

The concept of intuition and intuitive knowledge

What is intuition? In this thesis, a deepened understanding of intuition and intuitive knowledge shall be reached.

The first aim is to get a better grip of the concept ‚intuition‘. To this end, the development of this concept in modern philosophy is exposed first. Second, some key studies and approaches about intuition in psychology and cognitive science are examined with respect to their understanding and central findings about intuition. As a result, a broad understanding of ‚intuition‘ is brought forward which takes *immediacy* and *certainty* to be the key elements of intuition on the phenomenal level. Furthermore, it is argued that intuition is closely linked to nonpropositionality and therefore is to be set apart from belief. Additional differentiations are made (e.g. intuition vs. perception) and some more narrow views are rejected (e.g. intuition as exclusively *a priori*).

The second aim is to elucidate the role intuitions play in epistemology, specifically concerning intuitive justification. If intuition is to be taken as mainly nonpropositional, how can it be reason-giving and constitute evidence for knowledge? In answering this question, two different paths are followed: First, an externalist explanation about intuitive justification is given, which stresses the *adaptiveness* intuition has regarding human knowledge. Second, inspired by Descartes, intuition will be primarily understood as a special kind of *inference*. Based on this, the antagonism between internalist and externalist accounts of epistemic justification can be overcome, at least concerning intuition. In addition, there is reason for hope that departing from the question about intuitive justification we can gain valuable insights with respect to the more general problems about nonpropositional justification, the internalism-externalism divide, and the Sellarsian problem of the ‚given‘.