

Adam Lipszyc

SEMINAR: Word, Flesh and Subjectivity: Selected Notions of the Human in the 20th Century Philosophy

Author:	Dr hab. Adam Lipszyc, prof. PAN Word, Flesh and Subjectivity: Notions of the Human in the 20th Century Philosophy	
	WINTER Semester	SPRING Semester
HOURS	30	30
FREQUENCY	4 x 45 every two weeks	4 x 45 every two weeks

THE COURSE CORRESPONDS TO TOPICS: Contemporary philosophy, history of philosophy, philosophy of subjectivity, philosophy of language, philosophy of body, philosophy of time

ASSESSMENT:

- The course is available to all students (General course open to all students)
- The course to be conducted in English
- Credit requirements: Active Participation during the Course plus Final Essay
- Time of classes: Wednesday
- Begins: 17:00
- Duration: 17:00-20:00 (4 x 45 minutes) every two weeks (for a total of 60 hours)
- Commencement date: October 24th

COURSE AIMS AND CONTENT:

20th century philosophy can be seen as an astonishingly rich collection of fresh, innovative visions of human subjectivity. In the past century various philosophers rebelled against simplified, overly rationalized visions of human being offered by early modern philosophy and the times of Enlightenment, while continuing and radicalizing certain trends of 19th century thought. In particular they tended to stress the significance of two crucial dimensions: first, the importance of language for our subjective constitution; second, the importance of the bodily dimension of our selves. As a result they came to appreciate and describe also such aspects of the human as temporality, mortality, memory, affect, power and gender. The course offers a selective overview of the most exciting notions of the human developed within the 20th century philosophy that can be still of much use in thinking about subjectivity within contemporary philosophy, as well as within sociology, cultural studies and human sciences in general. On order to set the ideas in motion from the very beginning, each class will be devoted to an in-depth discussion of two readings by two different authors with at least partly different take on a particular topic.

EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES:

Knowledge:

- Participants are expected to acquire the knowledge of a selection of 20th century philosophical conceptions of the human, with special attention paid to language and body.

Skills:

- Presenting various 20th century theories of humans subject
- Comparing the theories with each other
- Discussing and assessing the theories
- Applying the theories to examples taken from human sciences, art, literature and real life

Social Competence:

- Ability to present, discuss and argue for (as well as against) various notions of human subjectivity

THE CLASSES AND READINGS:

1. Man and Language: Ernst Cassirer and Hans-Georg Gadamer

Readings:

- Ernst Cassirer, *Essay on Man* (chapter: *Language*)
- Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Man and Language*

2. Language Games and Performativity: Ludwig Wittgenstein and J.L. Austin

Readings:

- Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations* (fragment)
- J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (fragment)

3. Laughing Bodies, Crying Bodies: Henri Bergson and Helmuth Plessner

Readings:

- Henri Bergson, *On Laughter* (fragment)
- Helmuth Plessner, *Laughing and Crying*

4. Mortality and Pain: Martin Heidegger and Ernst Jünger

Readings:

- Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (fragment)
- Ernst Jünger, *On Pain*

5. Phenomenology of the Bodily Experience: Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Emmanuel Lévinas

Readings:

- Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Body as Expression and Speech*
- Emmanuel Levinas, *Totality and Infinity* (fragment)

6. Narrative Self: Hannah Arendt and Paul Ricoeur

Readings:

- Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (fragment)
- Paul Ricoeur, *Oneself as Another* (fragment)

7. The Body and the City: Georg Simmel and Walter Benjamin

Readings:

- Walter Benjamin, *On Some Motifs in Baudelaire*
- Michel de Certeau, *Walking in the City*

8. Body, Rationalization and the Dialectic of Enlightenment: Siegfried Kracauer and Theodor Adorno

Readings:

- Siegfried Kracauer, *The Mass Ornament*
- Theodor Adorno (and Max Horkheimer), *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (chapter one)

9. Sexuality and Language: Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan

Readings:

- Sigmund Freud, *Three Essays on Sexual Theory* (2nd essay)
- Jacques Lacan, *The Instance of the Letter in the Unconscious, or Reason since Freud*

10. The Symbols and the Maternal: Hanna Segal and Julia Kristeva

Readings:

- Hanna Segal, *Symbolism*
- Julia Kristeva, *The Semiotic and the Symbolic*

11. Language, Body and Deconstruction: Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Nancy

Readings:

- Jacques Derrida, *Signature Event Context*
- Jean-Luc Nancy, *Corpus*

12. Body, Power and Gender: Michel Foucault and Judith Butler

Readings:

- Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality* (fragment)
- Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter* (fragment)

13. Body, Fold and Nomads: Gilles Deleuze and Rosi Braidotti

Readings:

- Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold* (fragment)
- Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects* (fragment)

14. Summary