

**Yayıncı ve Sahibi/Publisher and Owner**

Türk Felsefe Derneği Adına/On behalf of Association for Turkish Philosophy  
Prof. Dr. Murtaza Korlaelçi

**Yazı İşleri Müdürü/Managing Editor**

Merve Nur Sezer (Ankara Üniversitesi, Türkiye)

**Editör/Editor**

Prof. Dr. Hasan Yücel Başdemir (Ankara Üniversitesi)

**Yazı Kurulu/Editorial Board**

- Prof. Dr. Celal Türer (Ankara Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Prof. Dr. Christof Rapp (Ludwig Maximilians Universität, Germany)  
Prof. Dr. Dean Zimmerman (Rutgers University, USA)  
Prof. Dr. Duncan Pritchard (University of California Irvine, USA)  
Prof. Dr. Jason Brennan (Georgetown University, USA)  
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Eros Carvalho (Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil)  
Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zalan Gyenis (Jagiellonian University, Poland)  
Doç. Dr. Fatih Özkan (Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Doç. Dr. Muhammet Enes Kala (Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Aynur Tunç (Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Dr. Gary N. Kemp (University of Glasgow, United Kingdom)

**Alan Editörleri/Section Editors**

- Prof. Dr. Ahmet Emre Dağtaşoğlu (Trakya Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Doç. Dr. Fatih Özkan (Ankara Hacı Bayram Veli Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Doç. Dr. Mehmet Ata Az (Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Doç. Dr. Mehtap Doğan (Ankara Yıldırım Beyazıt Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Doç. Dr. Nihat Durmaz (Selçuk Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Doç. Dr. Sebile Başok Dış (Necmettin Erbakan Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Doç. Dr. Yurdağül Kılıç (Selçuk Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Ferhat Taşkın (Mardin Artuklu Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Kenan Tekin (Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Muhammet Çelik (Ankara Sosyal Bilimler Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Nazan Yeşilkaya (Şırnak Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Övge Öztürk (Yozgat Bozok Üniversitesi, Türkiye)

**Yazım Editörleri/Spelling Editors**

Ahmet Hamdi İşcan (Ankara Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Zehra Eroğlu (Ankara Üniversitesi, Türkiye)

**Dil Editörleri/ Language Editors**

Abdussamet Şimşek (Ankara Sosyal Bilimler Üniversitesi, Türkiye)  
Hatice İpek Keskin (Ankara Sosyal Bilimler Üniversitesi, Türkiye)

**Dizinlenme Bilgileri/Indexed by**

ULAKBİM TR Dizin (2003'dan itibaren/since 2003)  
Philosopher's Index (2004'dan itibaren/since 2004)  
ERIH PLUS (2023'den itibaren/since 2023)  
PhilPapers (2023'dan itibaren/since 2023)

*Felsefe Dünyası* uluslararası, süreli ve hakemli bir dergidir; yılda iki sayı yayımlanır; elektronik versiyonu, açık erişimlidir.  
Derginin online versiyonu ücretsizdir.

*The Philosophy World* is an international, periodical biannually, and peer-reviewed journal; its digital version is open access.  
The online version of the journal is free of charge.

**Fiyatı/Price:** 300 TL | **Basım Tarihi/Publication Date:** Aralık/December 2024, 300 Adet/Copies

**Adres/Address**

Necatibey Caddesi No: 8/122 Çankaya/ANKARA  
Tel: 0 (312) 231 54 40  
<https://dergipark.org.tr/pub/felsefedunyasi>

**Hesap No / Account No:** Vakıf Bank Kızılay Şubesi  
**IBAN:** TR82 0001 5001 5800 7288 3364 51

**Tasarım / Design:** Turku Ajans

**Baskı / Printed:** Uzun Dijital  
Zübeyde Hanım, İstanbul Çarşısı, İstanbul Cd. No:48 D:48,  
06070 Altındağ/Ankara

**Tel:** (0312) 341 36 67 | **Sertifika No:** 47865

# A Kantian Analysis of the Contemporary Views on Nothings and Absences

Osman Gazi Birgül

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2089-848X> | [gazibirgul@gmail.com](mailto:gazibirgul@gmail.com)

Manisa Celal Bayar University, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of Philosophy,  
Manisa, Türkiye

<https://ror.org/053f2w588>

## Abstract

This paper aims at contributing to contemporary literature on nothings and absences from a Kantian perspective. To achieve its aim, the article is structured in two main sections. The first investigates *nihil privativum*'s metaphysical-epistemological, cognitive, and linguistic aspects, shedding light on its enduring relevance and multifaceted nature. The analysis begins by elucidating *nihil privativum*'s negativity, highlighting the distinctions between its material and formal senses, and explores the epistemological intricacies of accessing knowledge concerning nothings and absences. Engaging with contemporary perspectives within the framework of Kant's philosophy, it demonstrates the enduring applicability of Kantian framework in addressing contemporary philosophical debates. Furthermore, the section delves into the linguistic dimension of *nihil privativum*, examining the distinctions between various forms of nothings and absences and the classification of terms denoting contradictory nothings. The second section begins with exploring the cognitive aspect of *nihil privativum*, yet this time as a general and abstract concept, unveiling the step-by-step process involved in its formation. The second section ends by an analysis of the linguistic aspect of '*nihil privativum*' as a rigid general term, arguing for its rigidity as a general abstract term by logical necessity, which is shown through two thought experiments within the discourse of possible worlds. The paper concludes that in the material sense, nothings and absences are not perceivable, in their formal sense they are conceptually representable, and as a general and abstract term '*nihil privativum*' is rigid, containing all particular *nihil privativa* in its extension and designating the property of 'being non-existent or absent' in all possible worlds.

**Keywords:** *Nihil privativum*, Nothing, Absence, Cognition, Rigidity of General Terms

<b>Citation</b>	Birgül, Osman Gazi (2024). A Kantian analysis of the contemporary views on nothings and absences. <i>Felsefe Dünyası</i> , 80, 98-117. <a href="https://doi.org/10.58634/felsefedunyasi.1558873">https://doi.org/10.58634/felsefedunyasi.1558873</a>
<b>Date of Submission</b>	30.09.2024
<b>Date of Acceptance</b>	02.12.2024
<b>Date of Publication</b>	15.12.2024
<b>Peer-Review</b>	Double anonymized - Two External
<b>Ethical Statement</b>	It is declared that scientific and ethical principles have been followed while carrying out and writing this study and that all the sources used have been properly cited.
<b>Plagiarism Checks</b>	Yes - intihal.net
<b>Conflicts of Interest</b>	The author(s) has no conflict of interest to declare.
<b>Complaints</b>	<a href="mailto:turkfelsefeder@gmail.com">turkfelsefeder@gmail.com</a>
<b>Grant Support</b>	The author(s) acknowledge that they received no external funding in support of this research.
<b>Copyright &amp; License</b>	Authors publishing with the journal retain the copyright to their work licensed under the <a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/">CC BY-NC 4.0</a> .

# Hiçlikler ve Yokluklar Üzerine Güncel Görüşlerin Kantçı Bir Analizi

Osman Gazi Birgül

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2089-848X> | [gazibirgul@gmail.com](mailto:gazibirgul@gmail.com)

Manisa Celal Bayar Üniversitesi, İnsan ve Toplum Bilimleri Fakültesi, Felsefe Bölümü, Manisa, Türkiye  
<https://ror.org/053f2w588>

## Öz

Bu makale, hiçlikler ve yokluklar üzerine güncel literatüre Kantçı bir perspektiften katkı sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu amacı gerçekleştirmek için makale, iki ana bölümde yapılandırılmıştır. İlk bölüm, *nihil privativum*'un metafizik-epistemolojik, bilişsel ve dilsel yönlerini araştırarak, onun süregelen önemini ve çok yönlü doğasını aydınlatmaktadır. Analiz, *nihil privativum*'un olumsuzluğunu açıklayarak, onun maddi ve biçimsel anlamları arasındaki ayrımları vurgulamakta ve hiçlikler ve yokluklar hakkında bilgiye erişmenin epistemolojik karmaşıklıklarını keşfetmektedir. Kant felsefesi çerçevesinde güncel perspektiflerle etkileşime giren bu bölüm, Kantçı çerçevenin günümüz felsefi tartışmalarında süregelen uygulanabilirliğini göstermektedir. Ayrıca bu bölüm, *nihil privativum*'un dilsel boyutuna da değinerek, çeşitli hiçlik ve yokluk biçimleri arasındaki farkları ve çelişkili hiçlikleri ifade eden terimlerin sınıflandırılmasını incelemektedir. İkinci bölüm, *nihil privativum*'un bilişsel yönünü bu sefer genel ve soyut bir kavram olarak araştırmaya başlayarak, onun oluşum sürecini adım adım ortaya koymaktadır. Bu bölüm, '*nihil privativum*' teriminin mantıksal zorunlulukla genel soyut bir terim olarak katılığını savunarak, iki düşünce deneyi aracılığıyla olası dünyalar söylemi içinde bunun nasıl gösterildiğine dair bir analizle sona ermektedir. Makale, maddi anlamda hiçliklerin ve yoklukların algılanamaz, biçimsel anlamda ise kavramsal olarak temsil edilebilir olduğu ve '*nihil privativum*' kavramının genel ve soyut bir terim olarak katı olduğu, tüm tikel *nihil privativum* örneklerini içerdiğinde barındırdığı ve tüm olası dünyalarda 'var olmama ya da yok olma' özelliğini işaret ettiği sonucuna varmaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Nihil privativum*, Hiçlik, Yokluk, Biliş, Genel Terimlerin Katılığı

<b>Atf Bilgisi</b>	Birgül, Osman Gazi (2024). A Kantian analysis of the contemporary views on nothings and absences. <i>Felsefe Dünyası</i> , 80, 98-117. <a href="https://doi.org/10.58634/felsefedunyasi.1558873">https://doi.org/10.58634/felsefedunyasi.1558873</a>
Geliş Tarihi	30.09.2024
Kabul Tarihi	02.12.2024
Yayın Tarihi	15.12.2024
Değerlendirme	İki Dış Hakem / Çift Taraflı Körleme
Etik Beyan	Bu çalışmanın hazırlanma sürecinde bilimsel ve etik ilkelere uyulduğu ve yararlanılan tüm çalışmaların kaynakçada belirtildiği beyan olunur.
Benzerlik Taraması	Yapıldı - intihal.net
Çıkar Çatışması	Çıkar çatışması beyan edilmemiştir.
Etik Bildirim	<a href="mailto:turfelsefeder@gmail.com">turfelsefeder@gmail.com</a>
Finansman	Bu araştırmayı desteklemek için dış fon kullanılmamıştır.
Telif Hakkı & Lisans	Yazarlar dergide yayınlanan çalışmalarının telif hakkına sahiptirler ve çalışmalarını <a href="https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/">CC-BY-NC 4.0</a> lisansı altında yayımlanmaktadır.

## Introduction

Throughout the history of philosophy, various types of nothing have been discussed from different philosophical perspectives. This paper specifically centers on the notion of nothing delineated by Kant as *nihil privativum*, which can be understood as nothingness arising from deprivation (A292/B348 and 9, s. 251).<sup>1</sup> Examples of this concept encompass shadows, coldness, darkness, and similar instances where there is a lack of previously existing objects; for instance, coldness represents the absence of warmth. In addition to these absences, Kant also includes non-existent entities, such as fictional characters, within the class of *nihil privativum*. This paper follows Kant's framework to examine cases of non-existence and absence.

*Nihil privativum*, like other forms of nothingness, is an enduring and intricate topic within philosophical discourse, remaining relevant and demanding multifaceted analysis due to its interconnectedness with various aspects. Accordingly, the first main section of this paper undertakes an examination of *nihil privativum* from metaphysical-epistemological, cognitive, and linguistic perspectives. Given the transcendental nature of Kant's epistemology, some metaphysical and epistemological inquiries intersect. Notably, one fundamental aspect of *nihil privativum* is its inherent negativity, positing that nothings and absences cannot be objects of our sensible intuitions (29, s. 962). This assertion underscores the material sense of *nihil privativum*, where these entities lack existence altogether and thus evade sensory apprehension. However, we can still conceptually represent nothings and absences, as facilitated by another sense of *nihil privativum*: formality. Consequently, while metaphysically these entities lack existence and evade perception, they remain cognitively representable and epistemologically accessible as objects of intellectual intuition.

Following the exposition of the material and formal senses of *nihil privativum*, the subsequent section delves into its epistemological dimension, probing the mechanisms through which knowledge of nothings and absences is accessed. This inquiry centers on the accessibility of such knowledge through the contrasting with the environment and the pre-givenness of objects. Through the exploration of three scenarios, the section elucidates the intricate interplay between these elements in facilitating epistemic access to nothings and absences. Notably, the perceptibility of nothings and ab-

---

1 To facilitate reader's ability to track the quotes, Kant's works are cited using the German paginations, and Cambridge translations are used. Citations from *The Critique of Pure Reason* follow the A/B pagination tradition.

sences remains a contentious subject within contemporary philosophical discourse. To demonstrate the continued relevance of Kant's framework, this paper engages with the perspectives of Sorensen (2008a, 2008b, 2009) and Farennikova (2013, 2019), juxtaposed with Gow's insights (2021a, 2021b), within the context of Kant's theoretical framework. By aligning these contemporary accounts with Kantian framework, the paper asserts that they can be mapped onto Kant's original framework. This comparative analysis is conducted on the foundational differentiation between the material and formal senses of *nihil privativum*, serving to elucidate the enduring applicability and theoretical richness of Kant's philosophical framework within contemporary discussions.

The final aspect of *nihil privativum* examined within the first main section pertains to its linguistic dimension. Here, two pivotal questions are addressed: firstly, the method by which distinctions between various forms of nothings and absences are made; secondly, the appropriate classification of terms denoting contradictory nothings, such as the square triangle, wherein neither a concept nor an object of sensory intuition exists. Drawing upon Frege's seminal differentiation between sense and reference, this paper posits that terms like 'square triangle' constitute mere utterances devoid of extension in their material sense, having no reference. However, in their formal sense, they function as linguistic terms with empty reference, emblematic of instances of *nihil privativum*.

The second main section of the paper concentrates on *nihil privativum* from two distinct perspectives: cognitive and linguistic. In exploring the cognitive aspect, this section delves into *nihil privativum* as a general and abstract concept of a higher order, which encapsulates all instances of *nihil privativa* as formal and conceptual representations. The cognitive analysis of *nihil privativum* as a general and abstract concept elucidates the step-by-step process involved in its formation. This construction process underscores the abstract nature of the concept, i.e., constructed by the mechanism of abstraction. To expound upon the formation of *nihil privativum* as a general and abstract concept, it becomes necessary to delineate between intuitions and concepts, contrasting immediacy with mediacy, particularity with generality, and objectivity with subjectivity (A320/B376-7). Drawing upon Kant's framework of concept formation and the distinctions between intuitions and concepts, the section explicates how *nihil privativum*, as a general and abstract concept, functions as the conceptual representation of all particular instances of *nihil privativa*. Yet it must be noted that these instances, serve as formal and conceptual representations of particular nothings and absences.

The second theme addressed in the second main section pertains to the linguistic counterpart of the general and abstract concept of *nihil privativum*: ‘*nihil privativum*’ as a rigid general abstract term. Here, I contend that this term encompasses all particular instances of ‘*nihil privativum*’ terms within its extension and serves to designate the property of ‘being non-existent or absent’. It is worth noting that while Kripke does not furnish a comprehensive account of rigidity concerning general terms, he does argue for the rigidity of certain general terms (Kripke, 1980, s. 119-121). However, the absence of a unified framework has spurred numerous philosophers to develop their own accounts. To elucidate how the general term ‘*nihil privativum*’ is argued to be rigid, three distinct accounts regarding the rigidity of general terms are expounded upon: extensionalism (Soames, 2002, s. 250; Schwartz, 2020, s. 250), rigid essentialism (Devitt, 2005 and 2009), and rigid expressionism (Salmon, 2005; Sullivan, 2007; LaPorte, 2000 and 2013; Orlando, 2014). By scrutinizing the relevant strengths and weaknesses of each approach, I contend that a variant of rigid expressionism, tailored to accommodate the general term ‘*nihil privativum*’, demonstrates its rigidity as a general term. This assertion is substantiated through a grounding in logical necessity and exemplified through two thought experiments situated within the discourse of possible worlds, and in connection with the framework established by Kant.

## **1. Metaphysical, Epistemological, Cognitive, and Linguistic Aspects of *Nihil Privativum***

The first feature of *nihil privativum* is its negativity, which pertains to both its metaphysical and epistemological aspects—specifically, the perceptibility of absences and their metaphysical status. Negativity is often contrasted with positivity. This distinction is clearest in Kant’s use of the term *noumenon*. Kant defines noumenon in its negative sense as “a thing insofar as it is not an object [object] of our sensible intuition” (A248/B307).<sup>2</sup> And in its positive sense Kant defines it as “an object [object] of a non-sensible intuition [i.e., intellectual intuition]” (A248/B307). Although *nihil privativum* and *noumenon* are distinct elements in Kant’s framework, they share the feature of negativity. In its negative sense, *nihil privativum* refers to the absence of any object of sensible intuitions, meaning absences or *nihil privativa* cannot be perceived as sense-data. Kant’s examples of *nihil privativa* include negative concepts such as *cold* and *darkness*, which he defines as the absence of warmth and light, respectively:

<sup>2</sup> Kant emphasizes certain phrases by bolding them, and all such phrases are bolded in the original.

“Warmth is thus something positive like light, and cold as well as darkness are simply names for their apparent absence” (9, s. 251).

Negativity and the positive use of *nihil privativum*, akin to *noumenon*, are closely related to the second feature of *nihil privativum* identified by Kant: *formality*. Formality concerns the cognitive status of the concept of nothing, addressing questions about its existence and nature. Kant divides the concept of an object in general into *something* and *nothing*, classifying the concept of *nihil privativum* under something. This positive treatment is achievable only by appealing to *nihil privativum* in its formal sense. According to Kant,

A nothing is a merely formal concept, to the extent that the lack of everything material in intuition is found with it. It is thus only a nothing in the material sense <*nihilum in sensu materiali*>, but by all means a something in the formal sense <*in sensu formali*>, ... From this it follows that all concepts belong here for which all empirical intuition is lacking (29, s. 962).

The key point is distinguishing between the negative and positive aspects of *nihila in sensu materiali* and *in sensu formali*. In its material sense, nothing does not exist, as famously stated by Parmenides: non-being is not. However, we can still think about or mention nothing, raising the question of what it is if it does not exist materially. According to Kant, the answer is that it is nothing in its formal sense.

Although there are terminological differences, the distinction between the material and formal senses of *nihil privativa* is a hot topic in contemporary literature on absences or nothings. The discussion falls into two subtopics: the metaphysical-epistemological aspect regarding the perceptibility of nothings and absences, and the cognitive aspect concerning their conceptual cognition. Some scholars argue that we can perceive absences (Kusko, 2006; Sorensen, 2008a, 2008b, 2009; Farennikova, 2013, 2019; Roberts, 2016; Cavedon-Taylor, 2017), while others disagree (e.g., Gow, 2021a, 2021b). These views can be mapped onto Kant’s analysis. For brevity, I will compare the accounts of Sorensen and Farennikova with Gow’s within the context of Kant’s analysis, as Sorensen and Farennikova are the most eminent defenders of treating nothings and absences positively and Gow provides the strongest criticisms against their position. Before this comparison, let me discuss three epistemological aspects of *nihil privativum*, focusing on how we acquire knowledge of *nihil privativa* despite they are not objects of our sensible intuition.

There are two primary ways to know the absence of something: (a) through contrasting with the environment, and (b) through the pre-givenness of the absent object. Yet, as the meaning of 'environment' varies across scenarios, there are several interplays between (a) and (b) that make knowledge of nothings and absences possible. Let me briefly discuss three scenarios.<sup>3</sup>

In scenario (1), imagine seeing a wall with a crack for the first time. According to Sorensen absences are perceivable by virtue of their "contrast with their environment" (2008b, s. 74). One recognizes the absence by contrasting it with the rest of the wall. However, this contrast involves the deeper assumption that the wall is an uninterrupted surface. Farennikova terms this an "expectation" (2013, s. 443).<sup>4</sup> In scenario (2), imagine seeing a crack on a wall previously observed as intact. Here, one recognizes the absence by contrasting the current image of the wall with its pre-crack image. Pre-givenness plays a role along with environmental contrast, as the complete wall is the pre-given object.<sup>5</sup> In scenario (3), imagine seeing trousers designed with circular *holes* from the start, without first being complete and then altered. One would still assert there are holes, contrasting this with the standard, pre-given image of trousers, which is formed by the most frequently seen design. Here, the contrast is between the object and the standard image of trousers.

Returning to negativity, Sorensen claims that "We hear pauses, feel holes, and see shadows. This makes it plausible that a student can see the empty string on a blackboard just as he can see a crack in a wall" (Sorensen, 2008a, s. 59). Such perceptions are counterintuitive for Kant, who argues that due to the negativity of *nihil privativa*, they should not be considered objects of sensible intuition. Kant states, "If light were not given to the senses, then one would also not be able to represent darkness" (A292/B349).

It indicates that nothings and absences are perceived negatively and in contrast with their environments where objects are pre-given. For Kant, one

3 While additional scenarios could be considered, I think three examples suffice to illustrate the point.

4 For a more detailed analysis on expectations see Esterman and Yantis (2010), and Kahneman et al. (1992).

5 According to Farennikova, some expectations require expertise, as in a case where "a medical professional can perceive the absence of a thrombosis perfusion on a patient's ultrasonogram" (2013, s. 449). Expertise is about how one gets the knowledge of the complete thing in the first place, and it is about the ways we learn the presence of things that might be absent in other cases. Thus, the same case might be thought without expertise. Imagine a non-expert given the task of finding differences between two ultrasonograms, in one of which there is thrombosis perfusion and in the other, there is not. That person may not call it 'absence of thrombosis perfusion' but 'absence of something' yet may still recognize the absence under the concept of 'thing'. As this paper does not focus on the epistemic foundations of expectations or assumptions, the discussion will not extend in that direction.



can only know the absence of something previously perceived. While for Sorensen we literally hear silences such that “A deaf man cannot hear silence” (2009, s. 126), for Kant, like a blind person who, without prior perception of light, cannot perceive darkness, a deaf man cannot hear silence due to the lack of data for contrast. Farennikova offers a parallel view with her Mismatch Model (MM), claiming that “seeing absence requires projection of object-templates” (2013, s. 449). For example, if someone working on their laptop in a café takes a break and returns to find the laptop gone, they perceive the absence because they had an object-template of the laptop on the table (Farennikova, 2013, s. 430). According to both Kant and Farennikova, if another person had entered the café at the same time, he would not notice the laptop’s absence due to the lack of pre-given data about its presence.

Farennikova’s MM assumes a pre-given template to (mis)match the later experience’s content. The person whose laptop is stolen expects to match the perceptual content of their experience before the break with the content upon returning to their table. This formulation aligns with Kant’s account and what Farennikova refers to as “the prevailing models of perception” (2013, s. 429), supported by scholars like Marr (1982), Gibson (1966, 1979), and Dretske (1969, 2004). Farennikova asserts that “perception of holes or of empty space counts as absence perception only when mismatches are involved” (2013, s. 452). This clarifies that parallelism has two aspects: (1) one cannot have the negative experience the non-existence of an object not given to the senses in advance, and (2) absences are perceived only in contrast with the environment in its pre-given forms. The question of whether Sorensen’s and Farennikova’s accounts imply treating absences positively still requires an answer. Sorensen argues that “Hearing silence is successful perception of an absence of sound. It is not a failure to hear sound” (2009, s. 126). Similarly, Farennikova maintains that “Experiences of absence possess immediate perceptual qualities” (2013, s. 430). Their positive treatment of absence experiences contradicts Kant’s assertion that nothings and absences do not exist in their material sense and cannot be perceived or referred to positively. Kant underscores the negativity of *nihil privativum* and asserts that negation or the absence of objects cannot be objects of sensible intuition. He explicitly denies any positive use of *nihil privativa*, stating, “I cannot say: I have seen that no one is in the room, for I cannot see nothing” (28, s. 235).<sup>6</sup>

6 Kant’s sentence may sound unusual in English and in other Indo-European languages due to absence of double negation. However, in some language families, such as the Ural-Altai family, constructions like ‘I cannot see nothing’ are grammatically accurate.

Both Sorensen's and Farennikova's accounts treat *nihil privativa* in the material sense as if they were objects of sensible intuition. This is a fundamental counterintuitive aspect of accounts that treat absences positively. They fail to explain how one could possibly have the experience of a nothing in the material sense. Thus, the positive treatment of *nihil privativa* in material sense does not logically follow from their negative epistemological accounts of recognizing absences. Their accounts seem confusing the material and formal senses of *nihil privativa*, which I return while discussing the sense and reference distinction between the material and formal senses of *nihil privativa*.

When compared, Gow's position aligns with Kant's assertion on the impossibility of experiencing or perceiving nothings and absences in material sense. The positive treatment of *nihil privativa* pertains to their cognitive aspect and formality. Gow argues that "absence experience consists in a kind of cognitive phenomenology, namely, 'intellectual seemings'" (2021a: 496). Recall that Kant treats *noumena* positively as objects of our non-sensible intuition, namely, intellectual intuition. From this perspective, treating *nihil privativa* positively would conflate their material and formal senses, leading to parodies akin to Kant's illustration: "You have money in the chest—for if you did not have that, then there would be nothing of money in the chest, then nothing would be money, thus you must have money. The mistake is that nothing <*nihil*> is meant one time as negation, another time as a concept" (29, s. 815-6).

Gow distinguishes between experiencing absences and perceiving them, stating, "I agree that we can experience absences—the examples we find in the literature are extremely compelling. However, I do want to take issue with the idea that we can perceive absences" (2021a, s. 169). Consistent with Kant's evaluation, Gow argues that if we experience absences, these experiences are fundamentally negative and rely not on sensible intuition but on intellectual intuition. Such experiences are cognitively recognized by concepts of nothings and absences, corresponding to particular cases of *nihil privativa* in Kant's terminology. According to Kant, a *nihil privativum* is "the empty object of a concept" (A292/B348), meaning 'a concept without an object'. Kant's examples support this analysis:

a *nihil privativum*, although it still can be thought, is one to which *nothing* existent corresponds; e.g., the aether in physics is an invented concept that has no reality *intuitu objecti*, but which can be thought without contradiction. Likewise a positive cold, as absolute cause of cold, contains nothing contradictory in thinking it, but it has no existence (29, s. 961).

These examples highlight a third aspect of *nihil privativum*—in addition to its metaphysical-epistemological and cognitive aspects—its linguistic dimension. Linguistically, we use terms such as ‘nothing’ and ‘absence’. While there is a conceptual framework for non-existence and absence due to formality, the extension of these linguistic terms remains empty as there are no objects of sensible intuition. The linguistic aspect of *nihil privativum* addresses two issues.<sup>7</sup> Firstly, it helps distinguish between the absences of two or more distinct objects, where linguistic terms and concepts exist but no corresponding objects do. Secondly, it addresses cases where there are neither objects nor concepts, only mere linguistic terms.

Consider the comparison between the absence of an elephant at the office and the absence of an officemate. To differentiate between them, one must rely on the linguistic aspect of *nihil privativum*. Let’s denote the absence of an elephant as ‘absence<sub>a</sub>’ and the absence of an officemate as ‘absence<sub>b</sub>’. Absence<sub>a</sub> and absence<sub>b</sub> differ in sense, following Frege’s framework. However, since there is no referent in the material sense, distinguishing them by reference is impossible—they both refer to empty extensions. Therefore, while distinguishing present objects relies on both sense and reference of linguistic expressions, in the case of absences, the difference lies solely in sense, as described by Frege, not in reference. When Farennikova’s claim that experiences of absence possess immediate perceptual qualities is reconsidered within this context, her account seems to be confusing the sense and reference of non-existence and absence terms, where in the former there are mediate qualities while in the latter there is no qualitative differences.

The second issue concerns logically contradictory nothings. According to Kant, *nihil privativa* can be thought without contradiction because “the concept is indeed possible, but there is no reality there” (28, s. 544). In contrast, there is another type of nothing that is inherently contradictory, termed *nihil negativum* by Kant: “empty object without a concept” (A292/B348). Examples like wooden iron or triangular square violate the principle of non-contradiction: “two opposing predicates cannot be either affirmed or denied of the same thing” (28, s. 793). Unlike contemporary approaches like dialetheism (Priest, 2006; Priest and Routley, 1989), Kant’s framework does not allow cognitive content representing *nihil negativa*. He calls *nihil negativum* ‘empty object without a concept’, indicating no cognitive content of this type of nothing: “[to *nihil privativum*] no *thought* or representation corresponds at

7 There is another case that can be explained by the linguistic aspect of *nihil privativum*, i.e., the case of the fictional entities. Elsewhere I discuss it in detail, see (Birgöl, 2021).

all. It is ordinarily so constituted that it involves an inner contradiction in the representation” (29, s. 961).

Yet, considering the linguistic aspect, *nihil negativum* can be classified as a case of *nihil privativum*. This very paragraph discussing *nihil negativa* illustrates that there is a linguistic framework whereby we can mention them. When combined with empty reference, terms like these become mere linguistic phrases with no cognitive content. From Kant’s perspective, such terms are objects of non-sensible intuition, like *nihil privativa* in the formal sense, which can be thought without contradiction. This classification relies on the principle that thinking about contradictions is not itself contradictory, making *nihil negativa* cases of *nihil privativum* linguistically. Take Frege’s famous phrase “not identical with itself” (1960, s. 87). For Kant it is an example for “that which at the same time can both be and not be the same thing” (29, s. 963).

From Kant’s perspective, this whole phrase has no cognitive content or any object of sensible intuition as its reference but is just a mere linguistic phrase. Such terms are objects of our non-sensible intuition, or intellect, as in the cases of *nihil privativa* in the formal sense, which can be thought without any contradiction: “For formally <formaliter> a merely negative thing <ens mere negativum> can at least be *thought* without contradiction” (29, s. 1001). Classifying a contradictory type of nothing under a non-contradictory one basically relies on the principle that thinking about contradictions is itself not a contradictory act, leading to the conclusion that as a linguistic term ‘*nihil negativum*’ has no extension in its material sense, yet empty extension in its formal sense, making it a case of *nihil privativum*.

## 2. *Nihil Privativum* as a Rigid Abstract General Term

As mentioned earlier, this section addresses the cognitive and linguistic aspects of the general concept of *nihil privativum*. Firstly, I explain how, according to Kant’s epistemology, one forms the general concept of *nihil privativum* containing all particular *nihil privativa* terms in its extension. Secondly, I argue that as a linguistic term, the general term *nihil privativum* is abstract, general, and rigid. Let me begin with the cognitive account.

Kant’s framework offers insight into the formation of general concepts through a passage famously known as *the stepladder passage*. It derives its name from Kant’s description of the hierarchy of forming concepts as a *stepladder* (Ger. *Stufenleiter*):

The genus is representation in general (*repraesentatio*). Under it stands the representation with consciousness (*perceptio*). A perception that refers to the subject as a modification of its state is a sensation (*sensatio*); an objective perception is a cognition (*cognitio*). The latter is either an intuition or a concept (*intuitus vel conceptus*). The former is immediately related to the object and is singular; the latter is mediate, by means of a mark, which can be common to several things. (A320/B376-7, bolds and italics in the original).

Note that the passage pertains to the formation of general concepts of existing or present objects of sensible intuitions. As shall be observed, this stepwise procedure can also be applied to the formation of the general concept of *nihil privativum*. In the passage, Kant contrasts two fundamental elements of his epistemology: intuitions and concepts, which manifests in three aspects: (a) *immediacy vs. mediacy*, (b) *particularity vs. generality*, and (c) *objectivity vs. subjectivity*.

Beginning with (a), intuitions are immediate, signifying that when one perceives an object, it occurs directly through the senses (A19/B33). Since all “intuitions, as sensible, rest on affections” (A68/B93), and “grounded on the receptivity of impressions” (A68/B93), sensible intuitions possess an immediate nature. Conversely, conceptual representation is mediate because, unlike sensible intuitions, concepts rely on functions. Kant defines functions as “the unity of the action of ordering different representations under a common one” (A68/B93). This unity under a concept entails a relation between the concept and its object(s), such as the relationship between the concept of a table and a specific table-object. This relationship is established “by means of a mark, which can be common to several things” (A320/B377). An example of this would be the property of having a flat surface in the case of tables.

The second aspect of the contrast, (b), concerning the particularity of intuitions versus the generality of concepts, is closely intertwined with (a). Kant grounds concepts cognitively on the spontaneity of thinking (A68/B93), where the faculty of understanding employs concepts solely for “judging by means of them” (A68/B93). When considering these points alongside his assertion that the relation of a concept to intuitions is possible by means of a mark, which can be common to several things, the second aspect of the contrast simplifies into this: concepts represent a multiplicity of intuitions, characterized by generality, while intuitions possess particularity.

Regarding (c), Kant argues that no representation pertains to the object immediately except intuition alone, a concept is thus never immediately related to an object, but is always related to some other representation of it

(A320/B377). This contrast provides textual support for the first aspect but also carries deeper implications. Kant suggests that only sensible intuitions generate representations of particular objects distinct from us as subjects, rendering us passive in intuiting objects. Conversely, the faculty of understanding generates conceptual representations based on the spontaneity of thinking, where activities stem from the subject itself. In essence, conceptual representation is subjective—it arises from the activity of the subject's faculty of understanding, where the subject is active, contrasting with intuitions where the subject is passive in receiving impressions.

Kant refers to *nihil privativum* in its formal sense as “*nihil privativum repraesentabile*” (2, s. 172), indicating that this type of nothing is conceptually representable. Thus, it should be possible to elucidate the conceptual representation of *nihil privativum* in the formal sense in light of the step-ladder passage. Considering the cognitive hierarchy where the faculty of understanding constructs the concept of *nihil privativum* as a representable concept, we recall that *nihil privativa* are not positively available to our senses because they are simply absent in their material sense. Here, negativity comes into play, where *nihil privativa* are viewed as negative representations lacking sense-data in their formal sense, thereby making any particular case of *nihil privativum* in its formal sense a conceptual representation of the absence of particular object(s). Combining this with Kant's following statement, the concept of nothing in general becomes the concept uniting all cases of *nihil privativa*, which are themselves formal and conceptual representations, that a concept “is always related to some other representation of it (whether that be an intuition or itself already a concept)” (A68/B93).

In contrast, a singular and negative experience of non-existence or absence is only possible at a conceptual level and is mediate. For instance, any *nihil privativum* in its formal sense represents the non-existence or absence of particular object(s). To illustrate the distinction between the general concept of *nihil privativum* and singular ones, consider the concept ‘empty extension’. When we say, for instance, that ‘Pegasus’ is an empty term, it signifies that Pegasus has sense within Frege's framework but designates an empty extension, containing nothing within it. However, the concept ‘empty extension’ itself is not empty, on the assumption that it is the conceptual representation of an extension encompassing all representations with empty extensions. This assumption leads us to the second part of the debate, focusing on two questions: (1) Do general terms designate extensions, and (2) if not, what do they designate, if anything at all?

To address these questions within the framework of the rigidity of general terms, let me introduce three well-known positions: extensionalism (Soames, 2002: 250; Schwartz, 2020: 250), rigid essentialism (Devitt, 2005 and 2009), and rigid expressionism (Salmon, 2005; Sullivan, 2007; LaPorte, 2000 and 2013; Orlando, 2014). After outlining these positions, let me analyze their weaknesses and demonstrate that they do not undermine my argument regarding the rigidity of the general term *nihil privativum*, wherein I contend that it rigidly designates the same property in all possible worlds.

According to extensionalism, a predicate or general term is rigid if and only if it designates the same extension in all possible worlds (Soames, 2002, s. 250; Schwartz, 2020, s. 250). Soames and Schwartz do not advocate this view; rather, they provide concise explanations for why rigidity cannot be based on the sameness of extension. Soames, focusing on the rigidity of predicates, uses the example of the predicate *animal* to argue that if the sameness of extension were the necessary and sufficient criterion for rigidity: “then the mere fact that there could have been animal other than those there actually are, or the mere fact that some animals that actually exist could have failed to exist while others remained, would be sufficient to show that the predicate *animal* is not rigid” (2002, s. 250). Schwartz, on the other hand, illustrates with the general term ‘tiger’, asserting that its extension “varies from possible world to possible world. Thus if ‘tiger’ is held to designate the items in its extension, then it is non-rigid and indeed almost all common nouns would turn out to be non-rigid” (2020, s. 250).

The primary issue with extensionalism lies in the contingency of existence. As these examples demonstrate, one cannot consider an extension containing contingently existing objects as if they exist in all possible worlds. As a general term, the rigidity of *nihil privativum* cannot be established based on the sameness of extension, for the same reason: if existence and presence are contingent, so are non-existence and absence. Let’s assume that the general concept of *nihil privativum* designates *the same* extension in all possible worlds, and its extension includes all particular *nihil privativa* terms. An object absent or non-existent in one possible world might be present or existent in another, which would preclude the possibility of maintaining the sameness of extension and, consequently, rigidity.

Devitt and Sterelny propose an essentialist definition of rigidity (1999, s. 45), which is later refined into the definition that “a general term ‘F’ is a rigid applier if it applies to an object in any possible world, then it applies to that object in every possible world in which the object exists. Similarly

for a mass term” (Devitt, 2005, s. 146). According to Devitt’s position, it is possible to extend rigidity from singular terms to general terms by emphasizing the essential features of the individuals contained in the extension of the rigid general terms, ‘gold’, where any “piece of gold is essentially gold and ‘gold’ is a rigid applier” (2005, s. 146).

The emphasis on essence in the case of gold can be contrasted with the general and non-rigid term ‘bachelor’, which is not rigid because no bachelor is essentially a bachelor (Devitt, 2005, s. 146). The basic problem with Devitt’s rigid essentialism can be called *the problem of temporal flux*, where change over time may present counterexamples where the essential properties may turn out not to be essential. For example, Schwartz argues that Devitt’s examples are hand-picked and further contends that “a caterpillar turns into a butterfly, a tadpole turns into a frog” (Schwartz, 1980, s. 194-5). The reason is, according to Schwartz, “‘frog’ is surely a natural kind term, but a frog is not essentially a frog” (2002, s. 274-5). According to Schwartz’s explanation,

Any frog in this world sadly never gets beyond its tadpole stage in some other possible world. It would be a stretch too far to defend the rigid application of ‘frog’ by claiming that a tadpole is a frog. Surely that is not the way the term ‘frog’ is used in ordinary language, and the rigid/non-rigid distinction is meant by Kripke to apply to ordinary language natural kind terms and to rely on our ordinary linguistic intuitions (2020, s. 252).

Unlike rigid essentialism, where debates focus on essential properties, I establish the rigidity of *nihil privativum* as a general term based on logical necessity. Since both existence and non-existence or presence and absence of an object of intuition are contingent, it is impossible to base the rigidity of the general concept of *nihil privativum* on the property of ‘being non-existent or absent’ because it is not an essential property.

In the last position, rigid expressionism, there are various forms defended by different philosophers (Donellan, 1983; López de Sa, 2008), but the basic claim remains consistent: general names designate their extensions and express the property they name. Unlike extensionalism, which fails to establish rigidity based on the sameness of extension, rigid expressionism builds rigidity on the claim that a general term is rigid if and only if it expresses the same property in all possible worlds. This move has two motives, the first aims to sidestep the difficulties faced by extensionalism and the second aims to differentiate natural kind terms from descriptions that do not designate the same extension in all possible worlds. For the first one is clear, let us analyze La Porte’s example to illustrate the second one:



‘The honeybee = the insect species that is typically farmed for honey’, which involves kinds, is, for similar reasons, true but not necessarily true. With respect to those worlds in which the *bumblebee* is the usual creature to farm for honey, the sentence ‘The honeybee = the insect species that is typically farmed for honey’ comes out false: for in those worlds, the species that is typically farmed is the bumblebee, and obviously the honeybee is not identical to *that* (2000, s. 298).

Despite the various problems associated with rigid expressionism (La Porte, 2000; and Schwartz, 2002), such as the trivialization problem, which suggests that rigid expressionism renders almost all general terms trivially rigid, my focus is on the distinction between the extensions of descriptions and the properties expressed by general terms. It is worth noting that, like in most positions on rigidity, rigid expressionism adopts Kripke’s criterion: a term is rigid as long as it designates, refers, or expresses whatever it does in all possible worlds where they *exist*. When it comes to cases where non-existence or absence is the primary issue, things become more robust in various aspects. While I refrain from asserting whether all or almost all natural kind terms are rigid, I argue that as a general term, *nihil privativum* is rigid, and even more so than natural kind terms.

Embracing the differentiation between extensions and properties, I argue that the general term *nihil privativum* encompasses the various *nihil privativa* terms in its extension, each differing in sense but not in reference. Each *nihil privativum* term within the extension of the general term *nihil privativum* refers to the non-existence or absence of certain object(s) in the formal sense and is articulated through various linguistic terms or phrases, such as ‘Pegasus’, ‘crack’, ‘hole’, and so forth. Instead of sameness of extension, the general term *nihil privativum* is rigid by logical necessity. Although its extension may vary across different worlds, it consistently expresses the same property in all possible worlds without exception. To expound upon this assertion, consider a hypothetical world where the property expressed by the general term *nihil privativum*— ‘being non-existent or absent’—is not instantiated.<sup>8</sup> This would imply a world K where every possible thing with

8 The property of ‘being non-existent or absent’ is a compound property. A brief note may be beneficial for the reader to understand the relationship between non-existence and absence. Formal non-existence implies material non-existence and material absence—when something is non-existent, it is absent. Conversely, formal absence does not necessarily imply material non-existence; for example, when my officemate leaves the office, she does not cease to exist. Although various other combinations are conceivable, this one highlights the nuanced role of non-existence. Therefore, focusing on non-existence in the thought experiments sufficiently demonstrates that ‘being non-existent or absent’ is a property that can be instantiated in all possible worlds.

every possible property exists. Given the contingent nature of existence, non-existence, presence and absence, the property 'being non-existent or absent' must be predicated to some objects. Consequently, this leads to the paradoxical assertion that in the world K where everything exists and present, there are still objects that are absent or non-existent, thereby indicating that there is no such world where the general term *nihil privativum* fails to express the property 'being non-existent or absent'.

Having elaborated on my arguments, now let me deal with the caveats that seem to emerge but ultimately do not: while the existence of everything in K is one matter, predicating some of those things with 'being non-existent or absent' is another. To address this issue, let me consider a more challenging case within the context of the subjectivity involved in the conceptual recognition of non-existent or absent things. The formation of the general concept of *nihil privativum* requires at least one agent capable of forming concepts and expressing this concept with a term that designates the property of 'being non-existent or absent'. The question is, is it necessary for the agent to have epistemic access to K?

Let's imagine a world W where every possible being exists, except those capable of forming concepts, such as humans or advanced artificial intelligence. Can we still argue that the general term *nihil privativum* rigidly expresses its property? I believe the answer is yes. Through intellectual intuition, we can understand W and subsume 'intelligent beings in W' as a collective term into the extension of the general term *nihil privativum*.

Although this answer may initially seem superficial, it has deep roots in Kant's epistemology, especially within the contexts of epistemic access, spontaneity of thinking, concept formation, and the logical aspect of the subjectivity of concepts. The non-existence of intelligent agents in W is an ontological possibility that does not require epistemic access to W for representing the non-existence or absence of intelligent agents. In W, there is no intelligent agent capable of conceptually representing the non-existence or absence of intelligent agents. However, in the actual world, we can do so. This implies that distinguishing the non-existence or absence of things in W from predicating them as with the property of 'being non-existent or absent' assumes the formation of the general concept of *nihil privativum* in W needs to be done by some intelligent agent with epistemic access to W, which is neither logically nor epistemically necessary. Concepts are grounded in the spontaneity of thinking, and once formed, the general concept *nihil privativum* allows us to represent the non-existence and absence of intelligent be-

ings in *W* without contradiction. Through the logical aspect of subjectivity, we can use the general term *nihil privativum* to encompass epistemologically inaccessible non-existences and absences as instances of *nihil privativa* within its extension. In other words, in both *K* and *W*, predication relies not on the epistemological but on the logical aspect of the subjectivity of concepts.

## Conclusion

The analysis above shows that Kant's distinction between the material and formal senses of particular *nihil privativa* still provides useful insights for the contemporary debates about nothings and absences. In their material sense and due to the feature of negativity, nothings and absences cannot be objects of our sensible intuitions, yet we can still represent them conceptually by our intellect due to their formality. By the linguistic dimension of *nihil privativum* and Frege's distinction between sense and reference, we can distinguish nothings and absences from others of the same kind. The linguistic dimension also involves classifying terms denoting contradictory nothings, such as 'square triangle,' as mere utterances with no reference in their material sense but functioning as mere linguistic terms in their formal sense. *Nihil privativum* as a general and abstract concept, conceptually unites all instances of *nihil privativa* as formal and conceptual representations. The linguistic counterpart of the general and abstract concept *nihil privativum*, the term '*nihil privativum*' serves as a rigid general abstract term. It encompasses all instances of '*nihil privativum*' terms in its extension and designates the property of 'being non-existent or absent' in all possible worlds.

## References | Kaynakça

- Birgöl, O. G. (2021). Non-existence: On the representability of nothings. *Synthesis Journal for Philosophy*, 1(1), 69-87.
- Cavedon-Taylor, D. (2017). Touching voids: On the varieties of absence perception. *Review of Philosophy and Psychology*, 8(2), 355-366.
- Devitt, M. (2005). Rigid application. *Philosophical Studies*, 125, 139-165.
- Devitt, M. (2009). Buenos Aires Symposium on Rigidity: Responses. *Análisis Filosófico*, 29, 239-251
- Devitt, M., & Sterelny, K. (1999). *Language and reality: An introduction to the philosophy of language* (2nd edn.). MIT Press.
- Donnellan, K. (1983). Kripke and Putnam on natural kind terms. İçinde C. Ginet & S. Shoemaker (Eds.), *Knowledge and mind* (ss. 84-104). Oxford University Press.
- Dretske, F. (1969). *Seeing and knowing*. University of Chicago Press.
- Dretske, F. (2004). Seeing, believing and knowing. İçinde R. Schwartz (Ed.), *Perception* (ss. 337-353). Blackwell.
- Esterman, M., & Yantis, S. (2010). Perceptual expectation evokes category-selective cortical activity. *Cerebral Cortex*, 20(5), 1245-1253.
- Farennikova, A. (2013). Seeing absence. *Philosophical Studies*, 166(3), 429-454.
- Farennikova, A. (2019). Would you buy absence art? İçinde D. Shottenkirk, M. Curroda, & S. S. Gouveia (Eds.), *Perception, cognition and aesthetics* (ss. 255-278). Routledge.
- Frege, G. (1960). *Foundations of arithmetic*. (J. L. Austin, Çev.). Harper & Brothers.
- Gibson, J. J. (1966). *The senses considered as perceptual systems*. George Allen and Unwin.
- Gibson, J. J. (1979). *The ecological approach to visual perception*. Psychology Press.
- Gow, L. (2021a). Empty space, silence, and absence. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 51(7), 496-507.
- Gow, L. (2021b). A new theory of absence experience. *European Journal of Philosophy*, 29(1), 168-181.
- Kahneman, D., Treisman, A., & Gibbs, B. J. (1992). The reviewing of object files: Object-specific integration of information. *Cognitive Psychology*, 24, 175.
- Kant, I. (1992). *Theoretical philosophy, 1755-1770*. (D. Walford & R. Meerbote, Eds. & Çev.). Cambridge University Press.
- Kant, I. (1997). *Lectures on metaphysics*. (K. Ameriks & S. Naragon, Eds. & Çev.). Cambridge University Press.

- Kant, I. (1998). *The critique of pure reason*. (P. Guyer & A. W. Wood, Eds. & Çev.). Cambridge University Press.
- Kant, I. (2012). *Natural science*. (E. Watkins, Ed. & O. Reinhardt, Çev.). Cambridge University Press.
- Kripke, S. A. (1980). *Naming and necessity*. MIT Press.
- Kukso, B. (2006). The reality of absences. *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, 84(1), 21-37.
- LaPorte, J. (2000). Rigidity and kind. *Philosophical Studies*, 97, 293-316.
- LaPorte, J. (2013). *Rigid designation and theoretical identities*. Oxford University Press.
- López de Sa, D. (2008). Rigidity for predicates and the trivialization problem. *Philosophers' Imprint*, 8(1), 1-13.
- Marr, D. (1982). *Vision: A computational investigation into the human representation and processing of visual information*. Freeman.
- Orlando, E. (2014). General terms and rigidity: Another solution to the trivialization problem. *Manuscrito*, 37(1), 51-84.
- Priest, G. (2006). *In contradiction: A study of the transconsistent*. Clarendon Press.
- Priest, G., Routley, R., & Norman, J. (1989). *Paraconsistent logic: Essays on the inconsistent*. Philosophia Verlag.
- Roberts, T. (2016). A breath of fresh air: Absence and the structure of olfactory perception. *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, 97(3), 400-420.
- Salmon, N. (2005). Are general terms rigid? *Linguistics and Philosophy*, 28, 117-134.
- Schwartz, S. (1980). Formal semantics and natural kind terms. *Philosophical Studies*, 38, 189-198.
- Schwartz, S. (2020). Against rigidity for general terms. İçinde A. Bianchi (Ed.), *Language and reality from a naturalistic perspective: Themes from Michael Devitt* (ss. 249-267). Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-47641-0>
- Soames, S. (2002). *Beyond rigidity: The unfinished semantic agenda of naming and necessity*. Oxford University Press.
- Sorensen, R. (2008a). Empty quotation. *Analysis*, 68(1), 57-61.
- Sorensen, R. (2008b). *Seeing dark things*. Oxford University Press.
- Sorensen, R. (2009). Hearing silence: The perception and introspection of absences. İçinde M. Nudds & C. O'Callaghan (Eds.), *Sounds and perception: New philosophical essays* (ss. 126-145). Oxford University Press.
- Sullivan, A. (2007). Rigid designation and semantic structure. *Philosophers' Imprint*, 7(6), 1-22.