Seminar

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From Values to Probabilities

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In the Thunberg Lecture Hall
SCAS, Linneanum, Thunbergsvägen 2, Uppsala
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Born in Warsaw in 1947, Wlodek Rabinowicz studied philosophy at the University of Warsaw and moved to Sweden at the end of the sixties, in the aftermath of the student rebellion in Poland in March 1968. After receiving his doctorate from the Department of Philosophy at Uppsala University, he remained there as Associate Professor until 1995, when he was appointed to the Chair of Practical Philosophy at Lund University. From 1994 to 1995, he was one of the SCAS directors. Rabinowicz has published extensively in the fields of moral philosophy, decision theory and philosophical logic. Recent publications include 'Value Relations', in *Theoria* (2008); 'Incommensurability and Vagueness', in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* (Suppl. volume, 2009); 'Preference Utilitarianism by Way of Preference Change?' in *Preference Change: Approaches from Philosophy, Economics and Psychology* (eds. T. Grüne-Yanoff and S. O. Hansson, 2009); 'The Puzzle of the Hats', in *Synthese* (with L. Bovens, 2009); 'Broome and the Intuition of Neutrality', in *Philosophical Issues* (2009); 'Analyticity and Possible-World Semantics', in *Erkenntnis* (2010); 'Better to Be Than Not to Be?' in *The Benefit of Broad Horizons* (with G. Arrhenius, eds. H. Joas and B. Klein, 2010); 'Presumption of Equality as a Requirement of Fairness', in *Descriptive and Normative Approaches to Human Behavior* (eds. E. N. Dzhafarov and L. Perry, 2011); 'Bets on Hats', in *Episteme* (with L. Bovens, 2011); 'Value Relations Revisited', in *Economics and Philosophy* (2012); and 'The Interference Problem for the Betting Interpretation of Degrees of Belief', in *Synthese* (with L. Eriksson, 2013).

Rabinowicz is an editor of *Theoria* and *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*. He is a former editor of *Economics and Philosophy*. He has been President of the European Society for Analytic Philosophy and Chairman of the Swedish Philosophical Society. Visiting positions include the Leibniz Professorship at Universität Leipzig in 2000; an adjunct professorship at the Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, Canberra (2003–07); and a visiting fellowship at All Souls College, University of Oxford, in 2007, and at University College, also at the University of Oxford, in 2013. Rabinowicz is a member of the Institut International de Philosophie; the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences; the Royal Swedish Academy of Letters, History and Antiquities; and Academia Europaea. His current areas of research are theory of value and decision theory.

ABSTRACT

Setting off from the Fitting-Attitude analysis of value (FA-analysis), I have proposed an account of value relations which makes room both for incommensurability in value and for potential vagueness in value comparisons. I will first shortly summarize this account in my talk and then move on to suggest that one might adopt an analysis of *probability* that is structurally analogous to the FA-analysis of value. This makes it possible to represent different types of probability relations. In particular, we get tools to account for Keynesian incommensurable probabilities. This approach can also be used to model vagueness in probability comparisons. In modern discussions of so-called 'imprecise probabilities' the phenomena of vagueness and incommensurability are not always clearly distinguished. The account I provide allows to establish that vagueness and incommensurability, while being independent phenomena, might well co-exist with each other within one and the same modelling.