



Universität Innsbruck - Institut für Christliche Philosophie

## Gastvortrag

Organisation und Kontakt: Bruno Niederbacher

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**Erik J. Olsson (Lund/Genf):**

# How the Virtue Epistemologist Should Solve the Value Problem

**Mittwoch, 6. Juni 2012, 18.00 s.t.**

**Seminarraum VI (Karl-Rahner-Platz 3, 1. Stock)**

The talk will be based on joint work (in progress) with Bruno Niederbacher. In a recent book, the virtue epistemologist John Greco claims to have solved several problems facing process reliabilism, as advocated by Alvin I. Goldman and others. One is the so-called value problem: that of showing why knowledge is more valuable than mere true belief. We argue that, contrary to what Greco thinks, his view regarding the surplus value of true belief acquired through intellectual virtue largely lacks support in the work of Aristotle. Moreover, as also observed in Niederbacher (2011), a careful reading of Thomas Aquinas, a prominent Aristotelian, reveals a view substantially different from Greco's. We proceed to subsume Aquinas' theory under a precise and detailed solution to the value problem offered in Olsson and Goldman (2009). We conclude (1) that the surplus value of true belief acquired through virtue, like that of reliably acquired true belief in general, derives to a significant extent from the fact that it makes the acquisition of future true belief more likely, and (2) that true belief acquired through virtue has this value to a higher degree than reliably acquired true belief in general. We extend our reasoning in support of two analogous conclusions with regard to the capacity of true belief acquired through virtue to persist over time, drawing on the theory of stability proposed in Olsson (2007). Our account explains why virtue epistemology, as advanced by Greco and others, is plausibly seen as a species of process reliabilism, yet – to the credit of virtue epistemologists – one deserving special attention.

**Erik Olsson** is Professor of Theoretical Philosophy at the University of Lund / Sweden. Among his many publications are: *Against Coherence: Truth, Probability, and Justification* (Oxford, 2005); "Reliabilism, Stability, and the Value of Knowledge" (in: *American Philosophical Quarterly* 2007, 44(4)); the joint paper with Alvin Goldman: "Reliabilism and the Value of Knowledge" (in: D. Pritchard, A. Millar and A. Haddock (eds.), *Epistemic Value*, Oxford, 2009).

**Alle Interessent/innen sind herzlich eingeladen!**