

On Kant's Critique of a *Cognitio Symbolica*

Digital Kant-Lecture by Konstantin Pollok

In this talk I will explore Kant's critique of the *Schulphilosophie* notion of a symbolic, or figurative cognition that stands in parallel to a criticism levelled against Cassirer's usage of the term *symbol*. By analyzing Johann Heinrich Lambert's objections, but also approval of some of Kant's claims, I argue that the dichotomy of intuitive versus symbolic representation helped Kant to develop his critical view of the interdependence of rational cognition and sensible intuition. I extrapolate a taxonomy of possible kinds of representation from Kant's critical writings that is meant to replace the Leibnizian stipulation of a *cognitio symbolica* by contrasting discursive and intuitive kinds of representation. According to Kant's critical view, symbolic representation is meant to provide epistemic access to the supersensible, but with respect to the sensible world it should be rejected in favor of discursive, intuitive-empirical, and intuitive-schematic kinds of representation.