

# ***Synthese* Topical Collection on “Essences, Dispositions, and Laws in Kant”**

*Call for Papers*

## **Guest Editors**

Lorenzo Spagnesi (Trier University) and Kristina Engelhard (Trier University)

## **Deadline**

30<sup>th</sup> November, 2023

## **Topical Collection Description**

Essences, dispositions, and laws play a central role in Kant’s pre-Critical and Critical philosophy, especially in, but not limited to, his theoretical philosophy and philosophy of science. For several years there has been a reappraisal of these notions and their interconnections (or lack thereof) in Kant scholarship, which might be motivated by recent extensive debates in metaphysics and philosophy of science on the same issues. Yet, several questions have not been fully answered so far, e.g.: What are essences for Kant? Should they be distinguished from ‘natures’ or ‘grounds’? What kind of investigation of nature do they afford? What role do dispositions play? Can we provide unified foundations for essences and dispositions, or are dispositions primitive? What grounds laws of nature or their modality? And how can they be object of cognition? More generally, what are, if any, the relations between essences, dispositions, and laws in Kant’s philosophy? The aim of this topical collection is to shed light on these and other related questions, as well as to explore their implications for contemporary debates in essentialism, dispositionalism, laws of nature and the metaphysics of modality. As such, the topical collection brings together aspects of history of philosophy, metaphysics, and philosophy of science.

To be considered in the journal, each submission should include a discussion of the relevance of the examination of Kant’s views on essences, dispositions, and laws to contemporary debates. The discussion can occur in a specific section or be a general theme of the manuscript. In this way, the contribution will go beyond a historical understanding of Kant, although this understanding can be (and typically will be) at the centre of the manuscript.

The topical collection follows up on a workshop and summer school on the same topic that took place at Trier University in August 2022 (<https://essencesdispositionslawsinkant.weebly.com>), in the context of the Trier Kant Research Centre (<https://www.uni-trier.de/universitaet/fachbereiche-faecher/fachbereich-i/faecher-und-institute/philosophie/forschung/kant-forschungsstelle>) and the DFG research group ‘Inductive Metaphysics’ (<https://indmet.weebly.com>).

Topics that may be addressed include (but are not limited to):

- Essences and natural kinds in Kant;
- Forces, faculties, and powers in Kant;
- Laws and the metaphysics of modality in Kant;
- Kant and contemporary philosophy of science;
- Kant and analytic essentialism;
- Kant and scientific realism;
- Kant and dispositionalism;
- Pre-Critical Kant and natural science and/or metaphysics;
- Kant and predecessors on essences, dispositions, and laws;
- Kantian approaches to essences, dispositions, and laws.

For further information, please contact the guest editors: [spagnesi@uni-trier.de](mailto:spagnesi@uni-trier.de), [engelhard@uni-trier.de](mailto:engelhard@uni-trier.de).

Submissions can be made at: <https://www.editorialmanager.com/synt/default.aspx>. Please select “Essences, Dispositions, and Laws in Kant” as type of manuscript. Papers in a topical collection are not assigned to a special issue of the journal but published in the first available issue of *Synthese*. The papers are then collected and prominently displayed together on *Synthese*'s website. Papers in a topical collection undergo the same review process as any other submission to *Synthese*. Guidelines for submitting the manuscript can be found here: <https://www.springer.com/journal/11229/submission-guidelines>.

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