7th Annual In-House Philosophy Graduate Conference

OPEN TO PUBLIC – CEU Philosophy Dept., Zrínyi utca 14, 4th floor

	Friday (October 10, 2014)	
	Room 411A	**Room 411**
11:15-12:00		Holger Thiel (Chair: Howard Robinson) 'Towards a Holistic Conception of Phenomenal Consciousness'
12:15-13:00	Edi Pavlovic (Chair: Hanoch Ben-Yami) 'Barcan Formulas in the Context of Quantified Arguments'	Andrea Csillag (Chair: Howard Robinson) 'What is Access Consciousness?'
	Lunch Break	
14:30 15:15	Damir Cicic (Chair: Ferenc Huoránszki) 'Free Will and Responsiveness to Reasons'	Melvin Freitas (Chair: Philip Goff) 'Horgan's Partial Zombie Argument for Cognitive Phenomenology'
15:30-16:15	Ehsan Shafiee (Chair: Ferenc Huoránszki) 'Arguing for the Non-Factive Nature of Normative Explanation of Action'	Linda Lázár (Chair: Howard Robinson) 'Physical Constitution and the Objects of Perception'
16:30-17:15	Hywel Griffiths (Chair: Hanoch Ben-Yami) 'Metamythomathemagicophysics: Are applications of mathematics miraculous?'	Isik Sarihan (Chair: Howard Robinson) 'Does the Mind-Body Problem Have Any Practical Significance?'
17:30-19:00	**Room 412** **Keynote Address** Gábor Betegh (University of Cambridge/CEU) 'Colocation' Chair: Hanoch Ben-Yami	
19:00	**Welcome to New Students and Wine Reception**	

	Saturday (October 11, 2014)	
	Room 411A	**Room 412**
11:00 - 11:45	Zsolt Kapelner (Chair: Philip Goff) 'Knowledge of Essence in Contemporary Aristotelian Metaphysics'	Zlata Bozac (Chair: János Kis) 'Freedom of Occupational Choice: A Compromise of Justice?'
12:00 - 12:45	László Kajtár (Chair: David Weberman) 'What Mary Didn't Read: Literary Narratives and Knowledge'	Anton Markoc (János Kis) 'Bad Intentions and Third Party Intervention'
Lunch Break		
14:30 – 15:15	Zsófia Göde (Chair: Philip Goff) 'Pushing for Convergence: Spinoza on Prophets and Miracles'	Nemanja Todorovic (Chair: Andres Moles) 'Normative Grounds of Public Reason'
15:30 – 16:15	Attila Hangai (Chair: István Bodnár) 'Perceptual Content – Alexander of Aphrodisias'	Attila Mráz (Chair: Andres Moles) 'The Agency Problem and Mandatory Voting'
16:30 – 17:15		Jay Fogelman (Chair: Christophe Heintz) 'Crowding: A Social Science Explanation Toolkit'
19:00	**Dinner**	

Abstracts

Keynote Address

Gábor Betegh (University of Cambridge/CEU)

Colocation

In this paper I offer a historical overview of the different arguments offered to justify the commonly shared intuition that two bodies cannot be in the same place at the same time. I start by distinguishing this question from the contemporary debate which centres on the question whether or not an object, say a statue, and its constitutive stuff, say the bronze, are two different entities, as e.g. Leibniz's Law would require. I then turn to the discussion in the early modern period, highlighting central texts from Descartes, Locke, and Leibniz. In the main bulk of the paper, I show how these arguments go back to debates in the Hellenistic and Classical periods. Finally, I examine some cases in the Presocratic period in which it might appear that the 'no-two-bodies-at-the-same-place-at-the-same-time' principle gets violated. Ultimately, I would like to argue that the question of what can and what cannot be at the same place at the same time constitutes a crucial motivation for distinguishing different ontological realms.

Graduate Presenters

Zlata Bozac

Freedom of Occupational Choice: A Compromise of Justice?

It is widely accepted among egalitarians that there is a duty of justice that requires those who are well-off to transfer resources to the worse-off. However, there is also a far more controversial claim, endorsed primarily by G.A. Cohen, that talented people also have a duty to choose their occupation according to their biggest and socially most useful talent. This would seem to pose a large burden on the talented people and lead to something similar to what Dworkin labelled as the "slavery of the talented. In this paper, I examine Cohen's „ethical solution" for the trilemma between occupational freedom, equality and Pareto optimality and claim that Cohen's conclusions regarding the freedom of occupational choice fit poorly into his own theory of justice. Furthermore, I claim that Cohen fails to resolve the trilemma and conclude that his weak regard for the personal prerogative and freedom of occupational choice stem from his failure to acknowledge the fact of value pluralism, the task that I believe is more successfully undertaken by Rawls.

Damir Cicic

Free Will and Responsiveness to Reasons

The idea that there is a deep connection between free will and rationality has always been popular among philosophers. Many theories have been offered about the exact nature of that connection. According to a very influential school of thought, we exercise free will when our actions are suitably connected to our reasons. More precisely, the idea is that when our actions depend on our reasons, it is up to us what we do and we are responsible for it. A difficult problem for philosophers who hold this view is to account for the apparent existence of free actions that do not seem to depend on

our reasons, e.g. for weak willed actions and actions performed for no reason. In this talk I will argue that 'rationalists' about free will can respond to this challenge and I will try to explain what makes the idea that free will is some sort of rational capacity so appealing. In addition, I will point to some problems for philosophers who think that there is no such connection.

Andrea Csillag

What is Access Consciousness?

Access consciousness is one of the various kinds of consciousness philosophers distinguish. It has been introduced by Ned Block, who contrasted it with phenomenal consciousness, among other kinds of consciousness. Although Block insists that access consciousness and phenomenal consciousness are distinct properties, he seems to maintain that they are closely related; access consciousness is the "information-processing correlate" of phenomenal consciousness. Is access consciousness completely dependent on the notion of phenomenal consciousness, or is it significant in itself, apart from its relation to phenomenal consciousness?

Jay Fogelman

Crowding: A Social Science Explanation Toolkit

In this talk, I consider the question: What would constitute a good, social-scientific explanation of a crowding phenomenon?

Historical attempts to provide a unitary, single-factor (e.g. contagion, imitation, mass hypnosis) framework for the explanation of crowding have failed. I argue that this is because of the multiplicity of factors that may precipitate crowding, factors that may vary considerably from case to case. Nevertheless, we can identify some satisfying

explanations in particular cases. From these some guidelines emerge for the development of explanations of mass phenomena. The result is a framework for and a toolbox of methods in this pursuit.

The framework I will argue for is a form of General System Theory with a focus on the flows of information, and the tools include some that were unavailable to the early theorists, such as network science, process tracing, game theory, behavioral economics, and even some results of neuroscience.

The framework and the tool set provide a basis for a form of Causal Mechanical explanation, based on processes supported by invoking constellations of tools that are jointly sufficient for what may reasonably regarded as scientific, naturalistic, causal explanations.

Melvin Freitas

Horgan's Partial Zombie Argument for Cognitive Phenomenology

There is a current debate in the philosophy of mind regarding the conceivability, and existence, of some kind of cognitive phenomenology. Is there a distinctive phenomenology (or what it's like) for conscious cognition in the same way that there seems to be a phenomenology for conscious visual perception? Bayne and Montague (2011) consider what they call "epistemic challenges" to the existence of cognitive phenomenology borrowed from traditional arguments that have been made on behalf of phenomenology generally. These include Levine's (1983) "explanatory gap," Jackson's (1982) "knowledge argument," and Chalmers' (1996) "zombie intuitions." I argue that these sorts of arguments fail to definitively establish the existence (or lack thereof) of a distinctive cognitive phenomenology. In this paper, I consider Horgan's (2011) use of zombie intuitions in his argument from the "robust conceivability" of "partial zombies" to the likely existence of a proprietary cognitive phenomenology.

Zsófia Göde

Pushing for Convergence: Spinoza on Prophets and Miracles

Spinoza's treatment of miracles in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (*TTP*) has long perplexed philosophers. In the *TTP*, Spinoza advocates for interpreting Scripture on its own terms and cautions against approximating biblical teachings to our pre-exegetical beliefs, philosophical or otherwise. As it turns out, for Spinoza the Bible's core teaching is simple and moral in nature, while he takes the speculative parts of Scripture to lack authority. By denying that the Bible as a whole is true, Spinoza rejects the tradition of allegorical interpretation associated with Maimonides and Averroes, according to which the truth of philosophy and the truth of religion are one and the same. Moreover, he repudiates the view that the prophets were philosophers, who consciously adopted a non-philosophical language so as to inculcate morality in the multitude. The discussion of miracles, however, raises questions about Spinoza's actual distance from the aforementioned tradition, as he goes to great lengths to argue that the prophets, just like himself, did not endorse the orthodox view of miracles as willful divine intervention into the natural course of events. In this talk, I aim to offer an explanation about Spinoza's possible reasons to approximate the word of Scripture to his own philosophical ideas, without actually arguing for the thesis that there is a discernibly Averroist strand running through the *TTP*.

Hywel Griffiths

Metamythomathemagicophysics: Are applications of mathematics miraculous?

I will examine cases of the "unreasonable effectiveness" of mathematics in the natural sciences, specifically in physical theories, illustrating what it is about these cases that makes them seem unreasonable or miraculous, and why they have prompted the conclusion that the universe is somehow anthropocentric. I will argue that while these cases do present us with a phenomenon that we cannot at present fully explain, there are nevertheless ways of seeing how they are reasonable, and that a conclusion of anthropocentrism is misguided.

Attila Hangai

Perceptual Content – Alexander of Aphrodisias

Alexander of Aphrodisias distinguishes phantasia from opinion in his *De Anima* partly by the fact that in some cases they have different content. Whereas opinion is always complex, phantasia can be simple, viz. truth and falsity applies to them in different ways. This sort of complexity is explicated as involving assertion and denial – propositional content. At a later point in the treatise Alexander turns to the question of truth and falsity in phantasia. His exposition implies that phantasiai as well – and presumably all sorts of phantasiai – involve a propositional content. In this paper I examine the question raised by these two passages taken together: in what sense the non-complex phantasiai are simple?

László Kajtár

What Mary Didn't Read: Literary Narratives and Knowledge

Frank Jackson's knowledge argument is one of the most provocative thought experiments in the philosophy of mind. It is supposed to elicit intuitions about the implausibility of physicalism. In this paper, I am concerned not with the knowledge argument's implications for the physical basis of consciousness but with its conception of knowledge.
My central thesis is that the knowledge argument can fruitfully interact with the theories of literary cognitivism. Literary cognitivists claim that readers can learn from literary works, that they can acquire knowledge and truth. However, the knowledge argument needs to be tweaked in order to be relevant regarding this claim. By outlining two alternative Mary-scenarios and using Cormac McCarthy's contemporary novel, *The Road* as an example, I want to demonstrate that literary narratives not only provide us with new ways of knowing but also deepen our existing knowledge.

Zsolt Kapelner

Knowledge of Essence in Contemporary Aristotelian Metaphysics

Recently many philosophers, such as the late E. J. Lowe, Kit Fine, and Tuomas Tahko, have argued that metaphysics is the Science of Essence. In this paper I address an epistemological problem concerning this Science of Essence Conception (SEC), namely, how the justification of essentialist, i.e. metaphysical, beliefs is to be conceived within SEC. I argue that the very principles of this conception oblige its proponents to embrace the rather uncanny idea that at least some essentialist beliefs are justified *directly* or *immediately*, possibly by some kind of essentialist intuition or, as Husserl called it, a *Wesensschau*. I show that most attempts in the literature to avoid positing a *Wesensschau* are unsatisfactory, and I conclude that unless one intends to bite the bullet and accept the existence of an essentialist intuition, one has to revise the fundamental principles of SEC.

Linda Lázár

Physical Constitution and the Objects of Perception

It is often emphasised that any theory of perception should account for the appearance of objects in perception. I think that science grounds an argument that perception cannot even be a structural representation of reality outside. There are two main inputs to this argument. One is the radical weirdness of our best scientific theory of the most fundamental level of external reality, i.e. quantum mechanics, as compared to the image of the world as it is presented in perception. The other is the perspective-dependence of physical constitution, which excludes that the world of objects with which perceptions seems to get us in touch with is physically constituted from the radically different ground physical level without an ineliminable reference to subjectivity, i.e. the creative work and epistemic interest of the mind. I think that physicalistic perception theories cannot account for the presence of the ordinary objects of perception.

Anton Markoc

Bad Intentions and Third Party Intervention

The defenders of the relevance of intentions to the permissibility of actions are in the dilemma: they need to claim either that a third party has a strong reason to intervene in acting with a bad intention, by restraining from encouraging it or by preventing it, or to accept that it is sometimes permissible to encourage, or at least to fail to prevent, what they think is an impermissible form of acting. I first assess a strategy to take the first horn (Tadros 2011), showing that it falsely assumes that bad intentions are as weighty as to oblige a third party to infringe on one's autonomy in acting when it would be impermissible to do it to prevent some harms of that acting. I then assess two strategies to take the second horn, that of Walen (2005) and Tadros (2011, manuscript on file with the author), agreeing that they provide examples to the point that some impermissible actions can be permissibly encouraged. But since the reasons why such actions can be permissibly encouraged differ from the reasons why otherwise permissible actions done with bad intentions can be permissibly encouraged, this is not sufficient to show that the latter are impermissible. Moreover, I argue that, although taking the second horn blocks the argument that intentions are irrelevant to permissibility because acting with a bad intention could not be permissibly encouraged due to its supposed impermissibility, we can still show that intentions are irrelevant comparing their minor weight as reasons for third party interventions with the weight they might have as reasons against the permissibility of actions.

Attila Mráz

The Agency Problem and Mandatory Voting

I will argue that an argument for mandatory voting (AMV), grounded in popular sovereignty, is unsound. According to AMV, popular sovereignty obtains only if the entire electorate participates in choosing political representatives. The argument concludes that voting should be mandatory so as to guarantee universal participation. This result seems to be

in tension with a liberal understanding of political participatory rights, which insists that the exercise of these rights should be at the discretion of the right-holders. In my presentation, I will first show why two familiar liberal objections to AMV – the Non-Universality Objection and the Slippery Slope Suspicion – miss their target or are unsound, respectively. Finally I will provide a superior objection to AMV, which shows why popular sovereignty is coherent with the liberty not to vote.

Edi Pavlovic

Barcan Formulas in the Context of Quantified Arguments

Barcan formulas are a method of describing the interaction of quantifiers and modal operators. In this paper I examine the validity of those formulas in a modal logic with quantified arguments. I analyze the counterexamples to Barcan formulas and discuss the formal requirements, motivations and consequences of multiple methods of validating them.

Isik Sarihan

Does the Mind-Body Problem Have Any Practical Significance?

The mind-body problem, the traditional problem of making sense of the relation between the mind and the body, continues today mainly as the problem of understanding the relation between mental properties and physical properties, and it is considered as one of the biggest problems of philosophy and continues to puzzle many people. In this talk, I want to investigate whether the solution of the problem has any practical significance or not. By "practical significance", I mean what we can do with the answer given to the problem, how it would affect our daily or scientific practices, etc. A preliminary analysis shows us that, like many other philosophical problems, the solution to the mind-body problem would not have any practical implications, besides helping us clear our minds of some puzzles, confusions, and curiosity. The only important practical issue seems to arise at the intersection of philosophy of mind

and ethics, particularly in ethics of artificial intelligence, as the solution to the problem would tell us which creatures should be treated as moral subjects. But due to some general features philosophical progress and how it relates to everyday practice, practical significance might be little or none even in that area.

Ehsan Shafiee

Arguing for the Non-Factive Nature of Normative Explanation of Action

Jonathan Dancy in *Practical Reality* argues that, since what normatively matters is normally the state of affairs external to the agent, our motivating reasons for performing some action should in ordinary circumstances be some state of affairs *p* which we take to be a normative reason speaking in favour of it if we are to be acting in the light of what we take to be a good reason for it. This has been criticised partly on the grounds that, lest we carry by way of a conversational implicature a commitment to what the agent mistakenly believed, we would rather have to explain the action by the fact that the agent *believed that p*, at least in the cases of failure— i.e., where p was not the case. Dancy responds that the explanation of action in terms of reasons is not factive. That is, it does not follow from 'The agent's reason for the action was that *p*' that *p*. Yet, to avoid the conversational implicature in the cases of failure, he gives his appositional account as a way of accommodating in the explanation of action a reference to the fact that the agent believed that p without introducing this very fact as the reason in the light of which the agent acted. I shall argue that the appositional account is implausible, and offer an alternative account with the same purpose.

Holger Thiel

Towards a Holistic Conception of Phenomenal Consciousness

The overall argumentation for a holistic conception of phenomenal consciousness runs from internal relatedness to holism. In general metaphysical terms, internal relatedness of the parts renders them interdependent. Interdependence

among the parts results in the priority of the whole. Whole-priority is equivalent to holism. Specifically regarding phenomenal consciousness, phenomenal parts are perceptual experiences or single phenomenal states that instantiate phenomenal properties. Based on Carnap, Goodman, and Clark, the internal relatedness of the phenomenal parts stems from relations of relative similarity or difference that obtain between the phenomenal properties of perceptual experiences. From the internal relatedness of the phenomenal parts I infer their interdependence to the effect that the phenomenal whole is basic and thus prior to its parts. The priority of the phenomenal whole is equivalent to phenomenal holism. Two further views are concerned with the relatedness of phenomenal states. Dainton posits a co-consciousness relation and Bayne/Chalmers a subsumption relation among them. The holistic conception of phenomenal consciousness suggested in my talk is more parsimonious than the former and provides a stronger form of dependence among the parts than the latter, or so I argue.

Nemanja Todorovic

Normative Grounds of Public Reason

Theorists within the tradition of public reason liberalism recognize a constraint on the content of permissible reasons that might be offered in public political justification. Namely, these reasons need to come in a currency that is both accessible and acceptable to a constituency that is characterized by deep doctrinal disagreement on most metaphysical, epistemological and ethical issues. Since public reason theorists mostly focus on specifying the modalities of such justification – the issue of normative grounding of this justificatory 'restraint' has received a disproportionate treatment in the literature. In the talk, my aim will be to review some of the most prominent (moral and epistemic) arguments that motivate the need for public reasons, and point to their deficiencies. In the end I offer a tentative strategy that might tackle these deficiencies in a more satisfactory manner.