



Workshop

“A Resolute Reading of Descartes”: Author Meets Critics

2–3 November 2022

In his “A Resolute Reading of Descartes” (2020), James Conant offers an original and thought-provoking new reading of Descartes’s challenging and controversial Creation Doctrine, along the lines of his “Resolute Reading of Wittgenstein.” While authors usually understand Descartes to be claiming in this doctrine that God could create the eternal truths—e.g., the laws of logic—in a totally different and (to us) unintelligible way, Conant argues that it should be read as only making a negative claim regarding our own abilities, not a positive one regarding God’s abilities. Accordingly, this doctrine should not be read as telling us anything about God’s ability. Conant also uses this reading to constitute the basis of Descartes’s evil demon scepticism, which makes it an instance of what he calls Kantian scepticism—as opposed to the dream scepticism, which is an instance of Cartesian scepticism. In this workshop, we propose to have both established and early career scholars engage with Conant’s resolute reading of Descartes and its historiographical implications and to have Conant himself respond to the critics.

Convenors

- Mahdi Ranaee (Universität Siegen)
- Stephan Schmid (Universität Hamburg)

Participants

- James Conant (The University of Chicago)
- Anil Gomes (University of Oxford)
- Stefanie Grüne (Freie Universität Berlin)
- Anat Schechtman (The University of Texas at Austin)
- Arianne Schneck (Universität Bielefeld)

Venue

**Maimonides Centre for
Advanced Studies**

Please contact MCAS for registration
and further information.
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