
**SUMMARY**

Is any universal truth as such necessary? Is any necessary truth as such universal? From Kant up to Tarski, the philosophical tradition has always upheld, though without any clear discussion, that universality and necessity go together, i.e. are systematically correlated to each other. The purpose of this book is simply to question this thesis. The correlation of universality and necessity as equivalent features of certain truths is not self-evident and ought to be discussed. Even the very fact that universality and necessity are features of truths is not self-evident, and ought to be discussed. Indeed, it is this very discussion which runs through the book.

The simple opposing thesis, namely that there are basic counterexamples to the correlation of universality and necessity, is not endorsed, however: deeper clarification is needed. Thus, firstly, the multifarious conceptions and uses of the correlation thesis are carefully examined. Kant, Husserl, Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus*, Schlick, and von Wright, in particular, are considered. Whole sections or chapters are devoted to Kant’s transcendental analytic, to Kripke’s necessary *a posteriori* sentences adduced as counterexamples, to Russell’s theory of denoting concepts, and to Tarski’s thesis about logical validity. It is shown that the correlation thesis is never really proven. This gives all the more reason to stand back from a correlation thesis which results in confusion of both concepts – to the extent that each tends to be defined by means of the other, in a circular fashion. In the end, the correlation thesis can be compared to a mere postulate, and an ill-founded one.

The correlation postulate assigns both universality and necessity to some totality of the possible whose origin is left unexplained. When considered separately from each other, universality and necessity, on the contrary, can be clarified and their genesis can be described. The last third of the book is devoted to a positive reconstruction of both concepts along two separate lines. Universality can be better understood when traced back to the notion of genericity, as opposed to those of totality and of possibility: its anchorage in the realm of mathematics can then
be deepened and extended. On the other hand, necessity should not be defined as what holds in all possible cases or in all possible worlds, as though the totality of all possible worlds should be presupposed. It is argued that the meaning of necessity depends primarily on whether modal iteration is deemed to be significant or not and that, if it is, then necessity should be analyzed in connection with higher-order possible worlds, that is, with a realm of the possible that evades any universal totality and does not even lie on any single level.

To sum up, the book deals with a central philosophical problem that dates back to Kant. Authors in both the continental and the analytic traditions are commented on (Kant, Husserl, Wittgenstein, Russell, Tarski and Kripke, in particular). Logic and mathematics are substantially mentioned as well: the model theory of ZFC is studied on the occasion of the discussion of Tarski’s thesis, the theory of fibrations coming from category theory is used to formalize mathematical generality, and Riemannian geometry is called upon in order to put forward a new semantical framework for modal logic. The purpose of the book is to defend exact philosophy and to disassociate it from a postulate which turns out to be as old as it is uncritical.