, rule-guided behavior; however, under conditions requiring complex systems of rules to be followed, these same regions appear to support the formation of complex automatic behaviors. This somewhat unexpected finding of the reliance of automaticity on the lateral prefrontal cortex underscores the importance of investigating rule-guided behavior in its full, uniquely human, complexity.
This chapter shows how to expand the ideas of Chapter 5 for a language involving quantifiers, and offers a more rigorous treatment. Since the contents of states of being for are treated as properties, predicates are treated as semantically contributing functions from objects to properties. Lambda-abstractions are introduced to denote properties, and open lambda-abstractions to denote functions from objects to properties. After improved versions of the main developments in Chapter 5, it is observed that both the treatment of inconsistency and the constructive feature of the semantics turn essentially on the assumption that all sentences in this simple language express the same kind of mental state. From this, it is argued that the only way to incorporate descriptive language is if belief is itself analyzed in terms of being for.

Sensorimotor Foundations of Higher Cognition
Patrick Haggard

This book is dedicated to exploring how much of higher cognitive function can be explained by reduction to simpler sensorimotor processes. It uses a series of specific cognitive domains to examine the sensorimotor bases of human cognition. The first section deals with the common neural processes for primary and ‘cognitive’ processes. It examines the key neural systems and computational architectures at the interface between cognition, sensation, and action. The second section deals with specific themes in abstract cognition: the origins of action, and the conceptual aspects of sensory, particularly somatosensory, processing. It looks at how mental and neural processes of abstraction are vital to the cognitive–sensorimotor interface. It also covers topics such as tool use, bodily awareness, and executive organization of action patterns, and probes the extent to which principles of sensorimotor information processing extend to further hierarchical representations. The next section deals with the representation of the self and others. The questions of self-consciousness and of attribution to other minds have
a fundamental place, and a long history, in psychology. At first sight, few aspects of cognition could seem more abstract, more refined than these. However, recent research suggests that sensorimotor systems are good ‘social levellers’: your sensory and motor apparatus is much like mine. Can people vicariously experience the sensory and motor events of other individuals? Which aspects of social representation are explained by sensorimotor sharing, and which are not? The chapters in this section offer strongly contrasting perspectives. The final section deals with upper limits of cognition.

The Opuscula Sacra
John Marenbon

in Boethius

Published in print: 2003 Published Online: November 2003
Item type: chapter

Gives detailed analyzes of Boethius’ five short theological treatises. In particular, it examines the use of Aristotelian physics in the treatise written against the Nestorian and Monophysite views on Christology, the discussion of how far Aristotle's Categories can be used in talking about God and in analyzing the Trinity, and the ontological scheme, and argument about abstraction set out in Treatise III. Boethius is presented as an important innovator in theological method.

Martial Formations
Patricia A. Cahill

in Unto the Breach: Martial Formations, Historical Trauma, and the Early Modern Stage

Published in print: 2008 Published Online: January 2009
Item type: chapter

This chapter examines the status of military science in the playhouse, especially the ways in which the invocation of arithmetical discourses, processional marches, and battle formations displace cultural fantasies of individual distinction. The chapter focuses on Marlowe's two-part Tamburlaine, one of the most popular and most explicitly militaristic plays in the Elizabethan repertory and a play that has long been a touchstone for critical discussions of the emergence of the modern subject. This chapter argues that Tamburlaine's preoccupation with
military calculation and the organization of bodies in space produces a spectacle not just of overreaching singularity but also of uniform personhood and mathematically rationalized violence. Ultimately, by pointing to the play's sustained attention to visions of men in the aggregate, this chapter revises the usual reading of Marlowe's text so as to tease out its renderings of modern “massifying” practices, which presage a new world of social abstraction.

Introduction
Peter J. Schmelz

in Such Freedom, If Only Musical: Unofficial Soviet Music during the Thaw

Introduction
Peter J. Schmelz

This chapter is the introduction to the book. It begins by comparing the Soviet music of the Thaw with the visual arts from the time, and specifically examples by artists Oscar Rabin and Francisco Infante. It uses Karol Berger's ideas of “abstraction” and “mimesis” to discuss the stylistic shifts of the young Soviet composers of the Thaw generation, describing how they moved from serialism and the abstract style it seemed to necessitate to freer, more mimetic compositional styles involving aleatory devices and tonal quotations. The chapter then considers the possibilities of resistance in the Soviet Union during the 1960s and 1970s, building upon and critiquing anthropologist Alexei Yurchak's concept of vnye. It concludes with a summary of the book's remaining chapters. Karol Berger Alexei Yurchak abstraction mimesis serialism aleatory resistance vnye Francisco Infante Oscar Rabin

Religion, Myths, Women, Colonization
Simon Hornblower

Religion, Myths, Women, Colonization
Simon Hornblower

This chapter examines parallels and similarities between Pindar and Thucydides in the area of colonical myth. Topics covered include the afterlife, immortality, personified abstractions, women, Dorieus of Sparta, and the ‘lost clod of earth’, myths as ways of rejecting or upstaging
historical claims, kinship diplomacy, mixed colonial realities, and myths of possession.