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Given current environmental concerns, it is not surprising to find literary critics and theorists surveying the Romantic poets with ecological hindsight. In this timely study, Onno Oerlemans extends these current eco-critical views by synthesizing a range of viewpoints from the Romantic period.

Introduction The dispute between rationalism and empiricism takes place within epistemology, the branch of philosophy devoted to studying the nature, sources and limits of knowledge. The defining questions of epistemology include the following. What is the nature of propositional knowledge, knowledge that a particular proposition about the world is true? To know a proposition, we must believe it and it must be true, but something more is required, something that distinguishes knowledge from a lucky guess. A good deal of philosophical work has been invested in trying to determine the nature of warrant. How can we gain knowledge? We can form true beliefs just by making lucky guesses. How to gain warranted beliefs is less clear. Moreover, to know the world, we must think about it, and it is unclear how we gain the concepts we use in thought or what assurance, if any, we have that the ways in which we divide up the world using our concepts correspond to divisions that actually exist. What are the limits of our knowledge? Some aspects of the world may be within the limits of our thought but beyond the limits of our knowledge; faced with competing descriptions of them, we cannot know which description is true. Some aspects of the world may even be beyond the limits of our thought, so that we cannot form intelligible descriptions of them, let alone know that a particular description is true. The disagreement between rationalists and empiricists primarily concerns the second question, regarding the sources of our concepts and knowledge. In some instances, their disagreement on this topic leads them to give conflicting responses to the other questions as well. They may disagree over the nature of warrant or about the limits of our thought and knowledge. Our focus here will be on the competing rationalist and empiricist responses to the second question. Some propositions in a particular subject area, S, are knowable by us by intuition alone; still others are knowable by being deduced from intuited propositions. Intuition is a form of rational insight. Deduction is a process in which we derive conclusions from intuited premises through valid arguments, ones in which the conclusion must be true if the premises are true. We intuit, for example, that the number three is prime and that it is greater than two. We then deduce from this knowledge that there is a prime number greater than two. Intuition and deduction thus provide us with knowledge a priori, which is to say knowledge gained independently of sense experience. Some rationalists take mathematics to be knowable by intuition and deduction. Some place ethical truths in this category. Some include metaphysical claims, such as that God exists, we have free will, and our mind and body are distinct substances. The more propositions rationalists include within the range of intuition and deduction, and the more controversial the truth of those propositions or the claims to know them, the more radical their rationalism. Rationalists also vary the strength of their view by adjusting their understanding of warrant. Some take warranted beliefs to be beyond even the slightest doubt and claim that intuition and deduction provide beliefs of this high epistemic status. Others interpret warrant more conservatively, say as belief beyond a reasonable doubt, and claim that intuition and deduction provide beliefs of that caliber. Still another dimension of rationalism depends on how its proponents understand the connection between intuition, on the one hand, and truth, on the other. Some take intuition to be infallible, claiming that whatever we intuit must be true. Others allow for the possibility of false intuited propositions. The second thesis associated with rationalism is the Innate Knowledge thesis. The Innate Knowledge Thesis: We have knowledge of some truths in a particular subject area, S, as part of our rational nature. The difference between them rests in the accompanying understanding of how this a priori knowledge is gained. The Innate Knowledge thesis offers our rational nature. Our innate knowledge is not learned through either sense experience or intuition and deduction. It is just part of our nature. Experiences may trigger a process by which we bring this knowledge to consciousness, but the experiences do not provide us with the knowledge itself. It has in some way been with

us all along. According to some rationalists, we gained the knowledge in an earlier existence. According to others, God provided us with it at creation. Still others say it is part of our nature through natural selection. Once again, the more subjects included within the range of the thesis or the more controversial the claim to have knowledge in them, the more radical the form of rationalism. Stronger and weaker understandings of warrant yield stronger and weaker versions of the thesis as well. The third important thesis of rationalism is the Innate Concept thesis. The Innate Concept Thesis: We have some of the concepts we employ in a particular subject area, S, as part of our rational nature. According to the Innate Concept thesis, some of our concepts are not gained from experience. They are part of our rational nature in such a way that, while sense experiences may trigger a process by which they are brought to consciousness, experience does not provide the concepts or determine the information they contain. Some claim that the Innate Concept thesis is entailed by the Innate Knowledge Thesis; a particular instance of knowledge can only be innate if the concepts that are contained in the known proposition are also innate. Others, such as Carruthers, argue against this connection , pp. The content and strength of the Innate Concept thesis varies with the concepts claimed to be innate. The more a concept seems removed from experience and the mental operations we can perform on experience the more plausibly it may be claimed to be innate. Since we do not experience perfect triangles but do experience pains, our concept of the former is a more promising candidate for being innate than our concept of the latter. Two other closely related theses are generally adopted by rationalists, although one can certainly be a rationalist without adopting either of them. The first is that experience cannot provide what we gain from reason. The Indispensability of Reason Thesis: The knowledge we gain in subject area, S, by intuition and deduction, as well as the ideas and instances of knowledge in S that are innate to us, could not have been gained by us through sense experience. The second is that reason is superior to experience as a source of knowledge. The Superiority of Reason Thesis: The knowledge we gain in subject area S by intuition and deduction or have innately is superior to any knowledge gained by sense experience. How reason is superior needs explanation, and rationalists have offered different accounts. Another view, generally associated with Plato Republic ec , locates the superiority of a priori knowledge in the objects known. What we know by reason alone, a Platonic form, say, is superior in an important metaphysical way, e. Most forms of rationalism involve notable commitments to other philosophical positions. One is a commitment to the denial of scepticism for at least some area of knowledge. If we claim to know some truths by intuition or deduction or to have some innate knowledge, we obviously reject scepticism with regard to those truths. We have no source of knowledge in S or for the concepts we use in S other than sense experience. Insofar as we have knowledge in the subject, our knowledge is a posteriori, dependent upon sense experience. Empiricists also deny the implication of the corresponding Innate Concept thesis that we have innate ideas in the subject area. Sense experience is our only source of ideas. They reject the corresponding version of the Superiority of Reason thesis. Since reason alone does not give us any knowledge, it certainly does not give us superior knowledge. Empiricists generally reject the Indispensability of Reason thesis, though they need not. The Empiricism thesis does not entail that we have empirical knowledge. It entails that knowledge can only be gained, if at all, by experience. Empiricists may assert, as some do for some subjects, that the rationalists are correct to claim that experience cannot give us knowledge. The conclusion they draw from this rationalist lesson is that we do not know at all. I have stated the basic claims of rationalism and empiricism so that each is relative to a particular subject area. Rationalism and empiricism, so relativized, need not conflict. We can be rationalists in mathematics or a particular area of mathematics and empiricists in all or some of the physical sciences. Rationalism and empiricism only conflict when formulated to cover the same subject. Then the debate, Rationalism vs. The fact that philosophers can be both rationalists and empiricists has implications for the classification schemes often employed in the history of philosophy, especially the one traditionally used to describe the Early Modern Period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries leading up to Kant. It is standard practice to group the major philosophers of this period as either rationalists or empiricists and to suggest that those under one heading share a common agenda in opposition to those under the other. We should adopt such

general classification schemes with caution. The views of the individual philosophers are more subtle and complex than the simple-minded classification suggests. See Loeb and Kenny for important discussions of this point. Descartes and Locke have remarkably similar views on the nature of our ideas, even though Descartes takes many to be innate, while Locke ties them all to experience. Thus, Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz are mistakenly seen as applying a reason-centered epistemology to a common metaphysical agenda, with each trying to improve on the efforts of the one before, while Locke, Berkeley and Hume are mistakenly seen as gradually rejecting those metaphysical claims, with each consciously trying to improve on the efforts of his predecessors. One might claim, for example, that we can gain knowledge in a particular area by a form of Divine revelation or insight that is a product of neither reason nor sense experience. What is perhaps the most interesting form of the debate occurs when we take the relevant subject to be truths about the external world, the world beyond our own minds. A full-fledged rationalist with regard to our knowledge of the external world holds that some external world truths can and must be known a priori, that some of the ideas required for that knowledge are and must be innate, and that this knowledge is superior to any that experience could ever provide. The full-fledged empiricist about our knowledge of the external world replies that, when it comes to the nature of the world beyond our own minds, experience is our sole source of information. Reason might inform us of the relations among our ideas, but those ideas themselves can only be gained, and any truths about the external reality they represent can only be known, on the basis of sense experience. This debate concerning our knowledge of the external world will generally be our main focus in what follows. The debate raises the issue of metaphysics as an area of knowledge.

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IV Romanticism and the Metaphysics of Classification (pp.) In a report in the science journal Nature presented genetic evidence that the red wolf is a hybrid of the grey wolf and the coyote.

For example, the Dewey Classification, though having this useful advantage of being infinitely extendible, turns out rapidly to be a list or a nomenclature. A first attempt to make up for such a disadvantage has consisted of allowing some junctions between categories in the classification. A second one is the possibility of using some tables 7 in the DDC to aid in the search of a complex object, which may be located in different sites. For instance, a book of poetry, written by various poets from around the world, would appear in several classes, indexed thanks to the tables. In general, DDC used to combine elements from different parts of the structure, in order to construct a number representing the subject content. This one often combines 2 or more subject elements with linking numbers and geographical and temporal elements. The method consists of forming a new item rather than drawing upon a list containing each class and its meaning. Another example is the following: Other specific features occur in library classifications, which tend to make them very different from classical scientific taxonomies. One spectacular difference with hierarchical classifications in Zoology or Botany is, as we have already seen, that it is possible for subjects to appear in more than one class. For example, in DDC, a book on Mathematics could appear in the Another difference is a relative flexibility of library classifications. Though there exist improvements, UDC and DDC, like most of the classifications constructed at the same time see Bliss are based on a perception of knowledge and of the relationships between academic disciplines extant from to Moreover, though updated regularly, UDC and DDC, as decimal systems, are less hospitable to the addition of new subjects. These kinds of classification are based on fixed and historically dated categories. One may observe, for example, that none of the main concepts of our present library science digital library, knowledge organization, automatic indexing, information retrieval, and so forth were included in the index of the UDC edition, and that technical taxonomies generally require more complex features Dobrowolski Some of them are well known since the middle of the 20th century. Ranganathan was at first a mathematician and knew little about the library. He saw very quickly that Decimal Classifications did not give satisfaction to users. On the opposite, he had the vision of a meccano set, where, instead of having ready-made rigid toys, one can construct them with a few fundamental components. This made him think of a new kind of classification. It appeared to Ranganathan that the new theory might be organized at the higher level in 5 fundamental categories FC called facets: There is also subfacets, so that the facet scheme PMEST and the subfacets we may form from it, are then used to sort subclasses in the main classes of the classification. Rather than simply dividing the main classes into a series of subordinate classes, one subdivides each main class by particular characteristics into facets. Facets, labeled by Arabic numbers, are then combined to make subordinate classes as needed. For example, Literature may be divided by the characteristic of language into the facet of Language, including English, German, and French. It may also be divided by form, which yields the facet of Form, including poetry, drama and fiction. So CC contains both basic subjects and their facets, which contain isolates. A basic subject stands alone, for example: Every isolate in every facet must be a manifestation of one of the five fundamental categories in the PMEST scheme. The advantages of the CC are numerous. The first one is a greater flexibility in determining new subjects and subject numbers. A second is the concept of phases, which allows taxonomists to readily combine most of the main classes in a subject. Consider for example a subject like Mathematics for biologist. In this case, single class number enumerative systems, as those predominating in US libraries, tend to force classifiers to choose either Mathematics or Biology as the main subject. However, CC supplies a specific notation to indicate this be-phased condition. Indeed, some problems remain unsolved. In CC, facets, that is, small components of larger entities or units are similar to flat faces of a diamond which reflect the underlying symmetry of the crystal structure, so that the general structure of Ranganathan Classification, as that of a faceted classification

in general, is a kind of permutohedron. In principle, all descriptions may be done, whatever the order of them. For example, if we have to classify a paper speaking about seasonal variations of the concentration of noradrenaline in the tissue of the rat, we must get the same access if we have the direct sequence: In mathematical words, this means clearly that the underlying structure that makes this transformation possible must be a commutative group. But this is not always the case, and for some dihedral groups, this structure is even forbidden. Another potential worry is that the PMEST scheme, which certainly has some connections with Indian thought, is far from being universally accepted see De Grolier and has not been very often implemented in libraries, even in India. So, in spite of all the improvements they receive in the course of time, a lot of problems have been raised in front of library classifications. In particular, library classifications will be strongly questioned in the 20th century by the proliferating development of the knowledge. First, the ceaseless flux of new documents forbids a stiff topology for classifications. The problem, then, is to know how to construct evolutionary structures. Second, the successive orderings of the knowledge groupings and revisions and not only ramifications has called relational powerful and automated documentary languages. Classifications still remain necessary, because documentary languages cannot do everything. So the problem is still open. But, with the big development of mathematics in the last century, this general problem, which is the great problem of order, has to be investigated by the means of mathematical structures. Order and Mathematical Models First attempts to study orders in mathematics began to develop at the end of the 19th century with Peano, Dedekind and Cantor especially with his theory of ordinals, which are linear ordered sets. Then, in the first part of the 20th century, comes the notion of partial order with an article of MacNeille and the famous work of G. Birkhoff who introduced the notion of lattice, algebraically developed later in the great book of Rasiowa and Sikorski All these works supposed the big last century advances in mathematical order theory: The Belgian logician Leo Apostel and the Polish mathematicians Luszczewska-Romahnowa and Batog a, b have also published important articles on the subject. The more and more important use of computers in the search of automatic classifications has also been, in those years, a reason for searchers to get interested in mathematical models. As there are many forms of classifications in the world of knowledge we can find them, as we have seen, in mathematics, natural sciences, library and information science, and so forth there are also many possible mathematical models for classifications. We begin with the study of extensional structures. Extensional Structures In order to clarify the situation, we start with the weakest form of them and move to stronger forms. Mathematics allows us to begin with very few axioms, that usually define weak general structures, and afterwards, by adding new conditions, one can get other properties and stronger models. A Hypergraph In this case, the set of edges P does not necessarily cover the set X, and some nodes vertex of degree zero , may have no link to some edge. Assume the following conditions: Add now the following new conditions: Let now P X be the set of partitions on a nonempty finite set X. Then, one can prove that all the chains all the linearly ordered sequences of partitions of this lattice are equivalent to hierarchical classifications. So, the set C X of all these chains is exactly the set of all hierarchical classifications on a set. This set C X has itself a mathematical structure: The lattice of partitions of a 4-element set. A first problem is that such partitions are very numerous. So, when we want to classify some domain of objects plants, animals, books, and so forth , it is not very easy to examine what classification is the best one among, say, several thousands of them. A second problem is that the world is not made of chains of partitions. If it were, of course, the game would be over. Everything could be inserted in some hierarchical classification. But, the real world has no reason to present itself as a hierarchical classification. In order to make empirical classifications we must evaluate the similarities or dissimilarities between elements to be classified. In the history of taxonomic science, Buffon and Adanson have tried to understand the meaning of this evaluation in the following way. First, they claim, we have to measure the distance between the objects by the means of some index, so that we can build classes. Afterwards, we have to measure the distance between classes themselves, so that we can group some classes into classes of classes, and so replace the initial set of objects with an ordered set of classes that is less numerous than them. What old taxonomists were doing, only basis of observation, can now

be carried out with the help of mathematics, using a modern notion of distance. Problems arise when the distance between the objects classified is not ultrametric. In such cases, we have to choose the closest ultrametric smaller than the given distance, and so, access to the best hierarchical classification we can get and which is the closest one to the data. However, this kind of approach leads, in general, to relatively unstable classifications. Indeed, there are two kinds of instability for classifications. The first, Intrinsic instability,,is associated to the plurality of methods distances, algorithms and so forth that can be used to make the classifications of objects. The second is extrinsic instability, which is connected to the fact that our knowledge is changing with time, so the definitions of objects or attributes of the objects are evolving. An answer to the question of intrinsic instability is a theorem of Lerman which says that if the number of attributes or properties possessed by the objects of a set X is constant, the associated quasi-order given by any natural metric is the same. But this result has two limits. First, when the sample variance of the number of attributes is a big one, of course, the stability is lost and second, if we classify the attributes, instead of classifying the objects, the reverse is not true. For extrinsic instability the answers are more difficult to find. We may appeal to methods used in library decimal classifications UDC, Dewey, and so forth , which make possible infinite ramified extensions, but these classifications, as we have seen, are apt to assume that higher levels are invariant and have also the disadvantage to be enumerative and to degenerate rapidly into simple lists. Also, pseudo-complemented structures Hilman that admit some kinds of waiting boxes or compartments for indexing things that are not yet classified. We get as well structures whose transformations obey certain rules that have been fixed in advance. That is the case of Hopcroft trees Aho, Hopcroft, Ulmann for instance, or of structures close to these ones Larson and Walden, In recent years, new models for making classifications came from conceptual formal analysis Barwise and Seligman, , computer science or views using non-classical logics in the domain of formal ontologies Smith , In computer science, for example, the concept of Abstract Data Type ADT , related to the concept of Data Abstraction, important in object-oriented programming, may be viewed as a generalization of mathematical structures. An ADT is a mathematical model for data types, where a data type is defined by its behavior from the point of view of a user of the data. So, if we are not satisfied by a rough classification like the partition into collections, streams and iterators support loops accessing data items and relational data structures that capture relationships between data items, we must admit that ADT can also be regarded as a generalized approach of a number of algebraic structures, such as lattices, groups, and rings Lidi In this context, computer science adds nothing to mathematics and the problem is now that a classification of mathematical structures using, for instance, Category theory, as Pierce tried does not bring a sufficient answer because a category may exist while its objects are not necessarily constructible Parrochia-Neuville

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Chapter 3 : Classification | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

Get this from a library! Romanticism and the materiality of nature. [Onno Oerlemans] -- Given current environmental concerns, it is not surprising to find literary critics and theorists surveying the Romantic poets with ecological hindsight.

What all these thinkers share, which distinguishes them from materialists like Epicurus and Thomas Hobbes and from empiricists like David Hume , is that they regard freedom or self-determination both as real and as having important ontological implications for soul or mind or divinity. All three find common ground on the unique position of humans in the scheme of things, known by the discussed categorical differences from animals and inanimate objects. Begriff , "Spirit" and "ethical life" in such a way that the Kantian duality is rendered intelligible, rather than remaining a brute "given". In this way, Hegel intends to defend the germ of truth in Kantian dualism against reductive or eliminative programs like those of materialism and empiricism. Hegel preserves this essential Platonic and Kantian concern in the form of infinity going beyond the finite a process that Hegel in fact relates to "freedom" and the "ought" , [54]: Hegel renders these dualities intelligible by ultimately his argument in the "Quality" chapter of the "Science of Logic". The finite has to become infinite in order to achieve reality. The idea of the absolute excludes multiplicity so the subjective and objective must achieve synthesis to become whole. This is because as Hegel suggests by his introduction of the concept of "reality", [54]: Finite things do not determine themselves because as "finite" things their essential character is determined by their boundaries over against other finite things, so in order to become "real" they must go beyond their finitude "finitude is only as a transcending of itself". Modern philosophy, culture and society seemed to Hegel fraught with contradictions and tensions, such as those between the subject and object of knowledge, mind and nature, self and Other , freedom and authority, knowledge and faith, or the Enlightenment and Romanticism. According to Hegel, the main characteristic of this unity was that it evolved through and manifested itself in contradiction and negation. Contradiction and negation have a dynamic quality that at every point in each domain of reality â€" consciousness , history, philosophy, art, nature and societyâ€"leads to further development until a rational unity is reached that preserves the contradictions as phases and sub-parts by lifting them up Aufhebung to a higher unity. This whole is mental because it is mind that can comprehend all of these phases and sub-parts as steps in its own process of comprehension. It is rational because the same, underlying, logical , developmental order underlies every domain of reality and is ultimately the order of self-conscious rational thought, although only in the later stages of development does it come to full self-consciousness. The rational, self-conscious whole is not a thing or being that lies outside of other existing things or minds. Rather, it comes to completion only in the philosophical comprehension of individual existing human minds who through their own understanding bring this developmental process to an understanding of itself. Geist combines the meaning of spiritâ€"as in god, ghost, or mindâ€"with an intentional force. Civil society Hegel made the distinction between civil society and state in his Elements of the Philosophy of Right. This liberal distinction between political society and civil society was followed by Alexis de Tocqueville. For example, while it seems to be the case that he felt that a civil society such as the German society in which he lived was an inevitable movement of the dialectic, he made way for the crushing of other types of "lesser" and not fully realized types of civil society as these societies were not fully conscious or awareâ€"as it wereâ€"as to the lack of progress in their societies. Thus, it was perfectly legitimate in the eyes of Hegel for a conqueror such as Napoleon to come along and destroy that which was not fully realized. The State subsumes family and civil society and fulfills them. All three together are called "ethical life" Sittlichkeit. The State involves three " moments ". In a Hegelian State, citizens both know their place and choose their place. They both know their obligations and choose to fulfill their obligations. The individual has "substantial freedom in the state". The State is "objective spirit" so "it is only through being a member of the state that the individual himself has objectivity, truth, and ethical life" section Furthermore, every member both loves the State with genuine patriotism, but has transcended mere "team

spirit" by reflectively endorsing their citizenship. Members of a Hegelian State are happy even to sacrifice their lives for the State. Heraclitus[edit] According to Hegel, " Heraclitus is the one who first declared the nature of the infinite and first grasped nature as in itself infinite, that is, its essence as process. The origin of philosophy is to be dated from Heraclitus. His is the persistent Idea that is the same in all philosophers up to the present day, as it was the Idea of Plato and Aristotle". Hegel asserted that in Heraclitus he had an antecedent for his logic: Sein und Nichts sei dasselbe Being and non-being are the same. Heraclitus does not form any abstract nouns from his ordinary use of "to be" and "to become" and in that fragment seems to be opposing any identity A to any other identity B, C and so on, which is not-A. However, Hegel interprets not-A as not existing at all, not nothing at all, which cannot be conceived, but indeterminate or "pure" being without particularity or specificity. This interpretation of Heraclitus cannot be ruled out, but even if present is not the main gist of his thought. Just as humans continually correct their concepts of reality through a dialectical process , so God himself becomes more fully manifested through the dialectical process of becoming. Whatever the nous thinks at any time is actual substance and is identical to limited being, but more remains to be thought in the substrate of non-being, which is identical to pure or unlimited thought. The universe as becoming is therefore a combination of being and non-being. The particular is never complete in itself, but to find completion is continually transformed into more comprehensive, complex, self-relating particulars. The essential nature of being-for-itself is that it is free "in itself;" that is, it does not depend on anything else such as matter for its being. The limitations represent fetters, which it must constantly be casting off as it becomes freer and more self-determining. This means that Jesus as the Son of God is posited by God over against himself as other. Hegel sees both a relational unity and a metaphysical unity between Jesus and God the Father. To Hegel, Jesus is both divine and human. Hegel further attests that God as Jesus not only died, but "[God, that is to say, maintains himself in the process, and the latter is only the death of death. God rises again to life, and thus things are reversed". Kaufmann admits that Hegel treated many distinctively Christian themes and "sometimes could not resist equating" his conception of spirit Geist "with God, instead of saying clearly: So he, too, sometimes spoke of God and, more often, of the divine; and because he occasionally took pleasure in insisting that he was really closer to this or that Christian tradition than some of the theologians of his time, he has sometimes been understood to have been a Christian. Verlag von Duncker und Humblot, He formulates an early philosophical example of a disenchantment narrative, arguing that Judaism was responsible both for realizing the existence of Geist and, by extension, for separating nature from ideas of spiritual and magical forces and challenging polytheism. During the last ten years of his life, Hegel did not publish another book, but thoroughly revised the Encyclopedia second edition, ; third, He also published some articles early in his career and during his Berlin period. A number of other works on the philosophy of history , religion , aesthetics and the history of philosophy were compiled from the lecture notes of his students and published posthumously. This section needs additional citations for verification. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed.

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Chapter 4 : Romanticism and the Materiality of Nature - Onno Oerlemans - Google Books

Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of existence, being and the world. Arguably, metaphysics is the foundation of philosophy: Aristotle calls it "first philosophy" (or sometimes just "wisdom"), and says it is the subject that deals with " first causes and the principles of things ".

The Primacy of the Aesthetic One common concern strikingly unifies otherwise different romantic contributions. Rather, if the romantic ideal is to materialize, aesthetics should permeate and shape human life. Friedrich Schlegel, one of the leading figures in Early German Romanticism, put this idea in a few memorable phrases: Schlegel is not alone on this matter. Similar sentiments and slogans had been expressed just a little earlier in what is commonly regarded as the manifesto of German romanticism, The Oldest Programme: The idea that unites everyone [is] the idea of beautyâ€¦I am now convinced that the highest act of reason, by encompassing all ideas, is an aesthetic act, and that truth and goodness are siblings only in beauty. How is this core feature of romantic aesthetics, the primacy of the aesthetic, to be explained? A textually grounded and philosophically viable way to approach the imperative is as a structural or formal demand. On that reading, the imperative requires that we model our epistemological, metaphysical, ethical, political, social and scientific pursuits according to the form of the aesthetic comportment to the world, exemplified in poetry. Philosophy, science and everyday life need not be poetry, but poetic or poetry-like. Structurally, they should become similar. Aesthetics and Reason 2. On this traditional interpretation, romanticism is antirationalist or irrationalist. But, while the romantic pursuit of the primacy of aesthetics marks a break with the Enlightenment, regarding romantic aesthetics as antirational or irrational and as antagonistic to the core Enlightenment values is unjustified for a host of reasons cf. Beiser , Engell , Gregory Second, many of the core features of romantic aesthetics in addition to criticismâ€”like the relation between beauty, truth and goodness, the pursuit of unity among variety and the significance of the imagination and the sublimeâ€”would have been impossible independently of key Enlightenment thinkers. Third, the romantic elevation of aesthetic feeling and the creative imagination did not come at the price of their faith in and respect for reason. In one of his fragments, he commanded: Such proclamations challenge the alleged break between the Enlightenment and romanticism as much as they challenge another standard interpretation of romanticism, one that takes it to be a direct outgrowth of Sturm und Drang, a counter-Enlightenment movement that flourished in the s and s. Briefly, this response to the Enlightenment, expressed in works of literature, theatre, music and the plastic arts, heralded individual subjectivity and the free expression of unconstrained feelings as the proper replacements for the values of the Enlightenment. But regarding romanticism as simply a continuation of Sturm und Drang finds no grounding in romantic texts. In contrast to Jacobi, the German romantics never attempted to replace reason with faith, sensation, unconstrained feeling or intuition. Instead, they wished to bring out the rationality of the passions and the passionate nature of reason as part of a unified and balanced picture of human life. Rather than a straight development of Sturm und Drang, then, romanticism is better understood as an attempt to synthesize the grain of truth in the movement with the grain of truth in the philosophy of Enlightenment, or simply put, to synthesize reason and sensibility. Accordingly, what Coleridge, for example, admired in Wordsworth was not imagination and feeling alone, but the union of deep feeling with profound thought; the fine balance of truth in observing with the imaginative faculty in modifying the objects observed. Without the former, human beings would be reduced to mere animality; without the latter they would lose their humanity: We cannot deny the drive to free ourselves, to ennoble ourselves, to progress into the infinite. That would be animalistic. But we can also not deny the drive to be determined, to be receptive; that would not be human. Human dignity is grounded in rational and normatively constrained receptivity just as much as it is grounded in spontaneity. The restless striving after activity, the highest criterion of judgment, does not exclude all the virtues of receptivity but can only exist with them. And in a Kantian manner, they were concerned to expose the limits of reason and constrain its uses to legitimate boundaries. But that is not so: Romantic Poetry is

poetry as much as it is a philosophical method and a vital approach to human life. It is a creative and reflective human power, manifested in the theoretical, practical and aesthetic aspects of life: The transcendental poet is the transcendental person altogether. Irony thus presents its perspective as restrictedâ€"as only one among many different perspectives on the unconditioned whole. Like Romantic Poetry, irony is not merely a literary or even a rhetorical device. Nor is it a purely theoretical method. Rather, in a Socratic spirit, romantic irony is a way of life. For it is, after all, for the artist as well as the man, the first and the last, the most necessary and the highest dutyâ€¦most necessary because wherever one does not restrict oneself, one is restricted by the world; and that makes one a slave. The romantic use of irony was sharply criticized, most famously by Hegel, as free floating form of subjectivity. But not only does this criticism fail to do justice to the romantic insistence that irony itself is a form of self-constraint, but also to the imperative: This demand to constrain and regulate self-restriction itself is of equal importance to the demand to practice irony. Rather than a free floating form of subjectivity, then, romantic irony is a constrained, and normatively governed form of life, meant to expose the limits of reason and facilitate a life of humility cf. Aesthetics, Epistemology and Metaphysics Even a cursory glance through the writings of the romantics assures the reader that their interest in art and aesthetics is closely tied to their epistemological and metaphysical concerns. The primacy that the romantics attributed to aesthetics is explained by but is not reduced to the roles that art and beauty may play in the pursuits of epistemic and metaphysical goals. Briefly, this is how this explanation goes: Like Kant, they believed that such an unconditioned totality is inaccessible to discursive reason and is, to that extent, unknowable to human beings. While the absolute itself is conditioned by nothing, it conditions all the finite physical and mental manifestations of the world. Metaphysically, every finite thing is merely one manifestation of an unconditional totality: It is thus ultimately finite but also infinite, as part and parcel of the infinite whole. This notion of the Absolute is not distinctively romantic. But the romantic treatment of the Absolute is distinctively different from the idealistic one. And it is the distinctive romantic treatment of the Absolute that explains much in romantic aesthetics: While the idealists took the Absolute to be transparent to the human mind, conceptually representable, and inferentially related to other items of knowledge, the romantics regarded it as 1 ungraspable by concepts i. Following Kant, the romantics believed that all knowledge is discursive: But since concepts condition everything that might be known by determining it to be one way or another according to the forms of discursive thought, the Absolute, by its very definition as unconditioned, cannot be known. Knowledge [Erkennen] already denotes conditioned knowledge. The unknowability of the absolute is, therefore, an identical triviality. As Novalis memorably puts it: We seek the unconditioned [Das Ubedingte] and always find only [conditioned] things [Dinge]. Neither our knowledge nor our action can ever attain the point at whichâ€¦. Even though philosophy cannot systematically deduce all knowledge from the Absolute, it must nonetheless pursue its approximation. But if not through concepts, how can one approximate the Absolute? This is where aesthetics comes into the picture. If we abstract from all knowledge and willâ€¦we still find something more, that is feeling and striving. We want to see if we will perhaps find something here that is analogous to the consciousness of the infiniteâ€¦. Poetry elevates each single thing through a particular combination with the rest of the whole, [by allowing] the individual [to] live in the whole and the whole in the individual. Schlegel, Thoughts, KA Baudelaire summarizes these romantic sentiments, declaring, The one who says romanticism says modern artâ€"which is to say intimacy, spirituality, color, aspiration towards the infiniteâ€"expressed by all the resources of art. Salon of [] What is it about the aesthetic engagement with art and beauty that is particularly suitable for approximating the Absolute? The rest of this section will develop a few possible answers to this question. One might think that feelings are thus placed outside of rationality. But this would be a mistake. Rationality, then, is irreducible to cognition both in the Kantian framework and in its romantic inheritance. Aesthetic feeling is rational because of its ground and responsiveness to a claim, but non-cognitive insofar as it cannot be subsumed under concepts. Feeling does not determine any concrete property that its object has independently of subjectivity as cognition would , but is rather responsive to a relation between a subject and an object. Aesthetic pleasure, particularly, is a

non-determining mode of reflecting on the relation, not between a particular subject and a particular object, but between subjectivity and objectivity as such. This rational but non-cognitive nature of feeling, in general, and of aesthetic feeling, in particular, is perhaps the central feature that renders aesthetic feeling an attractive ingredient in addressing the epistemic and metaphysical concerns that occupied the romantics. This is exactly what the romantics have been looking forâ€”a non-discursive, but rational and normatively governed mode of awareness. And they found it in poetry, regarding it as grounded in feeling: Not art and artworks make the artist, but feeling and inspiration and impulse. We are now in a position to appreciate that this romantic imperative is explained partly by the view that philosophy cannot be reduced to concepts and propositions, but must also include certain kinds of affective mental states. To paraphrase Wittgenstein, discursive reasoning comes to an end. An expression borrowed from Kant is fitting here: Both are the source of their own normativity, without being subject to any external law. Given that, they are appropriate for approximating the Absolute insofar as this approximation must be non-determining applying no conditions , but normatively governed rather than arbitrary. This combination of being independent of given rules and attuned to something other than yourself is required not only for the genius, but also for approximating the Absolute. If everyone is to approximate the Absolute, then everyone should model herself after the genius. Criticism consists of a related combination of features. While it is based on no prior rules, it is also open and receptive to the work it concerns. And it is through the engagement with the work that each critical judgment constitutes its own norms. Although we can and should legitimize our judgments of beauty and art, we cannot do so by appeal to any given concepts or norms that are external to the work at stake. The artwork, on this picture, is sui generisâ€”it provides its own standards of appreciation: The critic should seek to express the work in a way that is faithful to its individual nature and be responsive to the specific norms that it constitutes: Fortunately, [the novel] turns out to be one of those books, which carries its own judgment within it. Beautiful objects make a claim on us to respond to them as the specific individuals that they are, on their own terms: This lawfulness without a law fits the requirements of the Absolute.

Chapter 5 : Project MUSE - The Emerson Museum: Practical Romanticism and the Pursuit of the Whole (re

Brown sees romanticism's significance largely in terms of its attachment to the ideal of wholenessâ€"variously manifested in its notions of organic unity, its evocations of a sublime interconnectedness between mind and matter, or its interest in encyclopedic modes of representation.

The Natural and the Human: Science and the Shaping of Modernity, Published: Reviewed by Phillip R. Although it is possible to view each volume in this series as self-contained, their incorporation in a more general breathtaking synthesis at the hands of one scholar requires some attention to the larger project. The goals of this long study are pursued along two fronts. One thematic is to be an analysis of the interplay of natural philosophy and epistemology in a historical dialogue with the Christian religious tradition since the medieval period. The general aim is to understand how the epistemic values of natural philosophy, and later "science," came to displace Christian theology and classical Humanism as the primary form of knowing, the default for assessing the claims of ethics, politics, religion, and philosophy. The second thematic is to discuss the growing "disunity" of science as one follows the fragmentation of an original unified project achieved in the seventeenth century in Cartesianism. This subsequent breakup in the eighteenth century takes place with the rise of experimentalism in company with Newtonian critiques of the mechanical philosophy. As this claim is put in Volume I: Since the assumption of the unity of science underlies not only reductionist programmes, but the assimilation of cognitive disciplines to science. Countering this explicit or implicit historiographical stance is the claim that a historical alliance of natural philosophy with Christian theology in some form has been the key to this development of modern science in the West: I have set out to clear the ground by showing that the reasons commonly adduced for the success of a scientific culture in the West in the wake of the Scientific Revolution -- its use of adversarial non-dogmatic argument, its ability to dissociate itself from religion, its technological benefits -- are mistaken and cannot explain this success. Indeed, a distinctive feature of the Scientific Revolution is that, unlike other earlier scientific programmes and cultures, it is driven, often explicitly, by religious considerations: Christianity set the agenda for natural philosophy in many respects and projected it forward in a way quite different from that of any other scientific culture. Moreover, when the standing of religion as a source of knowledge about the world, and cognitive values generally, came to be threatened, it was not science that posed the threat but history. If this alliance of science and religion was the key to the original social legitimation of science as a way to truth, Gaukroger is concerned to demonstrate how this alliance breaks down in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century through a profound process of "naturalization," both of the human being and also of Christianity. This naturalization will be achieved across a wide area of Western culture by the early nineteenth century. Fleshing out these large claims in exhaustive detail has now occupied Gaukroger for three major volumes, with more projected. In developing on the religion-science theme, Gaukroger expands without critique the thesis of Joseph Ben-David, in which Western science is seen to have avoided a rise-decline-new birth pattern evident in other major civilizations. Volume II develops in detail the alliance of natural philosophy and Christianity in the early modern period, either through newly-reworked metaphysical foundations, exemplified in Leibnizianism, or through physico-theology as developed particularly in the British tradition by John Ray, Robert Boyle, and William Derham. These served to legitimate the inquiry of natural philosophers and gave the new science this cumulative impetus. Volume II also detailed the way in which the epistemological assumptions of the mechanical philosophy succumbed to the critiques of Newtonianism after It is also around the Newtonian alternative to the comprehensive mechanical philosophy of Descartes that we see the "disunity of science" theme emerging. The matter theory of the new chemistry is not that of traditional mechanism. Newtonianism introduces new active forces and causal principles, with increasing emphasis on the aether. A new explanatory epistemology arising particularly with Locke and the experimentalism of the Royal Society moves away from explanations that involve the reduction of phenomena to underlying microstates of matter in mechanical interaction that underlies the

mechanical philosophy. Rather than a single Newtonian tradition emerging, there are several lines of inquiry that may pay obeisance to the great Newton, but have no deeper unification. These extend into chemistry, electrical theory, and Newton-inspired medical and scientific vitalism. Gaukroger pluralizes the "mechanistic" and "materialistic" readings of Newton described previously in the classic study by Robert Schofield, [2] and now fits these into a larger narrative. The Natural and the Human generally builds upon the foundations laid in the previous two installments. The first section opens with a chapter devoted to the "dichotomies" of understanding, and is focused on the tensions between the rationalism inherited from the seventeenth-century, grounded on metaphysical dualism and mechanical philosophy, and the new issues opened up by Lockean empiricism and British experimentalism. This chapter is followed by detailed discussion of the transformations in the theory of matter in the early eighteenth century. This leads the reader through detailed developments in chemistry, and eventually describes how matter, once considered inert, became in the eighteenth century endowed with dynamic and even vital powers. Section Two then characterizes four distinguishable "naturalizing projects" which eventually draw the human being into the natural world. The first is the development of French "anthropological" medicine, which extended the physiological concept of "sensibility" to include the medical, rational and ethical dimensions of human beings. In this Gaukroger synthesizes the important work of such scholars as Charles Wolfe, Roselyne Rey, and Elizabeth Williams and develops a more general thesis as we follow how this "medical philosophy" is expanded in the more general philosophical programs of Pierre Cabanis and Diderot. The second thematic explores "naturalization" through the primarily German development of "philosophical" anthropology. But this naturalizing project develops in opposition to "a fundamental assumption of metaphysical treatments. A third naturalizing project is the "natural history of man," developing out of inquiries into natural history, comparative anatomy, classification theory, geological histories of the earth, and comparative biogeography. This is addressed in more detail below. The fourth form of naturalization is pursued through an analysis of the development of social arithmetic, statistical approaches, and emphases on collective, rather than individual, properties. What makes these collective properties valuable as an object of study varies from case to case, but the way in which it allows causal accounts of behavior is crucial. In doing so, it will provide resources for economic and political theory in the nineteenth century. Section Three concludes the volume with discussion of the "naturalization" of religion. As we have seen from Volumes I and II, the impetus behind the cumulative character of the scientific movement in the seventeenth century was deemed to be its alliance with Christian tradition. But in keeping with the original thesis, the "naturalization" of religion takes place not through reductive science and mechanical philosophy, but through historical thinking. This narrative leads us through the early development of historical critiques of religion by Hume, the rise of Romantic aestheticism, and the reduction of Christianity to humanism by David Friederich Strauss and Ludwig Feuerbach. One thing that is clear is that we cannot think of naturalization as being primarily a relationship between the natural sciences and other disciplines. Materialism and reduction to the natural sciences play a very small and inessential role in the forms of naturalization. Indeed, the most powerful naturalizing resource, in the sense of the one that led most effectively to the replacement of basic traditional beliefs about the world and our place in it, was history. The power of history lay in its ability to do something that was wholly outside the resources of reductive forms of naturalization, namely to engage non-propositional forms of understanding. His scholarship draws on primary sources in at least four languages, and extensive secondary commentary, much of it recent. Gaukroger typically proceeds by a focus on a few key individuals and their works as central nodes in developing this story -- Descartes, Newton, Leibniz, Locke, Hume, Diderot, Gibbon, Mandeville, Herder, Kant, Hegel, Strauss, Feuerbach -- around which he weaves a larger narrative. Where general criticisms can be, and have been, raised is with the more general historiography and method of proceeding. Gaukroger is doing classical "history of philosophy-cum-history of ideas," with the deficiencies of this approach often noted in the literature. We have large concepts at work -- "science," "culture," "metaphysics," "experimentalism," "epistemology," and "anthropology" -- organizing the discussion. Often only loose connections are drawn

between the proponents singled out for discussion. There are on occasion sudden leaps in chronology. Predictably he has been criticized for ignoring social and institutional history. Rather than emphasizing difficulties facing the writers of "Big History," I acknowledge my deep appreciation for it. The copious footnotes yes, footnotes, not annoying endnotes , typically citing the most recent scholarship and the key primary sources relevant to the discussion, direct the reader to more detailed studies which he has synthesized in depth. Indeed he has, like Jonathan Israel in his recent discussions of the Enlightenment and French Revolution, been willing once again to foreground ideas, philosophical concepts, and the discussions within high intellectual culture in opposition to fashionable neo-Marxist "bottom up" historiography and the limitation to microhistory. It is something that every historian has to think about at some stage, and it distinguishes history from antiquarianism. I will drill down on a few issues to illustrate some of the strengths and weaknesses I found in the book. The human being is embedded in a wholly natural realm and the relationship is reciprocal: The natural history of man builds upon a narrowing of the understanding of the natural world to parameters defined by human subjectivity. Eventually this will lead us to Feuerbach. A central argument leading to this conclusion is drawn from statements of Buffon, who is claimed to be asserting in his Premier discours to the Histoire naturelle , that "if there is to be classification, as there must be for natural history to proceed, one has to give up the idea of natural groupings and instead think of classification as relative to human interests. It bears directly on the claim of this volume that "the naturalization of the human and the humanization of nature come to be part of the same programme by the nineteenth century" p. But to reach this conclusion, it seems that Gaukroger must ignore some considerable texts and secondary scholarship that would see Buffon not as arguing this point, but as attempting to establish, and even in the same text, a way to move away from this reduction of the natural to human subjectivity. The unusual approach to natural history he proceeds to develop from these foundations, leads to the reconceptualization of "physical" species, and to the expanding physical interconnections of organisms with geography and temporality. This moves us away from the claimed reduction of natural historical inquiry to human subjectivity that Gaukroger emphasizes, to what I would claim is a strong Realism in his claims about the physical and material of organic beings to the history of nature. This has been built on two thematics. One has developed a thesis about the close association of natural philosophy and Christian religion. This association is effectively undermined by naturalization in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This proceeds by showing that metaphysics, as the traditional bridge between revealed theology and natural philosophy, comes to a dead end in the late eighteenth century. The effort of Leibniz in particular to ground natural philosophy on a deeper metaphysics than the experimentalism and the anti-metaphysical mitigated skepticism of the combination of Locke and Newton is seen to fail. This leaves, it seems, only the physico-theological alternative standing as the support for the connection of religion and science. The disunity of science thematic is developed implicitly, rather than explicitly, in this volume. What emerges from this narrative is not the image of one synthetic project -- i. Newtonianism -- from which these "naturalizations" flow, but instead several distinguishable projects, developing on often incompatible assumptions, that in different ways accomplish a more general reduction of the human to the natural order. The importance of history in bringing about this naturalization develops on the scientific side with the emergence of historical science and geological "deep time" in the work of Burnet, Buffon, Hutton and Lyell, as outlined briefly in chapter five. From another direction, the historical source-criticism that derives from Renaissance Humanists, Spinoza, Richard Simon, and Reimarus does not deal so much with the science-theology relationship, as it does with the claims of the historical validity of revealed texts and the events described within them. It will require future volumes to see how this works out in detail. Success of the "naturalization of religion" theme of this volume demands the acquiescence in at least two claims: Both claims, I would suggest, need philosophical justification and cannot be resolved simply by a genealogical analysis. Such claims will also require attention to the way these issues have been encountered within different traditions in Christianity. How the unity of science thematic will play out in subsequent volumes can only be hypothesized at this point. We are left at the end of this volume with a picture of multiple

projects that have now focused on the human sciences. By the end of the eighteenth century, through these "naturalizations" it is claimed that "science was cut loose from the legitimating culture in which it had found a public rationale. His answer is that this involved "an abrupt but fundamental shift in how the tasks of scientific enquiry were conceived, from the natural realm to the human realm. Like many, I await the next installment of this magisterial synthesis. Prentice Hall, , ch. See elaboration on this point in H. British Natural Philosophy in an Age of Reason. Princeton University Press, Histoire naturelle et philosophie. See also my "Natural History," in Knud Haakonssen ed.

Chapter 6 : Metaphysic of the Romantic Era - Oxford Scholarship

10 The paradox of romantic metaphysics finer discrimination and classification of the various positions and movements philosophical romanticism takes the.

Back to Top Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of existence, being and the world. Arguably, metaphysics is the foundation of philosophy: Aristotle calls it "first philosophy" or sometimes just "wisdom" , and says it is the subject that deals with "first causes and the principles of things". It asks questions like: Later, it was misinterpreted by Medieval commentators on the classical texts as that which is above or beyond the physical, and so over time metaphysics has effectively become the study of that which transcends physics. Aristotle originally split his metaphysics into three main sections and these remain the main branches of metaphysics: Ontology the study of being and existence, including the definition and classification of entities, physical or mental, the nature of their properties, and the nature of change Natural Theology the study of God, including the nature of religion and the world, existence of the divine, questions about the creation, and the various other religious or spiritual issues Universal Science the study of first principles of logic and reasoning , such as the law of noncontradiction Metaphysics has been attacked, at different times in history, as being futile and overly vague, particularly by David Hume , Immanuel Kant and A. It may be more useful to say that a metaphysical statement usually implies an idea about the world or the universe, which may seem reasonable but is ultimately not empirically verifiable, testable or provable. Existence and Consciousness Back to Top Existence the fact or state of continued being is axiomatic meaning that it does not rest upon anything in order to be valid, and it cannot be proven by any "more basic" premises because it is necessary for all knowledge and it cannot be denied without conceding its truth a denial of something is only possible if existence exists. Consciousness is the faculty which perceives and identifies things that exist. However, what Descartes did not make clear is that consciousness is the faculty that perceives that which exists, so it requires something outside of itself in order to function: The primacy of existence states that existence is primary and consciousness is secondary, because there can be no consciousness without something existing to perceive. Existence is independent of, makes possible, and is a prerequisite of consciousness. Consciousness is not responsible for creating reality: Mind and Matter Back to Top Early debates on the nature of matter centered on identifying a single underlying principle Monism: Democritus conceived an atomic theory Atomism many centuries before it was accepted by modern science. The nature of the mind and its relation to the body has also exercised the best brains for millennia. There is a large overlap here with Philosophy of Mind , which is the branch of philosophy that studies the nature of the mind, mental events, mental functions, mental properties and consciousness, and their relationship to the physical body. In the 17th Century, Descartes proposed a Dualist solution called Substance Dualism or Cartesian Dualism whereby the mind and body are totally separate and different: Idealists , like Bishop George Berkeley and the German Idealist school, claim that material objects do not exist unless perceived Idealism is essentially a Monist , rather than Dualist , theory in that there is a single universal substance or principle. Baruch Spinoza and Bertrand Russell both adopted, in different ways, a dual-aspect theory called Neutral Monism, which claims that existence consists of a single substance which in itself is neither mental nor physical, but is capable of mental and physical aspects or attributes. In the last century, science particularly atomic theory, evolution, computer technology and neuroscience has demonstrated many ways in which mind and brain interact in a physical way, but the exact nature of the relationship is still open to debate. The dominant metaphysics in the 20th Century has therefore been various versions of Physicalism or Materialism , a Monist solution which explains matter and mind as mere aspects of each other, or derivatives of a neutral substance. Objects and their Properties Back to Top The world contains many individual things objects or particulars , both physical and abstract, and what these things have in common with each other are called universals or properties. Metaphysicians are interested in the nature of objects and their properties, and the

relationship between the two see the sections on Realism and Nominalism. The problem of universals arises when people start to consider in what sense it is possible for a property to exist in more than one place at the same time e. See the section on Realism for a further discussion of this. Any object or entity is the sum of its parts see Holism. The identity of an entity composed of other entities can be explained by reference to the identity of the building blocks, and how they are interacting. A house can be explained by reference to the wood, metal, and glass that are combined in that particular way to form the house; or it could be explained in terms of the atoms that form it see the sections on Atomism and Reductionism. Identity and Change Back to Top Identity is whatever makes an entity definable and recognizable, in terms of possessing a set of qualities or characteristics that distinguish it from entities of a different type effectively, whatever makes something the same or different. Thus, according to Leibniz , if some object x is identical to some object y, then any property that x has, y will have as well, and vice versa otherwise, by definition, they would not be identical. A thing cannot exist without existing as something, otherwise it would be nothing and it would not exist. Also, to have an identity means to have a single identity: The concept of identity is important because it makes explicit that reality has a definite nature, which makes it knowable and, since it exists in a particular way, it has no contradictions when two ideas each make the other impossible. Change is the alteration of identities, whether it be a stone falling to earth or a log burning to ash. For something to change which is an effect , it needs to be acted on caused by a previous action. Causality is the law that states that each cause has a specific effect, and that this effect is dependent on the initial identities of the agents involved. We are intuitively aware of change occurring over time e. The Ancient Greeks took some extreme positions on the nature of change: Parmenides denied that change occurs at all, while Heraclitus thought change was ubiquitous. Currently there are three main theories which deal with the problem of change: Perdurantism holds that objects are effectively 4-dimensional entities made up of a series of temporal parts like the frames of a movie it treats the tree, then, as a series of tree-stages. Endurantism, on the other hand, holds that a whole object - and the same object - exists at each moment of its history, so that the same tree persists regardless of how many leaves it loses. Space and Time Back to Top A traditional Realist position is that time and space have existence independent from the human mind. Idealists , however, claim that space and time are mental constructs used to organize perceptions, or are otherwise unreal. Descartes and Leibniz believed that, without physical objects, "space" would be meaningless because space is the framework upon which we understand how physical objects are related to each other. Sir Isaac Newton, on the other hand, argued for an absolute space "container space" , which can continue to exist in the absence of matter. With the work of Sir Albert Einstein, the pendulum swung back to relational space in which space is composed of relations between objects, with the implication that it cannot exist in the absence of matter. Although Parmenides denied the flow of time completely in ancient times, echoed more recently by the British Idealist J. This is sometimes considered a whole separate branch of philosophy, the Philosophy of Religion see that section for more detail. Does the Divine intervene directly in the world Theism , or is its sole function to be the first cause of the universe Deism? Is there one God Monotheism , many gods Polytheism or no gods Atheism or Humanism , or is it impossible to know Agnosticism? Does religious belief depend on faith and revelation Fideism , or on reason Deism? Within Western Philosophy, Philosophy of Religion , and theology in general, reached its peak with Medieval Christian schools of thought like Scholasticism. Necessity and Possibility Back to Top A necessary fact is true across all possible worlds that is, we could not imagine it to be otherwise. A possible fact is one that is true in some possible world, even if not in the actual world. This idea of possible worlds was first introduced by Gottfried Leibniz , although others have dealt with it in much more detail since, notably the American analytic philosopher David Lewis - in his theory of Modal Realism. The concept of necessity and contingency another term used in philosophy to describe the possibility of something happening or not happening is also central to some of the arguments used to justify the existence or non-existence of God, notably the Cosmological Argument from Contingency see the section on Philosophy of Religion for more details. Realism , best exemplified by Plato and his Platonic Forms, teaches that universals really exist, independently and somehow

prior to the world. On the other hand, Nominalism holds that there is really no such thing as abstract objects, which really exist only as names, because a single object cannot exist in multiple places simultaneously. Moderate Realism , as espoused by Aristotle among others, tries to find some middle ground between Nominalism and Realism , and holds that there is no realm as such in which universals exist, but rather they are located in space and time wherever they happen to be manifest. Conceptualism, the doctrine that universals exist only within the mind and have no external or substantial reality, is also an intermediate solution. Other positions such as Formalism and Fictionalism do not attribute any existence to mathematical entities, and are anti- Realist. The Philosophy of Mathematics overlaps with metaphysics in this area. Determinism and Free Will Back to Top Determinism is the philosophical proposition that every event, including human cognition, decision and action, is causally determined by an unbroken chain of prior occurrences. Thus, there is at any instant only one physically possible future, and no random, spontaneous, mysterious or miraculous events ever occur. This posits that there is no such thing as Free Will, where rational agents can exercise control over their own actions and decisions. Incompatibilists or Hard Determinists like Baruch Spinoza , view determinism and free will as mutually exclusive. Others, labeled Compatibilists or Soft Determinists , like Thomas Hobbes , believe that the two ideas can be coherently reconciled. It should be noted that Determinism does not necessarily mean that humanity or individual humans have no influence on the future that is known as Fatalism , just that the level to which human beings have influence over their future is itself dependent on present and past. Cosmology and Cosmogony Back to Top Cosmology is the branch of metaphysics that deals with the world as the totality of all phenomena in space and time. Historically, it was often founded in religion; in modern use it addresses questions about the world and the universe which are beyond the scope of physical science. Cosmogony deals specifically with the origin of the universe, but the two concepts are closely related. Pantheists , such as Spinoza , believe that God and the universe are one and the same. Panentheists , such as Plotinus , believe that the entire universe is part of God, but that God is greater than the universe. Deists , such as Voltaire , believe that God created the universe, set everything in motion, and then had nothing more to do with it. See the section on Philosophy of Religion for more details.

Chapter 7 : The Romantic Imperative (): Frederick C. Beiser - BiblioVault

Classification. One of the main topics of scientific research is classification. Classification is the operation of distributing objects into classes or groupsâ€”which are, in general, less numerous than them.

Basic characteristics[edit] The nature of Romanticism may be approached from the primary importance of the free expression of the feelings of the artist. Samuel Taylor Coleridge and others believed there were natural laws the imaginationâ€”at least of a good creative artistâ€—would unconsciously follow through artistic inspiration if left alone. The concept of the genius , or artist who was able to produce his own original work through this process of creation from nothingness, is key to Romanticism, and to be derivative was the worst sin. This particularly in the effect of nature upon the artist when he is surrounded by it, preferably alone. In contrast to the usually very social art of the Enlightenment , Romantics were distrustful of the human world, and tended to believe a close connection with nature was mentally and morally healthy. Romantic art addressed its audiences with what was intended to be felt as the personal voice of the artist. So, in literature, "much of romantic poetry invited the reader to identify the protagonists with the poets themselves". The application of the term to literature first became common in Germany, where the circle around the Schlegel brothers, critics August and Friedrich , began to speak of romantische Poesie "romantic poetry" in the s, contrasting it with "classic" but in terms of spirit rather than merely dating. Friedrich Schlegel wrote in his Dialogue on Poetry , "I seek and find the romantic among the older moderns, in Shakespeare, in Cervantes, in Italian poetry, in that age of chivalry, love and fable, from which the phenomenon and the word itself are derived. Margaret Drabble described it in literature as taking place "roughly between and ", [24] and few dates much earlier than will be found. In English literature, M. Abrams placed it between , or , this latter a very typical view, and about , perhaps a little later than some other critics. The early period of the Romantic Era was a time of war, with the French Revolution â€" followed by the Napoleonic Wars until These wars, along with the political and social turmoil that went along with them, served as the background for Romanticism. The first emerged in the s and s, the second in the s, and the third later in the century. That it was part of the Counter-Enlightenment , a reaction against the Age of Enlightenment , is generally accepted in current scholarship. Its relationship to the French Revolution , which began in in the very early stages of the period, is clearly important, but highly variable depending on geography and individual reactions. Most Romantics can be said to be broadly progressive in their views, but a considerable number always had, or developed, a wide range of conservative views, [31] and nationalism was in many countries strongly associated with Romanticism, as discussed in detail below. In philosophy and the history of ideas, Romanticism was seen by Isaiah Berlin as disrupting for over a century the classic Western traditions of rationality and the idea of moral absolutes and agreed values, leading "to something like the melting away of the very notion of objective truth", [32] and hence not only to nationalism, but also fascism and totalitarianism , with a gradual recovery coming only after World War II. This is most evident in the aesthetics of romanticism, where the notion of eternal models, a Platonic vision of ideal beauty, which the artist seeks to convey, however imperfectly, on canvas or in sound, is replaced by a passionate belief in spiritual freedom, individual creativity. Arthur Lovejoy attempted to demonstrate the difficulty of defining Romanticism in his seminal article "On The Discrimination of Romanticisms" in his Essays in the History of Ideas ; some scholars see Romanticism as essentially continuous with the present, some like Robert Hughes see in it the inaugural moment of modernity , [35] and some like Chateaubriand , Novalis and Samuel Taylor Coleridge see it as the beginning of a tradition of resistance to Enlightenment rationalismâ€"a "Counter-Enlightenment"â€" [36] [37] to be associated most closely with German Romanticism. An earlier definition comes from Charles Baudelaire: This movement was led by France, with Balzac and Flaubert in literature and Courbet in painting; Stendhal and Goya were important precursors of Realism in their respective media. However, Romantic styles, now often representing the established and safe style against which Realists rebelled, continued to flourish in many fields

for the rest of the century and beyond. In music such works from after about are referred to by some writers as "Late Romantic" and by others as "Neoromantic" or "Postromantic", but other fields do not usually use these terms; in English literature and painting the convenient term "Victorian" avoids having to characterise the period further. In northern Europe, the Early Romantic visionary optimism and belief that the world was in the process of great change and improvement had largely vanished, and some art became more conventionally political and polemical as its creators engaged polemically with the world as it was. Elsewhere, including in very different ways the United States and Russia, feelings that great change was underway or just about to come were still possible. Displays of intense emotion in art remained prominent, as did the exotic and historical settings pioneered by the Romantics, but experimentation with form and technique was generally reduced, often replaced with meticulous technique, as in the poems of Tennyson or many paintings. If not realist, late 19th-century art was often extremely detailed, and pride was taken in adding authentic details in a way that earlier Romantics did not trouble with. Many Romantic ideas about the nature and purpose of art, above all the pre-eminent importance of originality, remained important for later generations, and often underlie modern views, despite opposition from theorists.

Chapter 8 : Rationalism vs. Empiricism (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

Ancient metaphysics was a model of metaphysics in general, but throughout the history of Western European philosophy, both the assessment of metaphysical knowledge and the position of metaphysics in the system of philosophical sciences and the horizon of the worldview of a particular epoch changed significantly.

That it is therefore one of the most affecting we have. That its strongest emotion is an emotion of distress, and that no pleasure from a positive cause belongs to it. That is saying more for Burke than the contemporary relativist would. But that is obviously absurd. And it is no mere coincidence that further down along the psychology versus metaphysics continuum, we arrive at Sigmund Freud, who has a great deal to say about the sublime and about sublimation, but who writes of beauty that it: Indeed other passages suggest that he finds the former idea every bit as reprehensible as the latter. In one section of the Enquiry Burke writes: All of this may seem a digression from what this article set out to be: Actually, the opposite is the case: Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image or any likeness of anything that is in heaven or on earth, or under the earth. It is taken for granted that God Himself defies depiction. As the Jewish hymn has it: He was, ere aught was made in heaven, or earth, But His existence has no date, or birth. But is Kant right to place such great emphasis on the powers of the mind? Indeed, accounts of the human mind are conspicuously scarce in the Bible. One notable exception, the account of the acquisition of knowledge in the Garden of Eden, is perhaps the exception that proves the rule; certainly it is not very flattering. But at least Burke leaves room for believers like this writer to say: We are humans, inadequate to the task of according God the admiration, reverence and respect He commands of us; astonishment is the response elicited by our recognising that inadequacy. The connection between the sublime and fear is made repeatedly by both Kant and Burke; it is that connection which will bring us back full circle to those a priori principles, that link the sublime to morality. To quote Freud yet again: Yet disinterested action must be reconciled with the existence of an awe-inspiring Creator. If we are to judge nature as sublime dynamically, we must present it as arousing fear. Now it is a very odd Deity that neither dominates us nor makes us afraid, whilst at the same time being proclaimed as mighty and awe-inspiring. It is indeed a mistake to worry that depriving this presentation of whatever could commend it to the senses will result in its carrying with it no more than a cold and lifeless approval without moving force or emotion. Again Burke, with his appreciation for Milton, for a Hell of fire and brimstone, is closer to the traditional conception of God: But a formula which defines the sublime in cerebral terms alone may be as much a sign of the deterioration of the soul in the eighteenth century, as the equation of the term with the sensual is a sign of the deterioration of our language in the twentieth century. Through approaching the Source of the sublime as more than a necessary component of our metaphysics â€" indeed, as the Being Who gave the mind its powers and on Whom those powers are dependent â€" we may yet come nearer the true meaning of the sublime. Pluhar, Hackett Publishing Co. Kant, Immanuel, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals. Freedman The Soncino Press, volume 1.

Chapter 9 : Metaphysics - By Branch / Doctrine - The Basics of Philosophy

John Donne as a father of metaphysical poetry is highly read and referred when it comes to the use of metaphysical characteristics. The metaphysical poets are said to be witty and intellectual because of the typicalities present in their writings specially in the use of wit and intellect, examples of ratiocination and conceit.