

The Tradition of Critical Philosophy [REVISED] **Stanisław Kamiński Memorial Lectures**

John Skorupski

These lectures will explain and examine the tradition of ‘Critical’ philosophy. The use of the word ‘Critical’ follows Kant, and the central question in this tradition is his question, how is knowledge possible? The lectures will discuss: (1) Kant and his critics; (2) The Vienna Circle and the early Wittgenstein; (3) Late Wittgenstein; (4) Recent discussion of reasons and rationality.

Discussion of Kant will focus on his ‘transcendental idealism’ in its application to knowledge, freedom and religion.

Discussion of the Vienna Circle will focus on its accounts of meaning, analyticity and convention.

Discussion of late Wittgenstein will discuss the Critical significance of the ‘rule-following considerations.’

The final section, (4), will explain how recent discussions of metanormativity can be seen as a revival of the Critical tradition, and discuss whether it can succeed. A recurrent question will be whether this Critical tradition can escape from Kant’s transcendental idealism, that is, whether it can ‘vindicate’ knowledge and freedom without it.

Background Reading

Broad, C. D. 1978. *Kant, An Introduction*

Carnap, Rudolf, ‘Empiricism, Semantics and Ontology’, e.g. in Carnap, *Meaning and Necessity*, or Benacerraf and Putnam eds., *Philosophy of Mathematics*

Friedman, Michael, 1991. ‘The Re-evaluation of Logical Positivism’, in *Journal of Philosophy*, 10.

Kant, Immanuel, *The Critique of Pure Reason*

Kripke, Saul, 1982. *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*

Putnam, Hilary, 2004. *Ethics without Ontology*, Part 1.

Scanlon, T. M. 2014. *Being Realistic about Reasons*

Skorupski, J. 2010. *The Domain of Reasons* (Introduction, Part IV)

Skorupski, J. 2012. ‘Précis of *The Domain of Reasons*,’ in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, LXXXV.

Stroud, Barry, 1984. *The Significance of Philosophical Scepticism*

Wittgenstein, L. 1953. *Philosophical Investigations*

Outline of lectures and set reading

Session 1 11 April The ‘Copernican Revolution’ and Transcendental Idealism

Set Reading:

Kant, ‘Preface’ and ‘Introduction’ to the *Critique of Pure Reason* (first edition, and second edition Bxiii ff)

Skorupski, Unpublished. ‘Freedom in Kant’s Revolution’

Stroud, B, *The Significance of Philosophical Scepticism*, ch IV, ‘Internal and External: “Empirical” and “Transcendental”’

Session 2 12 April Freedom and Reasons

Kant, ‘Third and Fourth Conflicts of Pure Reason’ *Critique of Pure Reason*, A444/B472 – A461/B489

Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, ch.3

Skorupski, Unpublished. ‘Freedom in Kant’s Revolution’, 2, 4.1 – 4.

Session 3 13 April God: metaphysical and moral proofs

Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, A567/B595 – A642/B670

Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason* 5.122 – 5.148

Skorupski, Unpublished. ‘Freedom in Kant’s Revolution,’ 1.6, 3.6-7, 4.5

Session 4 14 April Carnap on Internal and External Questions

Carnap, Rudolf, ‘Empiricism, Semantics and Ontology’

Stroud, B, *The Significance of Philosophical Scepticism*, ch V, ‘Internal and External: Meaningful and Meaningless’

Session 5 15 April Wittgenstein on rule-following

Kripke, Saul, 1982. *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*, ch 2.

————— No lectures on 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd or 25th April —————

Session 6 26 April Normativity and Reasons

Skorupski, J. *The Domain of Reasons* (Chs 1 & 2)

Session 7 27 April Scanlon on Reasons

Scanlon, T. M. *Being Realistic about Reasons*, lecture 2, ‘Metaphysical Objections’

Skorupski, unpublished. ‘Scanlon on the Ontology of Reasons’

Session 8 28 April Irrealist cognitivism

Skorupski, J. *The Domain of Reasons* (Ch 17, ‘The Ontology of Reason Relations’)

29 April

Oral Examination