

PETER MYRDAL

Curriculum Vitae

CONTACT INFORMATION

Philosophy
University of Oulu
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University of Turku
Department of Philosophy, Contemporary History, and Political Science
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AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Early Modern European Philosophy:
- metaphysics
- ethics
- epistemology
- mind

AREAS OF COMPETENCE

Ancient Philosophy
Medieval Philosophy
Kant
Metaphysics
Philosophy of Mind
Epistemology
Ethics
Philosophy of Action

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Uppsala University, Theoretical Philosophy, May 22, 2012. Title: *Leibniz on Agency and Force*.
Adviser (chair): Lilli Alanen.
M.A., Uppsala University, Theoretical Philosophy, 2005.
B.A., Uppsala University, Theoretical Philosophy, 2003.
D.E.U.G. (Diplôme d'études universitaires générales), Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne, Philosophy, 2000.

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Senior Researcher, University of Oulu, Philosophy. 2023-present.

Senior Researcher, University of Turku, School of History, Culture and Arts Studies. 2022-2023.

Collegium Researcher, University of Turku, Turku Institute for Advanced Studies (TIAS) & Department of Philosophy, Contemporary History, and Political Science. 2019-2022.

Postdoctoral Researcher. Uppsala University, Department of Philosophy. 2017-2018.

Lecturer (fixed-term), UCLA, Department of Philosophy. 2015.

Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Turku, Department of Philosophy, Contemporary History, and Political Science. 2014-2017.

Postdoctoral Researcher, Uppsala University, Department of Philosophy. 2014.

Lecturer (fixed-term), UCLA, Department of Philosophy. 2012-13.

Postdoctoral Researcher at the Center of Excellence *Understanding Agency*, Uppsala University, Department of Philosophy. 2012-2013.

Research Assistant at the Center of Excellence *Understanding Agency*, Uppsala University, Department of Philosophy. 2012.

Instructor, Uppsala University, Department of Philosophy, 2005-2011.

ACADEMIC VISITING POSITIONS

Visiting Scholar, University of Turku, Department of Philosophy, Contemporary History, and Political Science, 2023-present.

Visiting Scholar University of California, Irvine, Department of Philosophy. 2017.

Visiting Scholar, UCLA, Department of Philosophy. 2015.

Visiting Scholar, UCLA, Department of Philosophy. 2012-2013.

Visiting Graduate Scholar, UCLA, Department of Philosophy, 2008-2009.

Visiting Research Student, University of London, Birkbeck, School of Philosophy. 2007.

LANGUAGES

Swedish (native), English (fluent), French (fluent), German (reading skills), Latin (reading skills), Finnish (basic).

PUBLICATIONS

In Progress

- [1] "The Problem of Innate Ideas"
- [2] "The Priority of the Idea of God in Leibniz's Account of Cognition" (commissioned for special issue of the *Intellectual History Review* on *Early Modern Science of the Soul: Method and Metaphysics* edited by Sonia Schierbaum)
- [3] "Monadic Perception"
- [4] *Leibniz's Metaphysics of Active Being* (monograph)

Papers and Book Chapters

- [1] "The Monad's Principle of Action" In John Whipple (ed.) *Leibniz's Monadology: A Critical Guide*. Cambridge University Press. Commissioned (under review).
- [2] "Leibniz's Two Realms and the Final Cause as Activity." In Henrik Lagerlund, Sylvain Roudaut, and Erik Åkerlund (eds.) *The Mechanization of Nature between 1300 and 1700*. Springer. Forthcoming.

- [3] “Leibniz and the Metaphysics of Powers.” *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 62(3), 2024: 395-420.
- [4] “Leibniz on Possibilia, Creation, and the Reality of Essences” (main author; co-authors: Arto Repo & Valtteri Viljanen). *Philosophers’ Imprint* 23(17), 2023.
- [5] “Force, Motion, and Leibniz’s Argument from Successiveness.” *Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie* 103(4), 2021: 704-29.
- [6] “The Best of All Possible Coexistence” (with Mikael Fortelius & Indre Zliobaite). *Palaeobiodiversity and Palaeoenvironments* 101, 2021: 259–265
- [7] “Ideas and Reality in Descartes” (with Arto Repo). In Martina Reuter and Frans Svensson (eds.) *Mind, Body, and Morality: New Perspectives on Descartes and Spinoza*, 77-95. London: Routledge, 2019.
- [8] “Leibniz on Primitive Concepts and Conceiving Reality” (with Arto Repo). In Hemmo Laiho and Arto Repo (eds.), *De Natura Rerum. Scripta in honorem professoris Olli Koistinen sexagesimum annum complentis*, 148-166. Turku: University of Turku, 2016.
- [9] “Appetite as Activity.” In Wenchao Li, et al. (eds.) *“Für Unser Glück oder das Glück Anderer”. Vorträge des X. Internationalen Leibniz-Kongresses 2016*, vol. V, 143-153. Georg Olms Verlag: Hildesheim, 2016.
- [10] ”Leibniz’ perfektionism” [”Leibniz’s Perfectionism”]. *Ajatus* 71, 2014: 259-286.
- [11] “Leibniz om natur och politik” [”Leibniz on Nature and the Political”]. *Tidskrift för politisk filosofi [Journal of Political Philosophy]* 16, 2012: 40-50.
- [12] “Possible Worlds and the Nature of Choice in Leibniz” (with Henrik Lagerlund). *Studia Leibnitiana* 38/39, 2006/7 (published 2009): 156-176.
- [13] “Will and Self in Leibniz.” In Herbert Breger, Jürgen Herbst and Sven Erdner (eds.). *VIII. Internationaler Leibniz-Kongress: Einheit in der Vielheit*, vol. II, 663-670 Hannover: Gottfried-Wilhelm-Leibniz-Gesellschaft, 2006.
- [14] “Possible Worlds and Freedom in Leibniz” (with Henrik Lagerlund). In Henrik Lagerlund, Sten Lindström and Rysiek Sliwinski (eds.) *Modality Matters: Twenty-Five Essays in Honour of Krister Segerberg*, 263-286. Uppsala: Uppsala Philosophical Studies, 2006.

Book Reviews

- [1] Marc Bobro, *Self and Substance in Leibniz* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2004). *Theoria* 43, 2007: 68-72.

For a Wider Audience

- [1] ”Lilli Alanen 1941-2021 – ett liv i filosofin” [”Lilli Alanen – A Life in Philosophy”]. *niin & näin* 2022(3): 140-142
- [2] ”Till minne: Lilli Alanen” [Lilli Alanen in Memoriam]. In *Dagens Nyheter* [Swedish daily newspaper], October 29, 2021. (Co-author: Frans Svensson.)
- [3] “Vad är meningen med livets mening? [What is the Meaning of the Meaning of Life?]” In *Svenska Dagbladet* [Swedish daily newspaper], March 30, 2018.
- [4] *Att förstå mänsklig handling: slutrapport från ett forskningsprogram* [Understanding Human Agency: Final Report from a Research Program] (with Tomas Ekenberg, Lena Halldenius och Pauliina Remes). Riksbankens jubileumsfond (The Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences) and Makadam förlag: Stockholm, 2014.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

“The Problem of Innate Ideas.”

Tartu-Turku Philosophy Workshop: Mind and World, University of Turku, September 2025.

- Early Modern Philosophy Workshop*, Rutgers-Newark, November 2025.
- Helsinki Research Seminar in the History of Philosophy*, University of Helsinki, February 2026.
- “The Monad’s Principle of Action.”
- Nordic Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy*, Vilnius, August 2025.
- Journée d’études. Leibniz: recherches actuelles*, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, March 2026.
- “The Unity of Cognition.” *Metaphysics of Cognition and Self in Early Modern Philosophy*, University of Oulu, May 2025. (With Vili Lähteenmäki.)
- “The Nature of Final Causes in Leibniz.”
- Sixième congrès de la Société d’études leibniziennes de langue française / Dix-huitième congrès de la Leibniz Society of North America*. Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, June 2024.
- 7th Finnish-Hungarian Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy*. Central European University, October 2024.
- Séminaire Mathesis*. École normale supérieure, March 2025.
- Philosophy Department Seminar, Åbo Akademi University, April 2025.
- “What can we learn about powers from Leibniz?” *Powers, Causes & Laws*. University of Helsinki, May 2024.
- “Leibniz on Final Causes.” *JohnFest: Conference in Honor of John Carriero*. UCLA, October 2023.
- “Force and Leibniz’s Metaphysics of Powers.” *Physics and Metaphysics in Leibniz* (invited symposium), American Philosophical Association, Pacific Division Meeting, San Francisco, April 2023.
- “The Simple View of Meaning in Life.” University of Gothenburg Philosophy Department, April 2023.
- “Activity and Ends in Leibniz.”
- The End? Final Causation in Natural Philosophy and Moral Psychology (1300–1700)*, Stockholm University, May 2021.
- “Descartes on Understanding” (with Arto Repo). University of Helsinki Philosophy Department, May 2018.
- “Leibniz on Motion and Force.”
- Nordic Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy*, University of Helsinki, May 2018.
- Leibniz Workshop*, Uppsala University, March 2016.
- University of Helsinki Philosophy Department, January 2016.
- “Leibniz on Concepts.” *Early Modern Conference*, UCLA, April 2018.
- “Leibniz’s Criticism of Aristotelian Powers.” *Leibniz on Mind and Metaphysics*. Humboldt (Berlin), June 2017.
- “Leibniz on Force and Substance.”
- The Society for Early Modern Philosophy*, Yale, May 2017.
- History of Philosophy Roundtable*, University of California San Diego, April 2017.
- Stockholm University Philosophy Department, January 2020.
- “Appetite as Activity.” *X. Internationaler Leibniz-Kongress*. Leibniz Universität, Hannover, July 2016.
- “The Form of Leibniz’s Perfectionism,” *Self-interest and Other-regard*. University of Iceland, November 2015.
- “Leibniz on Force.” *Early Modern Conference*. UCLA, April 2015.

- “Leibniz’s Conception of Activity.” University of Helsinki Department of Philosophy, November 2014.
- “Leibniz on Perception as Activity.”
2nd Finnish-Hungarian Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy. University of Jyväskylä, 2014.
Understanding the World and Human Beings. University of Turku, 2014.
- “Why are Faculties Unintelligible? The Metaphysical Basis of Leibniz’s Criticism of Aristotelian Powers.”
Metaphysics and the Mind – Early Modern Views. University of Jyväskylä, 2014.
7th Leibniz Society of North America Conference. Yale, October 2013.
- ”Political Community, Nature, and Conflict: Leibniz vs. Hobbes.”
 Philosophy Department Seminar, Åbo Akademi University, September 2013.
 Philosophy Department Seminar, University of Helsinki, September 2013.
6th Nordic Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy, University of Turku, June 2013.
Understanding Political Agency, Malmö University, May 2011.
- “Desiring the Good: Two Approaches.” *Agency and the Good*. Uppsala University, April 2013.
- “Leibniz on Activity and Force.”
Subjectivity, Selfhood and Agency in the Arabic and Latin Traditions, Uppsala University, August 2012.
Early Modern Metaphysics of Causality and Representation. University of Turku, December 2011.
- “Action and Ends in Leibniz.” *Leibniz and Resemblance Nominalism*. University of Turku, October 2010.
- “Leibniz on Pleasure in Activity.”
Mind in Nature: Second Conference of the European Society for Early Modern Philosophy, Humboldt (Berlin), February 2010.
Aspects of Action and Selfhood. Uppsala University, January 2010.
- “Leibniz on Pleasure and Joy.” *History of Philosophy Roundtable*, University of California San Diego, April 2009.
- “Moral Identity and Love in Leibniz.”
Limits of Personhood, University of Jyväskylä, June 2008.
Mind, Body, and Agency in Spinoza and Leibniz, Uppsala University, May 2008.
 University of London, Birkbeck School of Philosophy, April 2008.
- “Persons, Agents and Rights in Locke and Leibniz.” *Nordic Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy*, University of Tartu, June 2008.
- “Leibniz on Individuals, Persons and Immortality.”
 University of London, Birkbeck School of Philosophy, June 2007.
Nordic Colloquium in Early Modern Philosophy, Oslo University, May 2007.
- “Will and Human Action in Leibniz.” *Understanding Agency: Causation and Agency in Nature*. Uppsala University, December 2006.
- “Will and Self in Leibniz.”
VIII. Internationaler Leibniz-Kongress. Leibniz Universität, Hannover, July 2006.
Nordic Colloquium in Early Modern Philosophy. Uppsala University, May 2006.

Invited Commentator/Discussant

Sixième congrès de la Société d'études leibniziennes de langue française/Dix-huitième congrès de la Leibniz Society of North America. Commentator on Dimitrios Athanasakis: “Forces dérivatives et intelligibilité des phénomènes chez Leibniz.” Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, June 2024.

Nordic Workshop in Early Modern Philosophy. Round Table on “Past Figures and Future Directions of Nordic Scholarship in Early Modern Philosophy: Lilli Alanen in Memoriam.” University of Jyväskylä (Finland), August 2023.

Workshop on a book manuscript on Descartes by Lilli Alanen. University of Helsinki, January 2018.

2nd Arctic Circle Seminar in Early Modern Philosophy. Commentator on Christian Barth: “Leibniz on Phenomenal Consciousness.” Kilpisjärvi (Finland), August 2013.

Yale Leibniz Workshop. Commentator on Don Rutherford: “Five Theses About Monadic Change.” Yale, October 2012.

GRANTS AND FELLOWSHIPS

Three-year grant (as co-PI) for multi-researcher project on *Epistemic Resilience: A Study in Early Modern Philosophy*, University of Oulu Spearhead Funding.

Three-year grant for project on *Cognition and Concepts: Revisiting the Rationalist Tradition* funded by the Kone Foundation. University of Oulu, 2026–2028.

Twelve-month grant for project on *Natural Intelligence: Reconsidering the Rationalist Tradition* funded by the Finnish Cultural Foundation. University of Oulu, 2024–2025.

Fourteen-month grant within the four-year project *Thick Subjects: A Reconsideration of Early Modern Views of the Self* (PI: Vili Lähteenmäki) funded by the Academy of Finland. University of Oulu, 2023–25.

Eighteen-month grant within the four-year project *The Modern View of Concepts: Origins and Critique* (PI: Valtteri Viljanen) funded by the Emil Aaltonen Foundation. Co-author of the funding application. University of Turku, 2022–23.

Three-year fellowship as Collegium Researcher at the Turku Institute for Advanced Studies (TIAS), University of Turku, 2019–22.

Grant from the Joint Committee for Nordic Research Councils in the Humanities and Social Sciences (NOS-HS) for three conferences (Uppsala, Reykjavik, and Jyväskylä) on the *Conceptual History of the Good: Working towards a New Understanding of Ethics*. Co-applicant; main applicant: Miira Tuominen.

Three-year postdoctoral grant from the Academy of Finland for the project *The Metaphysics of the Good Life: Leibniz on the Human Good, Perfection, and Happiness*. University of Turku, 2014–17.

Four-year research grant from the Swedish Research Council for the project *The Metaphysics of the Good Life: Leibniz on the Human Good, Perfection, and Happiness* (only partly accepted). Uppsala University, 2014, 2017–18.

Postdoctoral fellowship at the Center of Excellence *Understanding Agency: Conceptions of Action, Human Nature, and Value in the Western Philosophical Tradition* funded by the Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences, Uppsala University, 2012–13. Contributor to the funding application.

Dissertation stipend from the *Ax:son Johnson Foundation*, 2010–11.

Grant from the *Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education* for visit to the UCLA Department of Philosophy, 2008–9.

Grant from the Swedish Foundation for Humanities and Social Sciences for organizing the conference *Mind, Body, and Agency in Spinoza and Leibniz* at Uppsala University, 2008. Co-author of the funding application; main applicant: Lilli Alanen.

TEACHING

Courses taught

Introduction to Ancient and Medieval Philosophy

Introduction to Modern Philosophy

Descartes

Leibniz

Locke & Berkeley

Leibniz: Mind and Ethics

Metaphysics of Mind and Cognition

Philosophy of Perception

Appearance and Reality

Force and Reality (co-taught graduate seminar, UCLA).

Pictures of Sensation in Early Modern Philosophy, (co-taught graduate seminar, UCLA).

Supervision

Member of Ph.D. dissertation committee (co-adviser) for Michael J. Hansen (*Worlds Apart: An Interpretation of Leibnizian Perceiving*). UCLA. Completed: 2019 (admitted 2012).

Co-adviser of Miika Hellevaara (*Hobbes and Spinoza on Peace*). University of Turku. Admitted: 2019.

Co-adviser of Oliver Lakanen (*Descartes's Ontological Argument*). University of Oulu. Admitted 2026.

Supervisor of BA and Master's theses on various topics in early modern philosophy at Uppsala University and the University of Turku.

Pedagogical Training

University Teacher Training Course (Högskolepedagogisk grundkurs). Uppsala University, 2013.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

Dynamis: the Finnish Network for Metaphysics

Leibniz Society of North America

SERVICE

Departmental

Deputy member of the board of the Turku Institute for Advanced Studies (TIAS) (as Researcher Representative), University of Turku, 2019-2021.

Co-organizer of the *Rationalist Circle* (weekly workshop), University of Turku, 2015-2016.

Member of the Steering Committee of the Center of Excellence *Understanding Agency*, Uppsala University, 2013-2014.

President of the Philosophical Society, Uppsala University, 2009-2010.

Member of Department Board (as Graduate Student Representative), Department of Philosophy, Uppsala University, 2005-2006.

Examiner

- External examiner of Ph.D. dissertation: Niccolò Fioravanti *Elasticity and Plasticity: The Material Structure of Leibniz's Corporeal Substances*. Università del Salento, 2025.
- Member of Ph.D. dissertation examination committee: Jan Johansson *Seeing all things in space : Kant and the reality of space in the context of early modern philosophy*. University of Turku, 2020.
- Member of Ph.D. dissertation examination committee: Michael J. Hansen *Worlds Apart: An Interpretation of Leibnizian Perceiving*. UCLA, 2019.
- External “mid-term” examiner (opponent) of Ph.D. dissertation manuscript: Kasper Kristensen *Vulnerability and the Common Good: Spinoza on Imagination, Reason and Politics*. Uppsala University, 2019.
- External pre-examiner of Ph.D. dissertation: Daryl De Bruyn *Spinoza's Concept of Emending the Intellect*, University of Turku, 2014.

Conference Organization

- Co-Organizer of the workshop *Conversations in the History of Philosophy: Mind, Body, and Normativity*. University of Oulu, October 2025.
- Co-Organizer of the workshop *Metaphysics of Cognition and Self in Early Modern Philosophy*, University of Oulu, May 2025.
- Co-Organizer of the annual conference of *Dynamis: the Finnish Network for Metaphysics*, University of Turku, May 2024.
- Main organizer of three workshops on a book manuscript on Descartes's ethics by Frans Svensson. University of Turku, 2021–2022.
- Co-organizer the conference *Nature, Mind, and Action in Leibniz*. University of Turku, June 2017.
- Co-organizer of *Mind, Nature, Morality: A Conference in Honor of Lilli Alanen*, Helsinki Collegium of Advanced Studies, September 2016.
- Co-organizer of the workshop *Descartes's Ethical Thought*. University of Turku, June 2016.
- Co-organizer of the conference *Morality and the Good Life*, Uppsala University, November 2014.
- Co-organizer of *Action and Reason: A Symposium in Honour of Fred Stoutland*, Uppsala University, November 2012.
- Co-organizer of the conference *Human Nature and Agency in Early Modern Philosophy*, Uppsala University, September 2012.
- Co-organizer of the conference *Mind, Body, and Agency in Spinoza and Leibniz*, Uppsala University, May 2008.

Refereeing

- Archiv für Geschichte der Philosophie*
- Australasian Journal of Philosophy*
- Ergo*
- Historiska och litteraturvetenskapliga studier*
- Journal of the American Philosophical Association*
- Journal of Modern Philosophy*
- Journal of the History of Philosophy*
- Manscrito*
- Oxford Studies in Early Modern Philosophy*

Philosophy and Phenomenological Research

Philosophical Explorations

Springer

Theoria

Topoi