TRATTENBACH-JILSKÁ

Sdružení absolventů a přátel Grundschule Trattenbach

& Oddělení analytické filosofie Filosofického ústavu AV ČR

uvádějí/present

Dan Zeman

CONCEPTUAL AND EMPIRICAL CHALLENGES TO THE ARGUMENT FROM RETRACTION

The argument from retraction (the speech act of "taking back" a previous speech act) has been one of the favorite arguments used by relativists about a variety of natural language expressions (predicates of taste, epistemic modals, moral and aesthetic claims etc.) in support of their view. The main consideration offered is that relativism can, while rival views cannot, account for this phenomenon. For some of the relativists leading the charge (e.g., John MacFarlane), retraction is, in fact, mandatory: a norm of retraction makes it obligatory for an agent to retract a previously unretracted assertion whenever what has been asserted is shown to be currently false. This norm, it is contended, is part and parcel of our behavior as rational agents and distinguishes relativism from other views on the market. Recently, several challenges have been raised to retraction providing supporting for relativism, of both a conceptual and an empirical nature. The main aim of this presentation is to go some way towards defending relativism from these challenges. Thus, in relation to the former, I claim that, even if retraction is not considered mandatory, there is still a phenomenon to be explained and that relativism is better situated in doing so than rival views, as well as show that, robbed of the retraction norm, relativism still counts as a distinctive and interesting view. In relation to the latter, I claim that the empirical data regarding retraction doesn't establish its dialectical inefficiency and show how relativism can account for certain types of cases deemed problematic ("ignorant assessors" cases etc.).

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To join contact please: marvan@flu.cas.cz