



MUSIC 9723A
SCHOENBERG/WITTGENSTEIN
FALL 2019

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

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Class meetings: Tuesdays 1:30–4:30 (TC 340)

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:

1. Schoenberg, Arnold. *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of Its Presentation*. Edited, translated, and with a commentary by Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006.
2. 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, two presentations with written summaries, one extended essay.

Evaluation

- Essay (20 pages): 60% [thesis statement: 5%; bibliography: 10%; essay: 45%]
- Presentations: 25% [10% + 15%]
- Participation: 15%

Essay (approx. 5000 words)

Your topic should treat some aspect of (musical) language and/or representation in Schoenberg and/or Wittgenstein. A thesis statement and bibliography are due on Nov. 12. The final essay and bibliography are due Dec. 3.

Presentations (25 and 40 minutes)

Generally, you'll begin with ideas from the readings, but feel free to direct these toward interests of your own. Your presentations are an opportunity to steer the course "off course" and teach us something while you're at it. 750- and 1000-word overviews will be due one week after your first and second presentations.

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 music and 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

Week 1 (9/10): Introduction

Nupen, Christopher. "The Language of the New Music." [Allegro Films London, 1985].
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DRI_ZSh6iF4)

Week 2 (9/17): Schoenberg/Wittgenstein

Schoenberg, Arnold. "My Evolution." *The Musical Quarterly* 38, no. 4 (1952): 517–27.
Wright, James K. *Schoenberg, Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*. Bern: Peter Lang Publishing, 2007.
[pp. 11-57]

Week 3 (9/24): Schoenberg/Wittgenstein

Schoenberg, Arnold. *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of Its Presentation*. Edited, translated, and with a commentary by Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006. [pp. 1–25]
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.
Wright, James K. *Schoenberg, Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*. Bern: Peter Lang Publishing, 2007.
[pp. 59–106]

Week 4 (10/1): Schoenberg/Wittgenstein

Schoenberg, Arnold. *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of Its Presentation*. Edited, translated, and with a commentary by Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006. [pp. 25–53]
Wright, James K. *Schoenberg, Wittgenstein and the Vienna Circle*. Bern: Peter Lang Publishing, 2007.
[pp. 107-63]

Week 5 (10/8): Schoenberg/Wittgenstein

Monk, Ray. *How to Read Wittgenstein*. London: Granta Books, 2005. [pp. 1–33]
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. *The Musical Idea and the Logic, Technique, and Art of Its Presentation*. Edited, translated, and with a commentary by Patricia Carpenter and Severine Neff. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2006. [pp. 53–74]

Week 6 (10/15): 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.
Monk, Ray. *How to Read Wittgenstein*. London: Granta Books, 2005. [pp. 34–53]
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)]

Week 7 (10/22): Wittgenstein

Kenny, Anthony. *Wittgenstein*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006. [pp. 44–57]
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. *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)]

Week 8 (10/29): Wittgenstein

Gyger, Elliott, and Alexander Rehding. "Idea and Image in Schoenberg's *Moses und Aron*." *The Opera Quarterly* 23, no. 4 (2007): 369–72.

Steiner, George. "Schoenberg's 'Moses and Aaron'." *Encounter* 24, no. 6 (1965): 40–46.

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)].

Reading Week (11/5): No class

Week 9 (11/12): Schoenberg

Cherlin, Michael. "Schoenberg's Representation of the Divine in *Moses und Aron*." *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* 9, no. 2 (1986): 210–16.

Cross, Charlotte M. "Three Levels of 'Idea' in Schoenberg's Thought and Writings." *Current Musicology* 30 (1980): 24–36.

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.

Rehding, Alexander. "Moses's Beginning." *The Opera Quarterly* 23, no. 4 (2007): 395–417.

Week 10 (11/19): Schoenberg

Covach, John. "The Sources of Schoenberg's 'Aesthetic Theology'." *19th-Century Music* 19, no. 3 (1996): 252–62.

Goehr, Alexander. "Schoenberg and Karl Kraus: The Idea Behind the Music." *Music Analysis* 4, no. 1 (1985): 59–71.

Ringer, Alexander L. "Arnold Schoenberg and the Prophetic Image in Music." *Journal of the Arnold Schoenberg Institute* 1, no. 1 (1976): 26–38.

Week 11 (11/26): Schoenberg

Berry, Mark. "Arnold Schoenberg's 'Biblical Way': From 'Die Jakobsleiter' to 'Moses und Aron'." *Music and Letters* 89, no. 1 (2008): 84–108.

Brown, Julie. "Schoenberg as Christ." In *Schoenberg and Redemption*, 33–55. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014.

Week 12 (12/3): Schoenberg

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.