

End of Certainty? Fin de certitude? Ende der Gewißheit?

Our age has often been characterized as the age of the end of certainty and of the grand systems on which certainty has been founded. Is such a characterization a simple constation, or is it a description of an actual state of affairs? Or is such a characterization, rather, prescribing to reality what reality ought to be? What does certainty mean for our contemporary world, and how does the proclaimed loss of certainty manifest itself in this world? In what relation does certainty stand to truth, probability, doubt, and conviction? Do different degrees of certainty exist? Are there any fixed criteria of certainty available to us? What role does certainty play in different fields of human action and knowledge?

Is uncertainty an »ontological« category, and if so, are disorder, chaos, accidentality, and indeterminacy its phenomenal forms?

While many of these questions have for a long time been a challenge to philosophical thought, of principal interest to us here are the following dimensions of the problem of certainty:

- In what ways is certainty involved with the constitution of the subject?*
- What is certainty's role and significance in the system of contemporary science?*
- In what ways is certainty present in the universal democratic politics?*
- In what ways is certainty inscribed in contemporary artistic practices?*

Needles to say that we are interested in getting answers to these questions regarding historical as well as contemporary aspects of the problem of certainty.

