

**Institut für Philosophie  
Seniorprofessur für Theoretische Philosophie**

**Im Rahmen des Forschungskolloquiums laden wir ein zum Vortrag von**

**Dr. Christian Feldbacher-Escamilla  
and Dr. Maria Sekatskaya**

**(University of Cologne and HHU Düsseldorf)**

**Dienstag, 13.12.2022  
19:30 – 21:00 Uhr, Raum: 24.53 01.81**

## **Reductionism in the Philosophy of Science and the Problem of Mental Properties**

### **Abstract:**

In philosophy of mind, theoretical irreducibility of mental predicates is often used to argue for ontological irreducibility of mental properties, while reduction is understood as a complete reduction of all mental predicates to physical predicates. This strong understanding was characteristic for the early stages of logical empiricism: reduction as explicit definability/translatability of theoretical predicates with the help of empirical predicates, but this understanding is problematic. A weaker form of reduction is that of employing bilateral reduction sentences for theoretical predicates such as dispositional terms, and an even weaker form of reduction is empirical confirmability of propositions with theoretical predicates. In this talk, we will outline a framework for better interrelating the discussions of reductionism in philosophy of science and philosophy of mind. We will show that this framework is helpful in untangling the question of ontological (ir-)reducibility of mental properties to physical properties, because different answers to this question depend on different syntheses of a particular understanding of reduction and a particular claim about ontology of mental properties.

### **Speakers:**

Christian Feldbacher-Escamilla is faculty of the philosophy department of the University of Cologne and external fellow of the Düsseldorf Center for Logic and Philosophy of Science; research foci: inductive and abductive inference, conceptual engineering, social epistemology; recent publications: "The Many Faces of Generalizing the Theory of Evolution" (APQ, 2021), "Cultural Inheritance in Generalized Darwinism" (PoS, 2020) both together with K. Baraghith, "An Optimality-Argument for Equal Weighting" (Synthese, 2020).

Maria Sekatskaya is a post-doctoral research fellow of the DFG research group Inductive Metaphysics at the institute of philosophy at HHU. Her research interests are in philosophy of mind and metaphysics, with a special emphasis on the problem of free will. Main publications: "Alternative Possibilities and the Meaning of Can" (with G. Schurz), *Dialectica* (forthcoming); "Free Will, Control, and the Possibility to Do Otherwise from a Causal Modeler's Perspective" (with A. Gebharder and G. Schurz), *Erkenntnis* (2020).