



Master Class with Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Küne (Hamburg)

Lies, Falsehoods, Truths

Reflections on Bolzano and Prior (3/5 ETCS)

28th – 29th September, 2012

The seminar will fall into two parts. The first part is on *liars*, '*liars*' and *harmless self-reference*. Bernard Bolzano, the great-grandfather of analytical philosophy, and a famous Italian monk, better known for his spectacular death than for his philosophy, will play leading roles in our discussion. The point of departure will be Bolzano's account of a fallacy *he* called The Liar and of an antinomy that *we* unfortunately got used to calling The Liar. Bolzano's reaction to the fallacy is praiseworthy, and it can also be used for the logical rehabilitation of the legendary Cretan who called all Cretans liars. Russell's exposition of the antinomy ("Its simplest form is afforded by the man who says 'I am lying'; if he is lying, he is speaking the truth, and vice versa") is flawed. Girolamo Savonarola did a better job. Bolzano may be right in rejecting his attempt at a solution, but he himself does not succeed either. In the course of his discussion, though, he makes a very acute observation concerning *every* self-referential sentence, no matter whether it is pathological or not: some care is needed when one wants formulate its *negation*. Problems also arise when harmlessly self-referential sentences occur in *deductive arguments* and when one tries to *translate* such sentences.

The second part of the seminar is on the structure of *truth talk*, of '*propositional attitude*' reports and of *ascriptions of sentential meanings*. Its point of departure is the following question: is the truth operator ('It is true that ...') explanatorily more fundamental than the truth predicate ('... is true') if we want to elucidate our everyday concept of truth? Tackling this problem requires close attention to the syntactical and semantical status of *that*-clauses. The questions such clauses evoke when we brood on truth ascriptions ('It is true that *p*') reappear when we consider reports of 'propositional attitudes' ('She ϕ s that *p*') and ascriptions of sentential meaning ('Sentence S means that *p*'). The assumption that *that*-clauses designate propositions is threatened by certain substitution failures. Perhaps we can make sense of answers to the questions what is true, what she believes or what such-and-such a sentence means - without assuming that there are such things as truths, contents of beliefs, or meanings of sentences. In each of these cases Arthur N. Prior opted for the same treatment of *that*-clauses. By Bolzano's lights it is a mistreatment. Frege's position is less clear-cut.

Venue: Philosophisches Seminar, Zürichbergstrasse 43, 8044 Zürich, Room: ZUP-U-8
Registration (required) and contact: phd@philos.uzh.ch.



Friday, 28th September 2012

Morning 9:30

Session 1a: Bolzano on self-confessed liars

Bernard Bolzano: *Wissenschaftslehre* (1837), vol. III, pp. 487-488, no. 5, (original pagination), repr. Aalen 1981; or: *Bolzano-Gesamtausgabe*, Series 1, Vol. 13/3, Stuttgart 1992.

Wolfgang Künne: 'Über Lug und Trug' (1999), in: ders., *Versuche über Bolzano / Essays on Bolzano*, St. Augustin 2008, 121-156.

St. Paul: *Letter to Titus* 1: 12-13.

Session 1b: Russell on the 'liar' and Kripke on Russell on Moore

G. E. Moore: 'The Epimenides' (1948), in: *The Commonplace Book of G. E. Moore*, London 1962, 378-384.

Saul Kripke: 'Outline of a Theory of Truth', Sect. I: The Problem, in: *Journal of Philosophy* 72 (1975), 690-694.

Session 2: Fra Girolamo and Bolzano on 'This (\leftrightarrow) is false'

Girolamo Savonarola: *Compendium Logicae* (1492), lib. X. cap. 18, in: Savonarola, *Opere*, vol. XIII: *Scritti filosofici*, Rome 1982, p. 151.

Bernard Bolzano: *Wissenschaftslehre*, vol. I, pp. 78-80. Repr. Aalen 1981; or: *Bolzano-Gesamtausgabe*, Series 1, Vol. 11/1, Stuttgart 1985.

Afternoon 14:00

Session 3a: Negating self-referential sentences

Bernard Bolzano: *Wissenschaftslehre*, vol. I, pp. 78-80.

Session 3b: Self-referential sentences in deductive arguments

Bill Hart: 'On Self-Reference', in: *Philosophical Review* 79 (1970), 523-528.

Session 3c: Translating self-referential sentences

Tyler Burge: 'Self-Reference and Translation', in: F. & M. Guenther (eds.), *Meaning and Translation*, London 1978, 137-153.



Saturday, 29th September 2012

Morning 10:00

Session 1: Truth talk

Arthur N. Prior: 'Correspondence Theory of Truth', in: P. Edwards (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, London 1967, vol. 2, 223-232.

—: *Objects of Thought*, Oxford 1971, ch. 1.

Kevin Mulligan: 'The Truth Predicate vs the Truth Connective. On Taking Connectives Seriously', in: *Dialectica* 64 (2010) 565-584.

Wolfgang Künne: 'Truth Without Truths? Reply to Mulligan', in: *Dialectica* 64, 597-615.

Session 2: 'Propositional attitude' reports

Arthur N. Prior: 'Oratio obliqua', in: Prior, *Papers in Logic and Ethics*, London 1976, 147-158.

—: *Objects of Thought*, Oxford 1971, 16-21.

Jeffrey C. King: 'Designating Propositions', in: *Philosophical Review* 111 (2002) 341-371.

Graeme Forbes: 'Content and Theme in Attitude Ascriptions' (Jan 2011), (online).

Afternoon 14:00

Session 3: Meaning ascriptions

Arthur N. Prior: 'Some Problems of Self-Reference in John Buridan', in: Prior, *Papers in Logic and Ethics*, London 1976, 130-146, esp. 137 f.

Newton Garver: 'Varieties of Use and Mention', in: *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 26 (1965) 230-238.

Session 4: Frege on 'abstract noun clauses'

Gottlob Frege: 'On Sense and Reference' (1892), 34 f, 37 ff (original pagination).

Wolfgang Künne: *Die Philosophische Logik Gottlob Freges*, Frankfurt/M 2010, 291 ff, 410-422.

No fees apply, but please note that participants are expected to have done the reading of the texts. Please note that PhD students at the UZH are required to book the module in order to get 3 or 5 credit points.