



MUSIC 9246A
SCHOENBERG/WITTGENSTEIN
FALL 2020

Instructor: Kevin Mooney
Office hours: By appointment (TC 222)

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Class meetings: Mondays 1:30–4:30 (Zoom)

Overview

“Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent.”
— Wittgenstein (*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*, Proposition 7)

“Inexpressible, many-sided idea, will you let it be so explained?
Shall Aron, my mouth, fashion this image?
Then I have fashioned an image too, false, as an image must be.
Thus am I defeated! Thus, all was but madness that I believed before,
And can and must not be given voice. O word, thou word, that I lack!”
— Schoenberg (*Moses und Aron*, Act II)

“I wanted to write that my work consists of two parts: of the one which is here, and of everything which I have *not* written. And precisely this second part is the important one.”
— Wittgenstein (letter to Ludwig von Ficker)

What are the limits of language? Are there inexpressible thoughts? What does it mean to represent an idea? This course will explore these and related questions in Wittgenstein’s early language philosophy and Schoenberg’s music aesthetics. We will examine the compositional, ethical, and aesthetic convergences between Wittgenstein’s *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and Schoenberg’s *Moses und Aron*—two famously intractable works that illuminate each other while casting light on the project of modernism/modernity itself.

Course Texts

Electronic copies of most texts will be provided, but you may wish to buy the following:

- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Translated by C. K. Ogden [and F. P. Ramsey]. London: Routledge, 1922.
- Wright, James K. *Schoenberg, Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*. Bern: Peter Lang, 2007.

AbeBooks.com is a good option for discounted texts.

Requirements

Assigned readings, class discussions, seminar presentation and overview, position paper, final essay.

Evaluation

Seminar presentation (10%)

Overview (10%)

Position paper (15%)

Final paper (50%)

Participation (15%)

Position Paper (1000 words)

You will stake out a position in response to some idea, debate, or problem encountered in one or more of the readings. This might be a short-form exploration of a final paper topic or a stand-alone analysis of something else. (Due Nov. 16)

Seminar Presentation (40 minutes)

Generally, I'd like you to begin with ideas from the readings, but feel free to redirect these toward relevant interests of your own. Your presentation is an opportunity to steer the course "off course" and teach us something while you're at it. A 750-word overview will be due one week after your presentation.

Final Paper (4000–5000 words)

Your topic should treat some aspect of language and/or representation in Schoenberg and/or Wittgenstein. It should also be discussed with me no later than Nov. 16–20. Papers are due Dec. 15. Please note that "incompletes" are discouraged and must be approved by myself and the Director of the Centre no later than Dec. 9.

Participation

I expect you to come prepared and to make productive contributions to each class. Should you miss more than two classes for undocumented reasons, you will forfeit this portion of your grade.

Learning outcomes

Students will develop an understanding of aesthetic and philosophical issues in early 20th-century intellectual culture. Students will analyze and evaluate primary and secondary sources in Schoenberg and Wittgenstein scholarship. Students will apply interdisciplinary insights in philosophy and musicology to general questions of modernism and modernity. Students will demonstrate what they have learned by producing a well-organized and well-written research project.

Statement on accommodation for medical illness

"In order to ensure fairness and consistency for all students, academic accommodation for work representing ten percent or more of the student's overall grade in the course shall be granted only in

those cases where there is documentation indicating that the student was seriously affected by illness and could not reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the office of the Associate Dean (Graduate Studies). Students with special learning needs or other circumstances are asked to inform the instructor as soon as possible so that necessary accommodations can be considered.” University policy regarding medical illness can be found here: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf

Statement on academic offences

“Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence,” as found here: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_grad.pdf

Statement on mental health

“As part of a successful graduate student experience at Western, we encourage students to make their health and wellness a priority. Western Graduate Instructional Information, 2019–20 provides several on-campus health-related services to help students achieve optimum health and engage in healthy living while pursuing a graduate degree. Students seeking help regarding mental health concerns are advised to speak to someone in whom they feel comfortable confiding, such as a faculty supervisor, a program advisor, or the Associate Dean (Graduate Studies).” Campus mental health resources may be found here: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/crisis.html>.

READINGS

Class 1 (9/14): **Introduction**

- Adorno, Theodor W. *Prisms*. Translated by Samuel Weber and Shierry Weber. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1983. [147–72]
- Malcolm, Norman, and G H von Wright. *Ludwig Wittgenstein: a Memoir*. Second Edition. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2001. [pp. 3–20]
- Monk, Ray. *How to Read Wittgenstein*. London: Granta Books, 2005. [pp. 3–14]
- Nupen, Christopher. “The Language of the New Music.” [Allegro Films London, 1985]. (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRI_ZSh6iF4)
- Schoenberg, Arnold. “My Evolution.” *The Musical Quarterly* 38, no. 4 (1952): 517–27.

Class 2 (9/21): **Schoenberg/Wittgenstein**

- Guter, Eran. “The Good, the Bad, and the Vacuous: Wittgenstein on Modern and Future Musics.” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 73, no. 4 (2015): 425–39.
- Schoenberg, Arnold. “New Music, Outmoded Music, Style and Idea (1946).” In *Style and Idea*, ed. by Leonard Stein and trans. by Leo Black, 113–24. London: Faber and Faber, 1984.
- Ware, Ben. *Dialectic of the Ladder: Wittgenstein, the Tractatus and Modernism*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015. [pp. 1–27]
- Wright, James K. *Schoenberg, Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*. Bern: Peter Lang Publishing, 2007. [pp. 11-57]

Class 3 (9/28): **Schoenberg/Wittgenstein**

- Goehr, Alexander. “Schoenberg and Karl Kraus: The Idea Behind the Music.” *Music Analysis* 4, no. 1 (1985): 59–71.
- Janik, Allan, and Stephen Toulmin. *Wittgenstein's Vienna*, New York: Simon and Schuster, 1973. [pp. 67–91]
- Kraus, Karl. *Dicta and Contradicta*. Translated by Jonathan McVity. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001. [pp. 61–96]
- Timms, Edward. *Kraus, Apocalyptic Satirist: Culture and Catastrophe in Habsburg Vienna*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986. [pp. 30–46; pp. 115–28]
- Wright, James K. *Schoenberg, Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*. Bern: Peter Lang Publishing, 2007. [pp. 59–106]

Class 4 (10/5): **Schoenberg/Wittgenstein**

- Adorno, Theodor W. *Philosophy of New Music*. Translated by Robert Hullot-Kentor, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2006. [pp. 50–57]
- Schoenberg, Arnold. “Composition with Twelve Tones (1941).” In *Style and Idea*, ed. by Leonard Stein and trans. by Leo Black, 214–45. London: Faber and Faber, 1984.
- Schoenberg, Arnold. “On Adorno and Composition with Twelve Tones.” In *A Schoenberg Reader: Documents of a Life*, ed. by Joseph Auner, 336–39. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.
- Wright, James K. *Schoenberg, Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*. Bern: Peter Lang Publishing, 2007. [pp. 107-63]

Class 5 (10/19): **Wittgenstein**

- Diamond, Cora. “Ethics, Imagination and the Method of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*.” In *The New Wittgenstein*, 149–73. Edited by Alice Crary and Rupert Read. New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Kenny, Anthony. *Wittgenstein*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006. [pp. 44–57]
- Monk, Ray. *How to Read Wittgenstein*. London: Granta Books, 2005. [pp. 15–43]
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Translated by C. K. Ogden [and F. P. Ramsey].

London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1922. [pp. 23–38 (props 1–4.002)]

Class 6 (10/26): Wittgenstein

- Adorno, Theodor W. *Hegel: Three Studies*. Translated by Shierry Weber Nicholzen, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1993. [pp. 100–03]
- Benjamin, Walter. "On Language as Such and on the Language of Man." In *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, Volume 1: 1913–1926*, 62–74. Edited by Marcus Bullock and Michael W Jennings.
- Monk, Ray. *How to Read Wittgenstein*. London: Granta Books, 2005. [pp. 44–53]
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Translated by C. K. Ogden [and F. P. Ramsey]. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1922. [pp. 38–55 (props 4.022–5.1)]

Reading Week (11/2): No class

Class 7 (11/9): Wittgenstein

- Cohen, Daniel. "Tractatio Logico-Philosophica: Engendering Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*." In *Feminist Interpretations of Ludwig Wittgenstein*, edited by Naomi Scheman and Peg O'Connor, 138–58. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002.
- Szabados, Béla. "Was Wittgenstein an Anti-Semite? The Significance of Anti-Semitism for Wittgenstein's Philosophy." *Canadian Journal of Philosophy* 29, no. 1 (1999): 1–27.
- Ware, Ben. "Ethics and the Literary in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 72, no. 4 (2011): 595–611.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. "A Lecture on Ethics." *The Philosophical Review* 74, no. 1 (1965): 3–12.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*. Translated by C. K. Ogden [and F. P. Ramsey]. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd, 1922. [pp. 74–90 (props 5.6–7)].

Class 8 (11/16): Schoenberg

- Lewin, David. "Moses Und Aron: Some General Remarks, and Analytic Notes for Act I, Scene 1." *Perspectives of New Music* 6, no. 1 (1967): 1–17.
- Lindenberger, Herbert. "Arnold Schoenberg's *Der Biblische Weg And Moses Und Aron*: On the Transactions of Aesthetics and Politics." *Modern Judaism* 9, no. 1 (1989): 55–70.
- Schoenberg, Arnold. "A Play About the Formation of a Jewish State." In *A Schoenberg Reader: Documents of a Life*, ed. by Joseph Auner, 202–07. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.
- Steiner, George. "Schoenberg's 'Moses and Aaron'." *Encounter* 24, no. 6 (1965): 40–46.

Class 9 (11/23): Schoenberg

- Covach, John. "The Sources of Schoenberg's 'Aesthetic Theology'." *19th-Century Music* 19, no. 3 (1996): 252–62.
- Dahlhaus, Carl. *Schoenberg and the New Music*. Translated by Derrick Puffett and Alfred Clayton. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1987. [pp. 81–93]
- Ringer, Alexander L. "Arnold Schoenberg and the Prophetic Image in Music." *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* 1, no. 1 (1976): 26–38.

Class 10 (11/30): Schoenberg

- Assmann, Jan. "Moses Tragicus: Freud, Schoenberg, and the Defeated Moses: Freud Birthday Lecture, Sigmund Freud Museum Vienna 6.5.2006." *American Imago* 76, no. 4 (2019): 569–88.
- Brown, Julie. "Schoenberg as Christ." In *Schoenberg and Redemption*, 33–55. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Freud, Sigmund. "The Moses of Michelangelo." In *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume 13 (1913–1914): Totem and Taboo, and Other Works*, 210–238. Translated by James Strachley. London: The Hogarth Press, 1955.

Class 11 (12/7): **Coda**

Adorno, Theodor W. "Sacred Fragment: Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*." In *Quasi una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music*, 225-48. Translated by Rodney Livingstone. London: Verso, 1998.

Borges, Jorge Luis. "Averroës's Search." In *Collected Fictions*, 235-41. Translated by Andrew Hurley. New York: Penguin Books, 1998.

Ross, Alex. "Whistling in the Dark: Schoenberg's Unfinished Revolution." *The New Yorker*, February 11, 2002. [[https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/02/18/whistling-in-the-dark-2.](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2002/02/18/whistling-in-the-dark-2)]