

The 10th Kant readings:
classical reason and the challenges of modern civilization
Kaliningrad, April 22–24, 2009

From the 22nd to the 24th of April, the Immanuel Kant State University of Russia held the 10th Kant Readings timed to coincide with the 285th anniversary of the birth of the eminent philosopher. The conference brought together more than 100 scholars from the universities of Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, the Baltics, Finland, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Southern Korea, as well as professors of Kaliningrad universities, and graduate and undergraduate students of IKSUR. Held over three days within the walls of the Kaliningrad Cathedral and IKSUR, the conference focused on the topical problems of epistemology, logic, ethics, social structure, religion, and theory of politics in the light of changing conceptions of rationality.

The conference included three plenary sessions featuring leading specialists in Kant's philosophy, whose achievements are acknowledged by the international scientific community: Prof. M.N. Gromov, head of the History of Russian Philosophy Unit of the Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Prof. B. Dörflinger, first chair of the Kant Society of Germany, Prof. L. A. Kallinnikov, president of the Russian Kant Society, professor of the IKSUR's Department of Philosophy, Prof. J. Stolzenberg (Halle, Germany), Prof. L. Caranti (Catania, Italy), Prof. V.N. Bryushinkin, head of the IKSUR's Department of Philosophy, Prof. S. A. Chernyshov, head of the Department of Philosophy of Bonch-Bruевич Saint-Petersburg State University of Telecommunications, Prof. V. V. Vasiliev, head of the Department of History of Foreign Philosophy of the Lomonosov Moscow State University, Prof. W. Stark (Marburg, Germany), director of Kant Archive, Prof. Yu. M. Shilkov (Saint Petersburg), and others.

The first two plenary sessions took place on the 22nd of April in Kaliningrad Cathedral. The conference opened with a performance of Gaudeamus, followed by the welcoming address of Prof. A.P. Klemeshev, rector of IKSUR. He emphasised that Kant conferences are of importance not only for philosophers and historians, but for the region's cultural life in general. Alongside the plenary sessions, the first day included festive events dedicated to the anniversary of Immanuel Kant: the traditional laying of a floral tribute at the philosopher's grave and an organ concert.

The first plenary session was opened by Prof. M.N. Gromov. His report considered Kant's influence on Russian intellectual culture. Prof. Gromov distinguished seven ways in which the ideas of the great Königsberger influenced Russian intellectuals. The first was direct acquaintance with the philosopher, attendance of his lectures, conversations and correspondence with him; the second was reading his works in the original or translation; the third was dissemination of Kant's ideas in Russia by German and Russian teachers; the fourth were visits of Russian students and interns to German universities, where Kant's ideas were expounded; the fifth was studying the works of European experts dedicated to the philosopher, the sixth was the development of Russian Kant studies and

consideration of different perspectives on I. Kant and his teaching; and the seventh was the assessment of contemporary interest in Kant and his works in Russia. Having overviewed all of the above, Prof. Gromov stressed that regardless of the philosophical preferences of Russian scholars, Kant as a personality have inspired respect in Russian people as an honest worker of thought, a selfless labourer, and a patient mentor. The plenary session was continued by a professor from Trier, the first chair of the German Kant Society, B. Dörflinger. The central idea of his report entitled *Jesus in Kant's interpretation* was that, from the perspective of ethics, the problem of actual existence of Christ is irrelevant; at the same time, the idea of the Redeemer is certainly of great significance. From the perspective of gnoseology, the question whether Jesus was an actual person does not seem to have a definite answer.

The next speaker was Prof. Dörflinger's peer, the president of the Russian Kant Society, Prof. L. A. Kalinnikov, whose speech was dedicated to the role of morality in the system of morals. The need to tackle this issue stems from the fact that theoretical works on practical philosophy are still dominated by the tendency to isolate Kant's ideas about morality from those about law. According to Prof. Kalinnikov, Kant's ethics should be considered as an integral structure, where the principal role of morality is that of the target and underlying tendency of the whole system of morals. In order to prove this thesis, Prof. Kalinnikov analysed the rules of morality and law and showed that the rules of morality have the property of absoluteness, while the rule of law that of relativity. It means that pure morality *per se* rarely serves as a behavioural motive; the general principle is its interaction with law and other legal motives facilitating morality. Summing up, Prof. Kalinnikov arrived at a conclusion that law rests on morality both in its nature and in effect.

The first plenary session was concluded by Prof. J. Stolzenberg. In his speech, entitled *Kant and the right to lie*, he considered possible ways to interpret this important problem through the analysis of certain casuistical examples. When criticising the right to lie, Kant builds his argumentation on the fundamental for any community notion of legal contract, which loses any sense upon the adoption of the rule stipulating that, in certain cases, it is permissible to lie in the course of formulating contractual obligations. In the light of these provisions, the right to lie, according to Kant, should not exist at all. However, according to Prof. Stolzenberg, Kant did not take into account the situation when a forced lie is not a justification of the universal right to lie. The cases of self-defence foreground the issue of value priorities. Thus, according to Prof. Stolzenberg, the duty to be truthful has no force when the principle of humanity is at stake and should be protected.

The second plenary session opened with the presentation by Prof. V. M. Sergeev, director of the Centre of globalistics at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations, entitled *The structure of consciousness, power and world politics*, which was dedicated to the causes and consequences of the world financial crisis and its analysis as a manifestation of the features of the modern stage of development of consciousness. The next speaker was Prof. L. Caranti, who made a report on the theory of human rights based on the interpretation of Kant's philosophy.

Professor V. N. Bryushinkin put forward the thesis that Kant's theoretical philosophy is based on a particular case of communicative understanding of rationality that is the aspiration to secure sufficient mutual understanding between

the agents of communication. Prof. Bryushinkin believes that the specific feature of rationality in Kant's theoretical philosophy is that the philosopher abstracts from the structure of the agent's and addressee's reason and attempts to build an image of a sentient being in general. In this case, rationality reduces itself to the construction of a theory of reason, which turns out to be identical with the conditions of possibility of cognition of universal truth. The general conditions of the recognition of a certain judgement as the universal truth, according to Kant, are determined by logic. Logic itself acts as a canon and a negative criterion of the truth. As a result of the reconstruction of logical devices in Kant's system, as well as his ideas of rationality, V.N. Bryushinkin comes to a conclusion that Kant did not manage to build his theory of reason on the solid ground of general pure logic, since, when developing this theory, he followed unconsciously another concept of rationality, namely, a certain new transcendental rationality that does not commit itself to observing logical rules.

The first day of conference concluded with a presentation by Prof. S. A. Chernov, who focused on the problem of understanding the essence of science by contemporary researchers, placing emphasis on the question of the change of historical types of rationality, as well as the values, that scholars are guided by in their practice. He drew attention to the fact that young scientists develop distorted ideas of the essence and significance of research work. The understanding of the essence of science requires, for instance, the analysis of the tradition of transcendentalism and spiritual movement, which, undoubtedly, surpasses the dominating analytical-positivistic trend in philosophical solidity, as well as the determination of its relation to that what we call "classical", "non-classical" and "post-non-classical" rationality. Having considered the correlation between Kant's teaching and these types of rationality, Prof. Chernov arrived at a conclusion that the juxtaposition of the ideas of transcendentalism with "classical reason" and the features of "classical rationality" shows that the features of "non-classical rationality" correspond to Kant's position more closely than those of "classical rationality". Prof. Chernov believes that it should raise the question as to whether it is practical to distinguish between "classical" and "non-classical" rationality, considering that Kant's theory formulates the very ideas that made his apprentice Schopenhauer the founder of "non-classical philosophy", and that Kant's thought that the fundamental correspondence between any object of cognition and the activity of consciousness constituting the object underlies Husserl's transcendental phenomenology, whose model was used by M.K. Marmardashvili to build the most interesting theory of "non-classical rationality" in Russian literature.

The second and the third days of the conference took place in the administrative building of IKSUR and included workshop sessions focusing on the topics of the plenary presentations. Workshop sessions discussed five issues: "Rationality in Kant's philosophy", "Classical reason and changing rationality", "Kant's philosophy and its perception in different cultures", "Classical reason, changing governance, and the modern world order", and "Classical reason, contemporary ethical concepts, and modern religious consciousness".

The first sitting of the "Rationality in Kant's philosophy" workshop session opened with a report by Prof. G. V. Grinenko (Moscow) entitled "*The antinomy of pure reason*" and *the types of contradictions*. The author identified the role of Kant's antinomies among different types of contradictions. The presentation of G. Motta (Mainz) was dedicated to Kant's rejection of attempts at physical interpreta-

tion of metaphysical objects. D.N. Razeev (Saint Petersburg) explored Kant's *Critique of Judgement* from an epistemological perspective. He showed that Kant's *Critique of Judgement* represents one of the most important foundations of new scientific rationality, since, in this work, Kant managed to substantiate the epistemological significance of teleological judgements. Dr. S.L. Katrechko set out to identify the possible mechanisms of the genesis of a priori forms of sensitivity and reason, considered abstraction since Kant – regarded as such by empirics, which enables the transition from the empirical to more abstract content, but cannot fulfil its function in transition from experimental content to the (a priori) form, i.e. explain our possession of pure cognition that "must be entirely independent of experience... must have a far different certificate of origin to show from that of a descent from experience" – methodologically unjustified. Dr. A.O. Antonova (Saint Petersburg, SPbSU) analysed the influence of Kant's philosophical ideas on the formation of the two fundamental ideas of the 20th century mathematical thinking, namely, the notions of set and type. I.V. Chernikova (Tomsk), A.G. Kislov (Yekaterinburg, USU), V.V. Balanovsky (Kaliningrad, IKSUR), Ye.A. Krotkov and T.V. Bosova (Belgorod, BSU), K.V. Lemeshevsky (Kaliningrad, IKSUR), V. Ye. Semenov (Vladimir, VSU), V. Ottinen (Helsinki, Aleksanteri Institute), and A.I. Barkhatkov (Minsk, BSU) also participated in the workshop session.

The "Classical reason and changing rationality" workshop session opened with a presentation by Dr. A. Hahmann (Göttingen, Germany) entitled *The justification of rationality by greed – what remains of Kant's reason in constructivism?* Dr. Hahmann outlined the problem of correlation between morality and reason. While traditionally reason was considered as a foundation for morals, since the first half of the 20th century reason has served profit. An attempt to unite the reasonable principles of justice with the instrumental application of reason was undertaken by John Rawls in his work *A theory of justice*. Dr. Hahmann juxtaposed Rawls's attempt with a similar philosophical ideas of Kant. Prof. N.A. Dmitriyeva (Moscow, MSPU), in her report *Reason and life. The justification of philosophy in the late works of Natorp and the works of Russian neo-Kantians*, considered the views of P. Natorp and Russian neo-Kantians. T.G. Rummyantseva (Minsk, BSU) made a report entitled *The two projects of a "critique of reason": I. Kant and F. Nietzsche*. She compared the ideas of the two entirely different philosophers, who treated morality, religion, and freedom in quite dissimilar ways. However, they have one thing in common: both of them regard critique and the critical method as of paramount importance. Dr. G. Luise (Catania, Italy) gave a presentation entitled *Mind activity and teleology. Notes on Kant and Maréchal*. According to Dr. Luise, among the prominent 20th century interpretations of Kant's transcendental philosophy, one of the most remarkable is the teleological interpretation that emerged in the framework of catholic philosophical culture as a result of opposition between Thomism and criticism and was revised by Joseph Maréchal (1878–1944) – an eminent neo-scholastic from Leuven. Dr. Carola Häntsch (Greifswald, Germany) made a presentation on *Kant and the post-modern mind*. She considered the influence of the German classic on the further development of philosophical thought. In the presentation entitled *Rationality and practical logic*, Prof. I.N. Griftsova (Moscow, MPSU) focused on different perspectives on the correlation between logic and language. She analysed various concepts of practical logic, while informal logic, due to its certain features, was considered as an example of practical logic. The presentation also addressed certain prob-

lems of informal logic, as well as the study of non-argumentative speech acts. The presentation of Prof. G.V. Sorina and Prof. Yu.V. Yarmak dedicated to *Kant's texts in students' expert activity* focused on certain methodological aspects of the analysis of Kant's text and offered a methodology for practical classes with students of non-philosophical fields of study based on the "expert group" method developed by the authors. The result of such activity is analytical reports on the texts examined. The authors emphasised the high efficiency of the method and students' keen interest in the texts, which facilitates individual work and immersion in the analysis of a philosophical text. Prof. I.D. Koptsev (IKSUR) gave a report entitled *Inferences of understanding and reason as factors of textuality in I. Kant's philosophical discourse*. On the basis of Kant's texts, he proved that two and three-element logical-semantic structures, which Kant calls the judgements of understanding and reason, represented logical-communicative forms for the "packaging" of textual material and, thus, were forms of textuality in I. Kant's discourse. At the same time, they impart assertoric and apodictic modality to Kant's discourse. S.V. Borisov (Chelyabinsk State Pedagogical University), N.V. Zaitseva (Moscow, Russian Foreign Trade Academy), Yu.O. Orlova (Saint Petersburg, SPbSU), L.A. Dyomina, (Moscow, Mosciw State Regional Pedagogical University), O.M. Mukhtdinov (Yekaterinburg, USU) also participated in the discussion.

The "Classical reason, changing power and the modern world order" workshop session focused on the reception and contemporary significance of Kant's theory of law, politics, and state structure. Dieter Hüning (Mainz, Germany) addressed the topicality of Kant's theory of criminal law, which was deemed outdated or, at least, problematic even by Kant's contemporaries due to the permission of equal retribution and death penalty. At the same time, they neglected the fact that retribution is an appropriate response to the insoluble problems of the legal theory of intimidation that dominated in the Enlightenment period. Dr. Hüning proved the legality and provided the examples of the application of Kant's theory of criminal law as a critical measure for the assessment of (undesirable) contemporary tendencies in German justice. Dr. A.N. Salikov in his presentation titled *The influence of Kant's ideas on Hanna Arendt's political philosophy* emphasised that Arendt was mostly right to consider the teaching on judgements as the core of political philosophy, which Kant did not have time to write. However – all discussion participants agreed on that – Arendt's interpretation of Kant's aesthetics from a political perspective could be more viable if Arendt had managed to refrain from the idealisation and absolutisation of politics. Ye.S. Bezus (Yekaterinburg, Institute of Philosophy and Law) considered the power of judgement (in particular, *sensus communis*) as the foundation for coexistence in the modern world. Dr. N.V. Andreichuk in her presentation *Education as an imperative for the sustainable development of society* emphasised Kant's achievements in the development of philosophy of education and culture. Although actual reality and the 20th century philosophy proved reason to be neither the only, nor the central component, an alternative equal to the enlightenment project and capable of preserving society has not emerged yet, thus, we can do nothing but modify it. This conclusion was unanimously supported by the workshop participants. N.V. Bukovskaya (Tomsk, TSU), A.S. Zilber (IKSUR), I.O. Dementyev (IKSUR) also participated in the workshop session. A.V. Barsukova (IKSUR) focused on the influence of Kant's philosophy on the concept of European construction developed by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing – French ex-president and a practicing politician.

The "Kant's Philosophy and its perception in different cultures" workshop session was opened by Prof. V.N. Belov (Chernyshevsky Saratov State University) with a presentation *The system of V.E. Sesemann's philosophy*. Prof. Belov's principal idea is that the problem of the rational and irrational is essential to the works of the Russian philosopher. V.E. Sesemann (1884–1963) was close to the Marburg neo-Kantian school, but his adherence to neo-Kantianism and, later, phenomenology is marked by creativity and criticism. Dr. N.A. Kutsenko (Institute of Philosophy of the RAS) gave a presentation entitled *The influence of Kant's ethical teaching on the development of Russian theological thought in the first half of the 19th century*. The workshop participants were acquainted with a wide spectrum of factual material regarding the training of orthodox students – citizens of Rzeczpospolita – at Königsberg University and philosophical education at Kharkov University and Kyiv Spiritual Academy. At Kharkov University, Kant's philosophy was addressed to at the Departments of Morals and Politics and Physics and Mathematics. Kant's and, later, Fichte's philosophical ideas were well-known but differently interpreted. Dr. V.J. Povilaitis (IKSUR) made a presentation entitled *About one Russian admirer of Rickert abroad* based on N.A. Reimers's book *The aesthetic principle in history*. Nikolai A. Reimers (1894–1964) authored a number of works dedicated to topical and philosophical issues. *The aesthetic principle in history* (1931) is an attempt at an original philosophical-historical synthesis underlain by H. Rickert's philosophy of history. Prof. A.N. Kruglov (Moscow, RSUH) made a presentation entitled *Philosophical exile as a Russian tradition: the "case" of J.W.L. Mellmann* focusing on the tragic story of a teacher of philosophy, Mellmann, who was sacrificed in a conflict that involved censorship and the church. The dispute was provoked by Kant's interpretation of the idea of God. Ye Parkhomenko's (Estonia, Tartu University) presentation entitled *The heaven as a spiritual turning point in the reflection upon Tartu in February 1808 (on the perception of Kant in Estonia in the early 19th century)* was dedicated to the evolution of the philosophical ideas of Gottlob Benjamin Jäsche (1762–1842), a professor of theoretical and practical philosophy at Tartu University (1802–1838). Within history of philosophy, Jäsche is famous as a compiler and publisher of his teacher, Immanuel Kant, namely, his lectures on logic. V.I. Savintsev (IKSUR) and V.I. Cherednikov (IKSUR) also participated in the workshop session.

The "Classical reason, contemporary ethical concepts and modern religious consciousness" workshop session included thirteen presentations by scholars from Russia, Ukraine, Germany, Spain, and Southern Korea. The sitting opened with a presentation by Dr. U.F. Wodarzik (Worms, Germany) entitled *Trinary reason as Kant's testament*. The author tracked down the influence of Christianity, Platonism and neo-Platonism on Kant's philosophy and drew analogies between Kant's theoretical, practical, and religious reason and the world-human being-God triad, arriving at a conclusion that Kant's trinary structure of metaphysics was adopted by Fichte and, later, Hegel. M. Yu. Savelyeva (Centre for Humanities of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine) focused on the problem of possibility to justify moral experience on the basis of Kant's ethics and postmodernist philosophical conceptions. The "ethical turn" in philosophy is a postmodernist paradigm of a foundation as the "foundation of foundations". There is no transcendental idea of foundation anymore, it is replaced by an aggregate of ideas that are proclaimed "founding" depending on the situation. M. Torrevejano (University of Valencia, Spain) gave a presentation entitled *Politics, moralising, and criticism*. She considered culture, civilization, and morals as products of rea-

son in the light of Kant's anthropological ideas. In her opinion morality can under no circumstances be reduced to civilization, i. e. solely social and political actions, it should determine human activity as a whole. I. A. Trotsak (IKSUR) analysed the critique of Kant's categorical imperative by A. Schopenhauer and proved that all three faults of Kant's ethical principles emphasised by Schopenhauer (insufficient theoretical framework, concealed theologism, and hypothetical character) were inconsistent, since they are based on an incorrect interpretation of Kant's works. M. Städtler (University of Münster, Germany) analysed to what extent Kant's ideas about religion can be applicable in the modern society. He emphasised the interconnection between the notions of reason, God and history in Kant's philosophy, arriving at a conclusion that today the transition from ideas to experience is not a philosopher's task and should be implemented in the course of historical action against the background of the unity of technical and moral-practical elements.

Prof. Choong-Jin Lee (Hansung University, Seoul, South Korea) dedicated his presentation to the perception of Kant's practical philosophy in the Confucian culture of Korea. According to his forecast, the focus of research attention of Korean scholars will be shifting from Kant's philosophy of law towards the ethics of the Königsberger. N. P. Pakhalina (IKSUR), A. M. Sologubov (IKSUR), D. S. Ivanov (IKSUR), D. V. Polyansky (IKSUR), N. V. Danilkina (IKSUR), S. V. Lugovoy (IKSUR), A. A. Gorin (SPbSU) also participated in the workshop session. All in all, the session showed that Kant's philosophical ideas were still topical in the context of solving theoretical and practical problems arising in modern ethics and philosophy of religion.

The third plenary session became a natural continuation of the workshop session on the problems of Kant's theoretical heritage. The plenary session was opened by Prof. V. V. Vasiliev (MSU), who gave a presentation entitled *Kant's critique of idealism: illusions and reality* focusing on the identification of actual differences between transcendentalism and idealism on the one hand and Berkeley's "dogmatic idealism" and Descartes's "problematic idealism" on the other. V. V. Vasiliev stressed that one could answer this question through clarifying why Kant started to change and alter his views on idealism after the publication of the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. In this connection, it is of importance to refrain from interpreting the later amendments as a reaction to external criticism. Having analysed different interpretations of Kant's attitude towards idealism, Prof. Vasiliev arrives at a conclusion that Kant's transcendental idealism occupies the traditional "critical" position in the middle between "dogmatic" and "sceptical" idealism. Within the particular issue of idealism, as well as in philosophy in general, criticism proves to be the middle way between dogmatism and scepticism, which, once again, emphasises the critical nature of Kant's ideas.

Strong interest of conference participants was sparked by the presentation of Prof. W. Stark from Marburg. He presented the first results of research on the origins of Kant's knowledge about Asia. Having collected the accounts of Kant's contemporaries and biographers and found textbooks and ancient maps, which the young philosopher could use, Prof. Stark attempted to reconstruct the image of world space built up in the consciousness of the future great thinker. The research of W. Stark, the director of the Kant-Archive in Marburg, is of major significance for philosophical Kant studies. For instance, it helps clarify some issues of Kant's anthropology, namely, elucidate the genesis of the philosopher's ideas

about the representatives of oriental culture, the knowledge of which was limited by Eurocentrism, which dominated geography at the time. An ample proof of this fact was provided by Prof. Stark.

The last plenary presentation, which concluded the main part of the conference, was made by Prof. Yu.M. Shilkov and entitled *Symbol and fiction*. The presentation shed light on the problem of fictional capacities of a symbol. Interest in this topic is stimulated by that the correct understanding of a symbol makes it possible to uncover the secret of human ability for creativity. Prof. Shilkov hypothesised a connection between the symbol and fiction paraphrasing Kant: symbols without fiction are void; fiction without a symbol, blind. In the development of his thought, Prof. Shilkov demonstrated that the creative mission of fiction is most vivid in its relation to reality and symbolic form. The "reality-fiction-symbol" triptych implements the function of both a carrier and a means, whose terms embody the discursive structure of fiction that mediates the relation between the symbolic form and reality.

While summing up the results of the conference, the participants came to a conclusion that the research on Kant's philosophical heritage was gaining in importance, since many problems addressed by the philosopher in the 18th century have become topical only recently. One of them, for example, is the issue of personal autonomy and freedom of thinking in the context of mass society. Thus, the fundamental development of Kant's promising ideas should continue, while the results of such research can be regularly published in the pages of *Kantovskiy sbornik*. It was also proposed to schedule the next "Kant readings" to coincide with the 290th anniversary of Kant's birth (2014). In his closing address, Prof. Vladimir N. Bryushinkin expressed his gratitude to all conference participants for the high level of the 10th Kant Conference and emphasised the support in organizing the conference provided by Russian Foundation for the Basic Research, Centre for Advanced Studies and Education, Immanuel Kant State University of Russia, and the staff and graduate and undergraduate students of the Department of Philosophy.

Valentin V. Balanovsky, Anatoly G. Pushkarsky