
Michel Foucault observed that what is specific about the human species as it moves into the modern period and becomes aware of its “species-being” is that humans, unlike any other species, actively participate in their own speciation through the processes of language, labor and life. The contemporary explosion of biotechnology and its integration with information technology (and nanotechnology) has made visible this process in an unprecedented way. Yet the mechanisms of intervention in the process of speciation go much further back, to the rise of the new sciences of biology, philology, physics and economics, which together create, as Foucault argues, a new vision of “Man”: “man” as the producer of “man”. This new vision of “man” constitutes the backbone of post-Enlightenment thought’s essential project of grasping the totality of anthropological difference and of founding a new order of rational governance based upon that scientific knowledge of “man producing man”.

If some of the most important French philosophers of the 20th century, such as Foucault, Deleuze, Derrida, Badiou, and others, were primarily motivated by a critique of the Hegelian dialectic, one of the principal reasons for this methodological stance has to be found not in philosophy per se, but in history. Normally, this history would be understood as the history of human liberation, perhaps finally codified into the struggle between Communism and Capitalism. This course, however, begins with the hypothesis that displaces the site of struggle from politics to biopolitics, from ideology to species difference.

The dialectical relation between master and slave described by G.W.F. Hegel has provided a template for the which in which species difference in general has been imagined, cross-culturally, throughout the bifurcated, bi-polar, colonial-imperial experience of modernity. Humanity imagines itself not simply as a species among many, but as a species that can only entertain relations of mastery or slavery with other species.

Today, this model of civilization based on the dialectic of anthropological difference is on the verge of collapse. This course aims to give advanced young researchers in the Humanities a macro-perspective on this era of massive historical transition.
Unit 1. From Evolution to Individuation

Darwinism


Sexuality and Selection


From Evolution to Individuation

Simondon, Gilbert. Philosophy of the Transindividual.

Simondon, Gilbert. Two Lessons on Animal and Man.

Unit 2. Machines and Animals: The Anthropological Other

The Machine


The Animal

**Code: the integration of organic and non-organic registers (or, the HuMachine and the MachinAnimal)**


**Anthropological Difference and Race**


**Unit 3: The Apparatus of Anthropological Difference as the History of Modernity**

**Bacterial Culture, a.k.a. Colonial Modernity**


**Viral Culture, a.k.a. Postmodernity**


The Apparatus of “Life”


Species-Being: The Regime of Capitalist Accumulation (I)


Species-Being: The Regime of Capitalist Accumulation (II)
