**Workshop: Beyond Epistemic Normativity**

2024/11/25

浙江大学紫金港校区西区成均苑4幢311

Hangzhou, China

**Schedules:**

**9:30-10:40**

**Wondering With Impunity: Why it is (almost) Never Wrong to Wonder**

**Miriam McCormick**

I argue that a kind of wondering, which I call *pure* wondering, is never epistemically wrong. Further, this kind of wondering has great value; given its value, it should rarely be discouraged but, instead fostered and cultivated. Section 1 offers a brief discussion of some different ways of thinking about wondering that one finds in recent discussions, and clarifies the nature and value of purewondering.The kind of radical openness of unrestricted wondering is linked to creativity, humility and perhaps a kind of peacefulness. Section 2 turns to some candidate epistemic norms for when and why wondering should be restricted. I argue that none of these restrictions are warranted for pure wondering. While I am primarily concerned with showing that prohibitive epistemic norms do not apply the cases of pure wondering, it could be that, in some circumstances, there are positive norms where one can fail to wonder when one ought to. But, even if epistemic norms do not apply, what about practical, moral or fittingness norms? Section 3 will consider some of the risks of wondering, focusing on moral concerns about unrestricted wondering. Is not firm closed-mindedness sometimes what is needed in matters of moral importance? I argue that belief and commitment are compatible with pure wondering; that this is so tells us something about the nature of belief. The final section will discuss whether certain kinds of objects are not worthy of wonder which would make pure wondering unfitting if directed at those objects. I concede that there may be cases where fittingness norms apply but, as has been made clear in discussions of fittingness of attitudes, whether it is fitting to hold a particular attitude does not settle whether it is wrong to hold it.

**10:40-11:00**

**Coffee Break**

**11:00-11:50**

**The Epistemic and the Zetetic for Emotions**

**Xiaoyu Ke**

In this paper, I investigate how we as human epistemic agents should conduct ourselves emotionally in inquiry. I first argue that, like beliefs, our emotions are subject to zetetic and epistemic norms; however, unlike beliefs, the zetetic and epistemic normativity of emotions are grounded in emotions’ unique functional roles in inquiry. I then argue that the zetetic and epistemic normativity of emotions not only give rise to the same normative tension as currently discussed in the literature, but also a new “conflicting verdicts” problem: whereas the old normative tension concerns mental states or attitudes that are irrelevant to inquiry, the new problem concerns mental states or attitudes that are relevant to inquiry. Finally, I suggest that the new problem not only seems to create a stronger normative tension but also is more serious for emotions because it poses a practical dilemma for emotions but not for beliefs.

**14:00-14:50**

**Are state-reasons reducible to reasons for acting?**

**Guowei Lai**

In his article “﻿On believing indirectly for practical reasons,” Sebastian Schmidt argues that reasons for ﻿being in non-intentional states are reducible to reasons for acting, namely reasons for bringing about non-intentional states or for maintaining them. By analogy, Schmidt suggests that ﻿any state-reason for belief is simply a reason to bring about or maintain that belief, rather than being a reason to believe per se. His argument goes against pragmatism, which is the thesis that practical considerations can be reasons for belief. In defense of pragmatism, I argue that reasons for ﻿being in non-intentional states are not reducible to reasons for acting because it conflicts with several plausible principles.

**14:50-15:10**

**Coffee Break**

**15:10-16:00**

**When it’s Ok to Believe against the Evidence?**

**Xian He**

Pluralists think that epistemic and practical reasons have independent normative sources. Robust pragmatists deny that there are distinctively epistemic obligations. Instead, they argue that one ought to conform one’s beliefs to the evidence only when practical reasons support doing so. The aim of this paper is to argue that robust pragmatism has an important advantage over pluralism because it can offer a compelling explanation of when one ought to believe against the evidence. My argument proceeds as follows. I start considering a range of intuitive cases highlighting the conditions under which one ought to believe against the evidence (AE-conditions for short). Pragmatists either explain such cases, or explain them away (§1). Then, I argue that robust pragmatism can provide a straightforward explanation of AE-conditions that accommodates all cases discussed earlier (§2). By contrast, I argue that pluralism faces a dilemma when they try to deal with such conditions: pluralists either accept robust pragmatism’s AE-condition or propose a more demanding one. Both paths face challenges: even if there are distinctively epistemic obligations, they only play a marginal role in determining whether one ought to believe against the evidence (§3).