PART II PAPER 09: WITTGENSTEIN

SYLLABUS

- Tractatus
- Philosophical Investigations
- On Certainty

Study of the following topics is also included: the development throughout Wittgenstein's work on solipsism and the self, and the nature of philosophy.

COURSE OUTLINE

Ludwig Wittgenstein was unquestionably one of the most important intellectual figures of the twentieth century. The paper enables candidates to study his two masterpieces, the Tractatus and the Investigations, as well as On Certainty, which he was working on just before his death. Although his historical importance can hardly be questioned, the interpretation of Wittgenstein's works has proved controversial, and the course provides an introduction to exegetical cruces in all the texts specified, as well as experience in relating those issues to ones in contemporary philosophy of mathematics, mind, and language.

Prerequisites

None

Objectives

The course is devoted to the study of philosophical issues arising in the three prescribed texts. Students will be expected to:

1. Acquire a detailed knowledge of some of the arguments contained in the texts studied.
2. Acquire an understanding of how different sections of the texts studied relate to one another.
3. Engage in close criticism of the arguments studied.
4. Develop their own powers of philosophical analysis and argument, through study of the set texts and (where appropriate) comparison of them with modern positions.

READING LIST

Reading on this list is divided into two sections:

(A) Introductory reading: a good place to start, to familiarise yourself with the issue and the central arguments.
(B) Further reading: things to read in order to further develop your views, deepening and broadening your knowledge.

Preliminary Reading

KENNY, Anthony, Wittgenstein (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975). Also available online at: https://www.dawsonera.com/abstract/9781405154499
WITTGENSTEIN, Ludwig, Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus. (either of the two translations, both published by Routledge). Also available online at: https://www.dawsonera.com/abstract/9780203010341

PRIMARY TEXTS


BIOGRAPHIES AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT

(A) Introductory Reading


(B) Further Reading


GENERAL BOOKS AND COLLECTIONS OF ESSAYS

(A) Introductory Reading


(B) Further Reading


THE TRACTATUS

(A) Introductory Reading


(B) Further Reading


Atomism and Realism

(A) Introductory Reading


(B) Further Reading


The Picture Theory and Wittgenstein's Philosophy of Mind

(A) Introductory Reading


**B) Further Reading**


**Saying and Showing**

(A) Introductory Reading

GEACH, Peter, 'Saying and Showing in Frege and Wittgenstein', in J. Hintikka, ed., *Essays on Wittgenstein in Honor of Georg Von Wright* (Amsterdam: North Holland, 1976), pp. 54-70. Also available on Moodle


**B) Further Reading**


**Nonsense**

(A) Introductory Reading


GOLDFARB, Warren, 'Metaphysics and Nonsense; on Cora Diamond's *the Realistic Spirit*', *Journal of Philosophical Research*, 22 (1997): 57-73. Also available in the Faculty Library offprint collection and on Moodle


(B) Further Reading


**Mysticism, Ethics and Religion**

(A) Introductory Reading


(B) Further Reading


**Solipsism and the Self**

(A) Introductory Reading


(B) Further Reading


PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATIONS

(A) Introductory Reading


(B) Further Reading

These four large volumes of commentary provide detailed paragraph by paragraph remarks on much of the Investigations. If you are puzzled by a particular passage you may find it worth delving in them:


Other useful books are:


PI 1-137: The Augustinian Conception, Language Games, Ostenstive Definition, Family Resemblance, the Nature of Philosophy


PI 138-242: Rule-Following

(A) Introductory Reading


MILLER, Alexander, and Crispin WRIGHT, eds., Rule-Following and Meaning (Chesham: Acumen, 2002). Also available online at: https://www.dawsonera.com/abstract/9781844653355 [Collection of essays considering Kripke's views on rule-following]

(B) Further Reading


PI 243-301: Private Language

(A) Introductory Reading


(B) Further Reading


PI 302-428: Sensations and Their Owners


PI 429-465: Intentionality


HACKER, Peter M.S., Wittgenstein: Mind and Will (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), ch. 1 'Intentionality'.


PL, II, xi: Aspect Perception


ON CERTAINTY

(A) Introductory Reading


MOORE, G.E., Philosophical Papers (London: Allen & Unwin, 1959), ch. 2 'A Defence of Common Sense'. Also available on Moodle.


(B) Further Reading


WITTGENSTEIN, Ludwig, Philosophical Remarks (Oxford: Blackwell, 1975). Also available online at: http://pm.nlx.com [Sections 57-66 discuss the self]
THE NATURE OF PHILOSOPHY (Development of Wittgenstein’s views)

In addition to the material on ‘Saying and Showing’, ‘Nonsense’ and ‘Mysticism, Ethics and Religion’ in the reading list for the *Tractatus*, the following readings cover Wittgenstein’s ‘middle period’ as well as his views in *Philosophical Investigations*, and include commentary on the development of Wittgenstein’s views across his career.


We welcome your suggestions for further readings that will improve and diversify our reading lists, to reflect the best recent research, and important work by members of under-represented groups. Please email your suggestions to phillib@hermes.cam.ac.uk including the relevant part and paper number. For information on how we handle your personal data when you submit a suggestion please see [https://www.information-compliance.admin.cam.ac.uk/data-protection/general-data](https://www.information-compliance.admin.cam.ac.uk/data-protection/general-data).