**London School of Philosophy**

Academic Year 2021-22

**Wittgenstein**

Venue On-line via Zoom

Day and Time Tuesday 7pm - 9pm

Term Dates 26th April - 28th June

No. of Meetings 10

Module taught by Mark Fielding, BA, MPhil

Entrance Requirements

The course is open to anyone with an interest and enthusiasm for the subject.

Teaching Methods

The module will be taught using a combination of lectures, reading extracts from the primary texts, and class discussion.

Module Content

Ludwig Wittgenstein is one of a very select number of Philosophers who transformed the subject in the twentieth century. The course follows the development from his work in the foundations of mathematics which led to the *Tractatus* and continues through the middle period in which he largely rejected the view of language it contains. The remainder of the course focuses on the final stages of his thought contained in *Philosophical Investigations* and in *On Certainty.*

**Part 1 The early philosophy**

Week 1 Frege, Russell, and the origins of the *Tractatus*

Week 2 The early *Tractatus*: Picture Theory of Meaning

Week 3 Later *Tractatus*: seeing and showing, and ethics

Week 4 The beginning of Philosophical Investigations

**Part 2 The later philosophy**

Week 5 Language Games, Forms of Life, and Rule Following

Week 6 Self expression: on the very idea of a private language

Week 7 Wittgenstein contra Descartes and Moore: On Certainty

Week 8 Wittgenstein’s Philosophy of Psychology

Week 9 Wittgenstein’s aesthetics

Week 10 Wittgenstein’s legacy

The two main texts are the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (the edition published by Routledge is preferred) and the *Philosophical Investigations* (Wiley-Blackwell).

There is a vast secondary literature available, much of it proposing new, or contentious interpretations. I’ve selected a few books which I’ve learned from but it’s almost impossible to avoid controversy. As ever, these are suggestions only!

*Wittgenstein: The Duty of Genius*, Ray Monk. Vintage 1991

*Wittgenstein’s Vienna*, Janik and Toulmin. Ivan R. Dee 1996

*Elucidating the Tractatus: Wittgenstein’s Early Philosophy of Logic and Language*, Marie McGinn. OUP 2006

*The Enchantment of Words*, Denis McManus. OUP 2010

*An Introduction to Wittgenstein’s Tractatus*, G.E.M. Anscombe. St. Augustine’s Press 1971

*Wittgenstein on Meaning*, Colin McGinn. Wiley-Blackwell 1987

*Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*, Saul Kripke. Wiley-Blackwell 1984

There are very extensive commentaries by Baker and Hacker. These are an incredible achievement but it might be best to avoid them at first!