

INSTITUT FÜR PHILOSOPHIE HUMBOLDT-KOLLOQUIUM



Professor Michael Beaney currently holds two posts, one at King's College London, and another at the Humboldt University in Berlin as Professor of History of Analytic Philosophy. Before taking up these jobs he was Reader (2005–09) and then Professor of Philosophy (2009–15) at the University of York. Professor Beaney has also worked at the Open University (2000–05), University of Manchester (1998–99), University of Leeds (1992–98), Birkbeck College, London (1990–92) and University of Sheffield (1986–88). He has held Alexander von Humboldt Research Fellowships in Germany at the University of Jena (2006–07) and University of Erlangen-Nürnberg (1999–2000), and was Visiting Professor at Beijing Normal University in 2013 and 2014 and Peking University in 2011.

Professor Beaney originally studied PPE at St. Catherine's College, Oxford, where he also did his B.Phil. and D.Phil. in Philosophy. Besides the history of analytic philosophy, Professor Beaney has research interests in: Chinese philosophy, philosophical methodology, philosophical translation (especially German-English and English-Chinese), and historiography of philosophy.

Michael BEANEY

SEEING COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY FROM A ZHUANGENSTEINIAN PERSPECTIVE

Comparative philosophy, like history of philosophy, is often seen as having a lower status within the discipline of philosophy than such 'central' areas as logic, epistemology, and metaphysics. Yet there is increasing recognition of the need to broaden the canon and diversify the curriculum in philosophy, and what goes on under the heading of 'comparative philosophy' can certainly contribute to achieving this. So what exactly is comparative philosophy, and what kind of rationale can be provided for it? Should it be renamed or reconceptualized to do better justice to what it does or could do? How might one respond to some of the objections that are raised to it? In this talk I want to address these and related questions by drawing on both Zhuangzi's conception of perspectives 'opening out' into one another in the *qíwùlùn* chapter of the *Zhuangzi* and Wittgenstein's remarks on aspect perception. Seeing some of Zhuangzi's ideas from a Wittgensteinian perspective, and some of Wittgenstein's ideas from a Zhuangzian perspective, will itself provide an illustration of the fruitfulness of comparative philosophy.

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