

## SAUL KRIPKE – A LOGIC GENIUS

Mircea DUMITRU

The man whom we are honouring in this special issue of *RJAP* is nothing less than a true legend of contemporary philosophy, a world-renowned philosopher and academic who works in the forefront of contemporary logic and analytic philosophy. As a well-known philosopher once said about Kripke, he is currently philosophy's true genius. Saul Kripke, a CUNY Graduate Center Professor in the PhD Programs in Philosophy and Computer Science has, in a career spanning more than fifty years, proved himself exemplary in the areas of research, scholarship and teaching. His primary field is logic, both philosophical and mathematical, as well as philosophy of language, but his achievements stretch beyond those two fields into the fields of metaphysics and philosophy of mind. Thus his much celebrated work, notably in mathematical logic on admissible ordinals and transfinite recursion theory, and in philosophy on necessity, names, reference and belief, identity statements, definitions and theoretical identifications, the mind-body problem, truth, and Wittgenstein and meaning, is widely thought to have profoundly changed the course of debates that have been going on among logicians and philosophers for thousands of years. In a profession which has the reputation of feeding itself with the substance of harsh criticism, Kripke is unanimously considered as one of the most profound and seminal contemporary philosophers whose remarkable contribution to analytic philosophy starting from 1960s onwards has reshaped the whole agenda of philosophical logic, philosophy of language, philosophy of mind, and metaphysics.

Saul Kripke's philosophy has had a great influence on the direction of analytic philosophy in the latter part of the twentieth century. His published work is widely discussed today and the literature connected to, and concerning Kripke's ideas is huge. Kripke's style of doing philosophy is not that of a system-building philosopher. Nevertheless, his work is very provocative and inspiring, just because his way of approaching philosophical issues is to find paradoxical issues, puzzles or problems, and then to analyze them in minute details and to apply technical distinctions and tools in order to solve

them. Even if some important part of the motivation for his work is rather technical, Kripke finds deep and perplexing philosophical ideas which go way beyond the dry technicalities of mathematical and philosophical logic. For in the process of dealing with paradoxes and puzzles, surprising connections with a whole range of philosophical issues emerge. Thus, what is noteworthy about Kripke is the philosophical and logical framework that he develops in a very creative and ingenious manner in order to deal with and solve those philosophical conundrums. This, in turn, leads to startling new results which are quite often surprising, and which are presented in a very clear and appealing prose, with humor and wit. For all those reasons, I am convinced that Kripke's philosophy will occupy professional philosophers for a long time to come.