18. November, 15:00

Vilnius University Philosophy Faculty (Universiteto g. 9/1, Vilnius), room 201

Public lecture (participation open and free of charge):

THE LEGACY OF GERMAN IDEALISM AND THE RISE OF ACADEMIC AESTHETICS

Dr. Christoph Jamme, Professor of Philosophy (University Lüneburg, Germany)

Host: Dr. Mintautas Gutauskas, Associate Professor of Philosophy (Vilnius University)

The lecture will reconstruct the social, cultural and institutional dimension of Idealist aesthetics on the basis of an investigation into the ways in which the historical development of Idealism contributed to a new relationship between academic disciplines and indeed to a new understanding of cultural life. It will demonstrate the inextricable connection between the place of art in speculative philosophy and the self-image of the 19th century German public sphere as overseen by the "Bildungsbürger". As will be shown, it was Schelling who put forward a view of 'Art' as disclosing something to be presupposed by philosophy - namely, an absolute identity of freedom and nature - and therefore by all adequately grounded knowledge, and it was thus through Schelling that Idealist aesthetics became a foundational aspect of the modern German university.

18. November, 17:00

Vilnius University Philosophy Faculty (Universiteto g. 9/1, Vilnius), room 201

Public discussion (participation open and free of charge):

Dr. Christoph Jamme, Professor of Philosophy (University Lüneburg, Germany), Dr. Anatoly Mikhailov, Rector of European Humanities University (Vilnius)

Moderation: Dr. Felix Ackermann, Visiting DAAD Associate Professor for Applied Humanities (Center for German Studies, EHU)

**Beyond Ivory Tower? Contemporary Philosophy Between Speculative Thinking and Practical Knowledge**

The question of the status of philosophy in human society has been a challenging one since the philosophical thinking has taken roots in the world of ancient Greece. Should philosophy be a guide in a development of a human being as a moral, social and political subject, or should it distance itself from the questions concerning judgments of human behavior and of accompanying development (or decline) of the human reality?

According to one of the most prominent contemporary political philosophers, C. Leforte, one shouldn’t engage in philosophy while having closed himself in a room. Philosophical ideas are intrinsically bound with particular issues and challenges faced in the world of politics, and the detachment of these two overlapping fields is of no good for either of them. However, as the aspiration of gaining practical knowledge has guided the political thought of ancient Greeks, the engagement with contemporary as well as timeless issues encountered in the sphere of the political can be seen to have fallen back behind pure theoretical or empirical (in case of political science) speculations offering no practical guidance. Is the refusal of contemporary political science to ,,disturb” itself with taking a normative stand leading to explicit guidance about right decisions and actions is also encouraging the political philosophy’s turn to detachment from the practical issues and to aspirations of neutrality?

Moreover, should the experience-generated wisdom and common sense evolving on the basis of encounters with practical problems guide philosophers in their quest to answer the questions about the nature of things, or should such a rapprochement be viewed as potentially misleading? This question straightforwardly points to the issue of responsibility of a philosopher towards human society. Should he address particular reality and care about the philosophical language becoming too speculative and incomprehensive for a wider audience? If yes, then contemporary philosophy is faced with a challenge of bringing speculative thinking and practical knowledge back together.

The discussion will open a possibility to take a stand on the question of whether the contemporary philosophy can be seen as having locked itself in an Ivory Tower detached from those living nearby and whether the philosophical community should strive to relate to common reality, facilitating better understanding of the human world and offering practical guidance in issues confronted by our society.