



**University of
Zurich** ^{UZH}

Institute of Philosophy

Doctoral Programme: "Philosophy – Language, Mind, and Practice"

Master Class

The Power of Agency

Maria Alvarez

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University of Zurich

18th & 19th May 2018

Synopsis

The course examines the capacity for human agency. We shall examine a series of questions intended to elucidate the nature of this capacity, including: What is an agential ability? How are agential abilities related to agential control? What is the connection between the capacity for agency and the capacity to move one's body? Can agency be understood as the capacity to cause change? If so, what sort of change? What kind of thing is an action: is an action an event? A process? Something else? What about activity? And what is the connection between action and activity?

Venue: University of Zurich
Rämistrasse 71
8001 Zürich
Room: Friday: KOL-E-13; Saturday: KO2-F-156

No fees apply. Participants are expected to have read the texts.
PhD students at the UZH are required to book the module in order to get credit points.
Registration: phd@philos.uzh.ch
Details: <http://www.philosophie.uzh.ch/doktorat/meisterkurse.html>

Programme and Readings

Friday, 18th May 2018

9:30 – 12:00: Agential Abilities

*Alvarez, Maria (2018f). *Agency, Abilities and Control*. Unpublished.

Kenny, Antony (1975). *Will, Freedom, and Power*. Oxford: Blackwell, ch. VII, 'Spontaneity, Indifference, and Ability'.

Locke, Don (1977). "Natural Powers and Human Abilities". In: *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 74, pp. 171–187.

Maier, John (2018). "Ability, Modality, and Genericity". In: *Philosophical Studies* 175.2, pp. 411–428.

13:30 – 15:30: Abilities and Dispositions

*Alvarez, Maria (2018e). *Agency, Abilities and Control*. Unpublished.

*Clarke, Randolph (2009). "Dispositions, Abilities to Act, and Free Will: The New Dispositionism". In: *Mind* 118.470, pp. 323–351.

Fara, Michael (2008). "Masked Abilities and Compatibilism". In: *Mind* 117.468, pp. 843–865.

Vihvelin, Kadri (2004). "Free Will Demystified: A Dispositional Account". In: *Philosophical Topics* 32.1/2, pp. 427–450.

Whittle, Ann (2010). "Dispositional Abilities". In: *Philosophers' Imprint* 10.

16:00 – 18:00: Animal Agency

Session conducted by Hans-Johann Glock

*Glock, Hans-Johann (2018). *Agency, Rationality and Reasoning in Animals*. Section 1-10.

Steward, Helen (2009). "Animal Agency". In: *Inquiry : An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy* 52.3, pp. 217–231.

Stoecker, Ralf (2009). "Why Animals Can't Act". In: *Inquiry : An Interdisciplinary Journal of Philosophy* 52.3, pp. 255–271.

Saturday, 19th May 2018

9:30 – 12:00: Agency and Bodily Movement

Alvarez, Maria (2018d). *Actions, Movements and Motions*. Unpublished.

*Alvarez, Maria and John Hyman (1998). "Agents and Their Actions". In: *Philosophy* 73.2, pp. 219–245.

Davidson, Donald (2001). "Agency". In: *Essays on Actions and Events*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 43–61.

Hornsby, Jennifer (1980). *Actions*. Routledge and Kegan Paul, chs. 1–2.

Hyman, John (2015). *Action, Knowledge, and Will*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, ch. 3: §§3.1–3.2.

13:30 – 15:30: Agency and Change

*Alvarez, Maria (2018a). *Acting as Causing Change*. Unpublished.

Dancy, Jonathan (2017). "Prichard on Causing a Change". In: *Royal Institute of Philosophy Supplement* 80, pp. 127–138.

Ford, Anton (2014b). "Action and Passion". In: *Philosophical Topics* 42.1, pp. 13–42.

Steward, Helen (2000). "Do Actions Occur Inside the Body?" In: *Mind and Society* 1.2, pp. 107–125.

16:00 – 18:00: The Ontology of Action

*Alvarez, Maria (2018b). *Action and Activity*. Unpublished.

Galton, Antony and Riichiro Mizoguchi (2009). "The Water Falls but the Waterfall Does Not Fall: New Perspectives on Objects, Processes and Events". In: *Applied Ontology* 4.2, pp. 71–107.

Hornsby, Jennifer (2012). "Actions and Activity". In: *Philosophical Issues* 22.1, pp. 233–245.

Mourelatos, Alexander P. D. (1978). "Events, Processes, and States". In: *Linguistics and Philosophy* 2.3, pp. 415–434.

Steward, Helen (2012). "Actions as Processes". In: *Philosophical Perspectives* 26.1, pp. 373–388.

Starred readings are compulsory; others optional.