Philosophy Faculty Reading List and Course Outline 2017-2018

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 of his views 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**


KENNY, Anthony, *Wittgenstein* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1975), chs 1-5. Also available online at: https://www.dawsonera.com/abstract/9781405154499


**(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


(B) Further Reading


Mysticism, Ethics and Religion

(A) Introductory Reading


DIAMOND, Cora, The Realistic Spirit: Wittgenstein, Philosophy and the Mind (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991), ch. 6 'Throwing away the ladder: How to read the Tractatus'. [Argues for the so-called "resolute" reading of the Tractatus. See also the exchange between Goldfarb and her in Journal of Philosophical Research, 22 (1997)]

HACKER, Peter M.S., 'Was He Trying to Whistle it?', in A. Crary and R. Read, eds., The New Wittgenstein (London: Routledge, 2000), pp. 353-88. Also available online at: http://lib.mylibrary.com/?id=5727. [Presents evidence that Wittgenstein was not himself a resolute reader of the Tractatus]

Solipsism and the Self

(A) Introductory Reading


(B) Further Reading


Mysticism, Ethics and Religion

(A) 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:

FOGELIN, Robert J., Wittgenstein. 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1987), ch. 9 'The critique of the Tractatus'.


PI 1-137: The Augustinian Conception, Language Games, Ostensive 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


PL II, xi: Aspect Perception


ON CERTAINTY

(A) Introductory Reading


(B) Further Reading


Stroll, Avrum, *Moore and Wittgenstein on Certainty* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995). [Argues that Wittgenstein changed his views in the course of writing *On Certainty* and that McGinn’s account does not do justice to the alteration. Read them both to make up your own mind]

SOLIPSISM AND THE SELF (Development of Wittgenstein’s views)

In addition to the material above under the headings (i) ‘Solipsism and the self’ [in the *Tractatus*] (ii) ‘PI 302-428: Sensations and Their Owners’, the following readings cover Wittgenstein’s ‘middle period’ views and include general commentary on the development of Wittgenstein’s views across his career.


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.


