

## [The Limits of Reason](#)

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Call for Papers

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Spain

Subject Fields:

Humanities, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Religious Studies and Theology

**International Conference**

**CALL FOR PAPERS**

**The Limits of Reason**

**Faculty of Philosophy**

**Universidad Complutense de Madrid, Spain**

**1st June 2022**

Reason is and has been a central component of Western philosophy, both as that which distinguishes it from alternative Western forms of thinking and from non-Western discourses generally. One of the key defining features of this privileging of reason is its often implicit association with redemption, whether this is thought epistemologically, where it is associated with illumination in contrast to the confusion associated with darkness; morality, where it is associated with goodness over evil; and onto-politically, where it is associated with order over chaos.

However, this valorization has also always been accompanied by a certain mistrust: epistemologically, this has given rise to debates questioning the importance of formal logic and affirming the primacy of faith; metaphysically, it has manifested itself in the affirmation of non-rational foundations and the place of reason; morally, it has come to the fore in terms of an interrogation of the good/evil binary opposition as well as a questioning of the power of reason to guide our moral activities; and onto-politically, it has manifested itself in terms of a questioning of, amongst things, the nature and importance of order and, indeed, the exclusion inherent in reason's historical affirmation of a universal, singular truth. This appears to set up a binary opposition between the affirmation of reason and its rejection. However, as a number of its critics explicitly understand, their critiques criticise reason through rational means; that is, through reason itself. As such, they recognize that it is not possible to simply discard reason. Instead, they aim to disrupt the apparent binary reason/non-reason opposition to re-evaluate the meaning, place, and limits of reason.

This one-day online international conference inserts itself into this historical debate by inviting a

reconsideration of reason from the perspective of its limits and limitations. We are particularly interested in contributions that engage with the heterogeneity of reason, as well as those that explore the boundary between reason and its other (whatever that might be). Given this, suitable topics might include, but are certainly not limited to:

- Historical conceptions of reason
- The heterogeneity of reason
- The limits of reason, including the relationship between reason and non-reason
- Foundations and reason
- Political theory and reason
- Non-Western conceptions of reason/rationality
- Ethics and reason, including the normativity of reason
- Metaphysical conceptions of reason and their limits
- The disrupting power of reason/non-reason
- Reason and the subject
- Feminist critiques of rationality
- Psychoanalytic theory and Reason
- Postcolonial thought and reason
- Rationality and the climate crisis

**Format:** The conference will be held virtually and hosted by Google Meetings (to be confirmed). Invited speakers will have 20 minutes to present their papers, followed by 10 minutes for questions. Those interested in participating should send a 400-word abstract, with a short biography that includes current academic status and affiliation, to [thelimitsofreason@ucm.es](mailto:thelimitsofreason@ucm.es) by **20th March 2022**. The conference will be in English and attendance is free.

**Conference organizers:** Gavin Rae and Cillian Ó Fathaigh.

**Funding:** This conference forms part of the activities for the research projects: (1) "[Agency and Society: An Inquiry through Poststructuralism](#)" (PR108/20-26); (2) "[Differential Ontology and the Politics of Reason](#)," funded by the Government of the Region of Madrid, as part of line 3 of the multi-year agreement with the Universidad Complutense de Madrid: V PRICIT Excellence Program for University Professors (Fifth Regional Plan for Scientific Investigation and Technological Innovation); and (3) "[The Politics of Reason](#)" (PID2020-117386GA-I00), financed by the Ministry of Science and Innovation, Government of Spain.

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