§1. Description and Objectives

Few authors have inspired as much interest and awe as Kant. Consideration of his theories for any one engaged in a philosophy curriculum is practically unavoidable and the number of books, articles and reviews that have been devoted to his work even only in the last few decades defies one's keenest ambition to survey them. One might be tempted to think that all this activity has left no stone unturned, that little can be added to current discussion of Kant's critical work or that it is unlikely that any great philosophical find is still likely to be made for Kant's scholars. Yet, as recent scholarship as shown, Kant's views on logic remain practically untouched and with them not only an important part of the history of the reception of Kant's first *Critique* but also an important aspect of the history of German thought.

The failure to come to terms with Kant as a philosopher of logic is somewhat puzzling. It cannot be explained by the fact that the notion itself is incongruous. Kant's *Lectures on Logic* show, for instance, that despite Kant's claims to the contrary - he famously declared that logic was "closed" and "finished" (1781, Bviii) - Kant was interested in logic and its theory. Kant did not avoid logical issues and even innovated to a certain extent. While his treatment of logical questions per se is often seen as relatively inconsequential (see for instance Kneale and Kneale, 354ff), Kant's dealings with questions concerning the subject matter of logic, its scope and its place within a theory of rationality should be seen as pioneering. It is true that in the *Critique* Kant discussed logic directly only to distinguish it from "transcendental" logic (in the *Introduction* to the eponymous section), that is, what Kant conceived as the investigation of the conditions of possibility of our knowledge of objects. But this discussion - a discussion that is developed in the first few pages of the Introduction to the *Logic* (1800) - turns out to be substantial. Moreover, throughout the remainder of his critical work, Kant makes innumerous claims that bear on logic and its philosophy, for instance the claim that there are only three kinds of syllogism: categorical, hypothetical and disjunctive or that there can only be definitions of mathematical concept - some of which were assumed *mutatis mutandis* by his successors. More importantly, Kant's views on logic were indeed considerably influential. There were, on the one hand, all those who attempted to devise logics freely inspiring themselves from the *Critique*, often borrowing Kant's ideas as though they were perfectly authoritative. There was, on the other hand, Bernard Bolzano.

Bolzano's interpretation and criticism of Kant as it is presented by Přihonský in the *New Anti-Kant* is rooted in the premise that logic - in the broad sense of a "theory of science" (more on this below) - is to be regarded as the primary
philosophical endeavour, a propedeutic meant to provide their foundation to all the other sciences; and that Kant's critical philosophy has effectively much to say about the latter. As such, the New Anti-Kant delivers, some three decades before the publication of Frege's seminal Begriffsschrift and Foundations of Arithmetic, the first comprehensive examination of Kant's philosophy from what some might call an "analytic perspective". The New Anti-Kant is not only a unique historical document; it is also one of the most philosophically interesting contributions to Kant studies of the last two centuries.

The aim of the seminar is twofold. The bulk of the discussion will be devoted to the New Anti-Kant and to understanding Bolzano's standpoint as well as his criticism of Kant. The objective will be to understand the way in which Bolzano's views on logic and in particular his views on the foundational role it plays in mathematics departs from Kant, also drawing on Bolzano's criticism of Kant's views on a priori knowledge. We will read excerpts from Bolzano's Theory of Science (provided in class) as well as the better part of Příhonský's New Anti-Kant (also provided in class). The second part of the course will aim at understanding the way in which Bolzano's views are similar (and dissimilar) to those of Gottlob Frege, thus providing a better insight into the history of early analytical philosophy. To this purpose we will base our discussion on a close reading of the first part of Frege's Begriffsschrift and the conclusion of Foundations of Arithmetic.

Basic acquaintance with Kant's Critique of Pure Reason will be assumed.

§2. Contact

Meeting by appointment only (UH 307A): lapointe@mcmaster.ca

§3. Schedule

Courses take place Thursdays, Thursdays 10:00am – 1:00pm, UH 316

12 September: Introduction: Bolzano, Kant and Frege

19 September: Bolzano's Program and the notion of a "proposition in itself" (Theory of Science §§1,15, 17, 19, 25-26, 30-32)

26 September: Propositions (Theory of Science §§122-127, 130, 132-133); Analyticity (§§147-148);

3 October: Presentation by Pauline van Wierst: Bolzano
§4. Requirements

5 reading summaries (3% x 5 = 15%) You will be expected to write four short reading summaries. The summaries can be handed in at any time with the two following restrictions: 1) they must be handed in at the beginning of the class in the course of which the assigned reading will be discussed (see schedule) 2) At least two of the summaries must be handed in before 15 October.

1 commented bibliography (25%). You will be expected to supplement the readings suggested for each class and to constitute a bibliography of at least 20 titles. For each title you are requested to explain what the paper, book or chapter is about and how it was useful to your understanding of the general topic of the seminar (150-200 words each)

1 term paper (50%) relating to the topic you will have presented and discussed in class. The essay should be no more than 3000 words. I will be available to provide feedback on the presentations and give advice. You are encouraged to send a draft of the term paper to receive comprehensive comments. The essay will be due on the last day of class.

Participation (10%). In order to obtain the maximum of participations points you need to 1) miss no more than 2 classes in the course of the semester and 2) make a positive contribution to the discussion.

§5 Bibliography
I am not allowed to give you links to PDFs online, but very many of the articles below can be found online and you should certainly look for them. Many others can be obtained through JSTOR.

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2. Improper collaboration in group work.

3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

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