METHODS OF CAUSAL INFERENCE AND

SCIENTIFIC REPRESENTATION (MCISR) SEMINAR

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SEMINARIO SOBRE MÉTODOS DE INFERENCIA CAUSAL Y

REPRESENTACIÓN CIENTÍFICA (MICRC)

THURSDAY 2 MARCH 2017   JUEVES 2 DE MARZO DE 2017

Seminar Room B-011 / Seminario B-011

Department of Logic and Philosophy of Science / Departmento de Lógica y Filosofía de la Ciencia

Faculty of Philosophy, Complutense University/ Facultad de Filosofía (UCM)

13:00 – 15:00 Constantine Sandis (Uiversity of Hertfordshire): "**Wittgenstein on Probability and Induction**"

Co-organized by the **Critical Materialism** Research Group (UCM)

For further info / información: msuarez@filos.ucm.es

Directions / Dirección: Faculty of Philosophy, Complutense University of Madrid
Metro: Ciudad Universitaria
Google map: https://goo.gl/Kc8kqH

GOBIERNO DE ESPAÑA — MINISTERIO DE ECONOMÍA Y COMPETITIVIDAD

UNIVERSIDAD COMPLUTENSE MADRID

RESUMEN: **Wittgenstein on Probability and Induction**

Constantine Sandis (Uiversity of Hertfordshire)

This paper traces the development of Wittgenstein's thought on probability and inductive reasoning, from the early notebooks (1914) to those remarks in On Certainty (1949-51) concerned with experimental physics and the law of induction (esp. §§133ff; 337ff.; 599ff.) Wittgenstein's early thinking struggles to comprehend to what extent, if any, 'laws' of induction and causation say anything about the world. This reasoning culminates in his famous 'Humean' conclusion that 'It is an hypothesis that the sun will rise tomorrow: and that means that we do not know whether it will rise' (Tractatus 6.36311). In his later work, by contrast, Wittgenstein maintains that we can indeed know such things, though not via inductive inference (a view which is arguably closer to that of Hume himself): 'the squirrel does not infer by induction that it is going to need stores next week as well. And no more do we need a law of induction to justify our actions or our predictions '(On Certainty § 287). In between these early and late stages he appeals to the concept of probability as a way of connecting hypotheses to reality without jumbling the a priori together with the empirical (here he repeatedly asserts that probability statements are unfalsifiable). Wittgenstein's ensuing discussions of the calculations of gamblers, insurance companies, and boiler manufacturers lead to a radical transformation of how we should think about the relation between reasons, probability, and certainty.