

Zakład Epistemologii Instytutu Filozofii UW

zaprasza na wykłady

prof. Olava Gjelsvika

(University of Oslo)

An Account of Intentional Action

2 kwietnia (wtorek), 10:00 (s. 209)

Seminarium Instytutu Filozofii

An Account of Practical Reasoning

2 kwietnia (wtorek), 15:00 (s. 205 – st. BUW)

Agentive Knowledge and Descartes' Cogito

3 kwietnia (środa), 15:00 (s. 4)

Professor Olav Gjelsvik (University of Oslo) specializes in philosophy of action, philosophy of mind, philosophy of language, epistemology. He was the acting director of CSMN (Centre for the Study of Mind in Nature) at the UiO. He is currently working on a book (*Agency and Knowledge: Implications of Action First*), in which he develops a new and challenging account of intentional action and practical inference, which has implications for some very deep issues in epistemology and metaphysics. The work stands out by bringing these topics together into a unified whole. The *action first* approach he develops has been neglected in modern philosophy.

Prof. Olav Gjelsvik

(University of Oslo)

An Account of Intentional Action

2nd April (Tuesday), 10:00 (Krakowskie Przedmieście 3, s. 209)

There are parallels between the theoretical and the practical realms shown by Williamson, who argues that the well-known problem of deviant causal chains manifests structurally similar problems in both the account of doing something intentionally and in the account of knowledge. The morale should be the same in both cases to turn the explanatory connections around. Williamson's *knowledge first* approach must be complemented by an (intentional) *action first* approach. They make up two important sides of one theoretical conception. Intention is the residue if we fail in some intentional action, like failing to get home in time for something, as belief may be the residue when we fail at knowing. In the case of the action, the situation is more complex in that (following Anscombe) we must appeal to knowledge. I shall argue that we can pin down the extension of what it is to do something intentionally by the notion of non-observational knowledge of what we doing. Moreover, I develop an account of the theoretical conception of intentional action and its relation to intending, having an intention, doing something with an intention etc.

Institute of Philosophy Seminar:

An Account of Practical Reasoning

2nd April (Tuesday), 15:00 (Stary BUW, s. 205)

I build on the account of intentional action (Talk 1) and on Frege's approach to inference. I generalize his approach to cover practical as well as theoretical inference. I argue that the basic inferential structures must be the same in all inferences. In the literature on practical reasoning, most of the work is geared towards reaching a conclusion about what one ought to do or what is best to do in relation to some situation one is in. This leaves a gap to intentional action, to be filled either by further reasoning or by brute causality. The latter seems unsatisfactory in the light of the possibility of irrational action and deviant causal chains. I give an account of how this gap should be filled, what the structure of proper practical reasoning is, what this approach provides solutions to, and how it does it, and what the cost may be. The result is a unique, challenging and striking conception of intentional action.

Agentive Knowledge and Descartes' Cogito

3rd April (Wednesday), 15:00 (Krakowskie Przedmieście 3, s. 4)

In the light of a much older way of thinking about doing something intentionally, traced back to Aquinas and further (in significant ways systematically resurrected in Talk 1 and 2), Descartes' basic move in the Cogito can be defended, to the effect that he knows that he is thinking even in the light of radical doubt. What cannot be defended by the argument is Descartes' further moves to the effect that he is a thinking subject, a soul, possibly without any physical properties. No such thing follows from the Cogito itself. What is interesting and striking are questions concerning the general framework in which epistemology has been conducted, and the way this result may imply a recasting of the whole epistemological enterprise. I will also argue that Hume's view on reason and rational capacities stands in the way of a proper appreciation of Descartes' achievement.