

## **180208 SE Wittgenstein: Über Gewissheit**

Studienprogrammleitung Philosophie

2 Stunde(n), 6,0 ECTS credits

Prüfungsimmanente Lehrveranstaltung

Unterrichtssprache: Englisch

Kapitel:18.01; 18.02

MA M 1, § 4.1.4 und § 2.5, PP 57.6

Prof. Dr. Martin Kusch (Room C0208. Office hours: Thursdays 11am-1pm.)

First session: 8 October 2009. Final session: 28 January 2010.

Time: Thursdays 2-4pm.

Place: 2G, NIG Universitätsstraße 7

Contents: Critical engagement with Wittgenstein's views on knowledge, certainty, belief, relativism and scepticism, especially on the basis of *On Certainty*.

Methods: Seminar with obligatory attendance, detailed engagement with texts, student presentations, discussions. Knowledge of the basic concepts of epistemology is a precondition of attendance.

Aims: A good understanding of *On Certainty* and other related writings by Wittgenstein; familiarity with the secondary literature.

Relevant for the assessment: regular attendance, active participation in discussions, presentation, a 15-20 page essay on a topic related to the course.

Literature:

Primary sources:

L. Wittgenstein, *Über Gewißheit / On Certainty*, ed. by G. E. M. Anscombe and G. H. von Wright, tr. by D. Paul and G. E. M. Anscombe, Oxford: Blackwell 1969 (or later editions)

L. Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations: The German Text with a Revised English Translation*, tr. by G. E. M. Anscombe, Oxford: Blackwell 2001 (or later editions)

L. Wittgenstein, *Lectures & Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief*, ed. by C. Barrett, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966

G. E. Moore, *Selected Writings*, London: Routledge, 1993

Secondary literature:

Conant, J., "Wittgenstein on Meaning and Use", *Philosophical Investigations* 21 (1998): 222-250

Kusch, M., "Relativism in *On Certainty* and Other Writings of the 1930s and 40s" (unpublished)

Kusch, M., "Rulers, Clocks, and Common Sense: Metrology as a Key to Wittgenstein's *On Certainty*" (unpublished)

McManus, D. (ed.), *Wittgenstein and Scepticism*, London: Routledge, 2004

Moyal-Sharrock D. and W. H. Brenner, eds., *Readings of Wittgenstein's On Certainty*, Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007

Moyal-Sharrock, D., *Understanding Wittgenstein's On Certainty*, Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007

Pritchard, D., "Wittgenstein on Scepticism" (unpublished)

Putnam, H., *Renewing Philosophy*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992

Rosen, G., "Nominalism, Naturalism, Epistemic Relativism", *Philosophical Perspectives* 15 (2001): 69-89

Williams, B., *Moral Luck*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981

Williams, M., "Why (Wittgensteinian) Contextualism is not Relativism", *Episteme* 4 (2007); 93-114

Programme:

Week 1: Introduction

Week 2: Moore on Common Sense and the Refutation of Skepticism: Discussion of G. E. Moore, "A Defense of Common Sense" & "Proof of an External World" (in G. E. Moore, *Selected Writings*, London: Routledge, 1993, pp. 106-133, 147-170)

Week 3: Moore and Wittgenstein: Discussion of Wittgenstein's *On Certainty* as a Response to Moore

Week 4: *On Certainty* and Foundationalism: Discussion of A. Stroll, "Why *On Certainty* Matters", and M. Williams, "Why Wittgenstein Isn't a Foundationalist" (in D. Moyal-Sharrock and W. H. Brenner, eds., *Readings of Wittgenstein's On Certainty*, Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007, pp. 33-46, 47-58)

Week 5: Common-Sense Certainties and Propositions: Discussion of D. Moyal-Sharrock, *Understanding Wittgenstein's On Certainty*, Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007, pp. 181-201; and D. Pritchard, "Wittgenstein on Scepticism" (unpublished)

Week 6: *On Certainty* and Relativism I: Discussion of M. Williams, "Why

(Wittgensteinian) Contextualism is not Relativism", *Episteme* 4 (2007): 93-114, and H. Putnam, *Renewing Philosophy*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992, pp. 134-179

Week 7: On Certainty and Relativism II: Discussion of B. Williams, *Moral Luck*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981, pp. 132-143; and G. Rosen, "Nominalism, Naturalism, Epistemic Relativism", *Philosophical Perspectives* 15 (2001): 69-89

Week 8: On Certainty and Relativism III: Discussion of L. Wittgenstein, "Conversation on Religious Belief", in L. Wittgenstein, *Lectures & Conversations on Aesthetics, Psychology and Religious Belief*, ed. by C. Barrett, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966, pp. 53-72

Week 9: On Certainty and Relativism IV: Discussion of M. Kusch, "Relativism in On Certainty and Other Writings of the 1930s and 40s" (unpublished), pp. 1-78

Week 10: On Certainty and Relativism V: Discussion of M. Kusch, "Relativism in On Certainty and Other Writings of the 1930s and 40s" (unpublished), pp. 78-131

Week 11: Anti-skepticism in On Certainty I: Discussion of C. Wright, "Wittgensteinian Certainties", and M. Williams, "Wittgenstein's Refutation of Idealism", in D. McManus (ed.), *Wittgenstein and Scepticism*, London: Routledge, 2004, pp. 22-55 & 76-96

Week 12: Anti-skepticism in On Certainty II: Discussion of J. Conant, "Wittgenstein on Meaning and Use", *Philosophical Investigations* 21 (1998): 222-250

Week 13: Anti-skepticism in On Certainty III: Discussion of M. Kusch, "Rulers, Clocks, and Common Sense: Metrology as a Key to Wittgenstein's On Certainty" (unpublished)

Week 14: Final Discussion