

PAUL A. ROTH

(Department of Philosophy, University of California – Santa Cruz)

**The Structure of Structure:
Revealing the Missing Historiography of Kuhn's *Structure*
and What It Teaches Us**

As is well known, Kuhn restricts a designation of “normal science” to those disciplines with accepted research practices. What makes for normal science, of course, shifts with changes in paradigms on Kuhn’s account. Now this way of specifying normal science has a whiff of circularity inasmuch as it defines normal science by reference to “scientific research,” but that can be overlooked. Sufficient for my purpose will be to take as a ‘science’ whatever comes to pass as such. In this respect, given the century old controversy regarding history’s status as a science, I propose focusing rather on the question of how whatever passes as “normal science” comes to achieve that status. My argument will be that any answer to a question about how normal science comes to be, i.e., one that develops a non-a priori causal/explanatory account, will have to utilize what I term an “essentially narrative explanation.” In other words, my account shows how in SSR Kuhn crafts a narrativized account of normal science. This will count as naturalistic in a minimalist sense inasmuch as it does not begin with any philosophical definition of what is or is not a science, and utilizes in its explanation nothing more than facts narratively ordered so as to explain (in the sense of revealing how a later point time results from earlier ones) how what comes to be called science achieves that status. Understanding Kuhn’s work in this way helps naturalize narrative explanation through a form of mutual containment—since narrative helps constitute any understanding of what counts as normal science, that narrative becomes a part of any account that comes to be viewed as science. It would be highly ironic then to reject an explanation form that in fact proves unavoidable for purposes of revealing why what passes as science at a particular time does so.

Seminar of Historical Epistemology

November 30th 2017, h 16.30, Aula Enzo Paci

University of Milan, Dept. of Philosophy, via Festa del Perdono 7, 20122 Milano

Further information @ <http://www.filosofia.unimi.it/guzzardi> | luca.guzzardi@unimi.it