

Preface

The second LSE-UBT Student Philosophy Conference took place in Bayreuth on the 8th and 9th of May 2014, as the result of the collaboration between the LSE department of Philosophy, Logic Scientific Method and the department of Philosophy and Economics (PE) at Universität Bayreuth. During this two-days initiative, eight students papers, written by undergraduates and postgraduates from both departments, as well as three keynote speeches, were presented.

The keynote speeches were given by the head of the LSE Philosophy Department, Prof. Luc Bovens, by LSE Assistant Professor Anna Mahtani and by UBT Professor Rudolph Schüßler. While Prof. Bovens provided a proposal, the ‘Distributive View’, to evaluate risk prospects, Dr. Mahtani focused on the epistemological problem of the ‘Sleeping Beauty’, and Prof. Schüßler explained how to de-rigorise consistently some Kantian ethical statements. In the same spirit as that of the keynote speeches, the presented papers covered a wide range of topics and areas, from public policy to philosophy of science, combining ethical issues with formal analysis. Each student presentation lasted 35 minutes, and was followed by a 10-minute commentary by a PhD student, researcher, or professor and by a 25-minute discussion with the audience. All students were very proud of their papers and combative defendants of their arguments, and the commentaries were a great occasion to hear productive objections. The informal setting of the conference provided the occasion for a fruitful and lively debate after all interventions. It was a great opportunity for the two philosophical traditions of LSE and UBT to blend, and so for the students to

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discover different philosophical methods and topics. Sharing their knowledge and their arguments, everyone seemed to benefit from the discussions. But, as in the best philosophical tradition, the days ended in joyful debates around German beer and delicious traditional meals. The LSE students went home with a bunch of new friends, who hosted them at their respective places. The hosts had shown them a different university lifestyle, where concrete is replaced by large green areas, and the crowds of stressed, busy people in the tube by small groups of students cycling through the park. The LSE staff and students did not leave without taking a walk through the picturesque town of Bayreuth, hearing a tinge of Wagnerian magic in the surrounding woods, vowing they would be back.

With the publishing of the students' papers in this volume, we hope to give our readers a taste of the various topics and different argumentative styles that the Student Philosophy Conference displayed. Furthermore, an interview with Benjamin Ferguson, former PhD student at LSE and now assistant professor in the Philosophy and Economics (PE) department at Universität Bayreuth, answers to some questions about the organisation of a successful conference, the benefits that philosophers gain from participating in such initiatives, and the future prospects for an increased collaboration between LSE and UBT. With this issue, we also hope to encourage all LSE and UBT philosophy students to take part in this wonderful experience next year.

The Editing Committee