



LANGUAGE & SUBJECTIVITY:

Theories of Formation

(Interdisciplinary Research)

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SPRING 2016 • SLA 515 / COM 514 • MONDAY • 1:30 pm - 4:30 pm

The purpose of the course is to examine key texts of the twentieth century that established the fundamental connection between language structures and practices on the one hand, and the formation of selfhood and subjectivity, on the other. In particular, the course will focus on theories that emphasize the role of formal elements in producing meaningful discursive and social effects. Works of Russian formalists and French (post)-structuralists will be discussed in connection with psychoanalytic and anthropological theories of formation.

Requirements:

Class Participation - 30%. Weekly Position Paper (no more than 250 words) - 20%.
 One oral presentation in class - 20%. Final Paper (3000-3500 words) - 30%

Books on order at Labyrinth:

Ferdinand de Saussure. *Course in General Linguistics.* Trans. by Wade Baskin. New York, 1959.

Jacques Lacan. *Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis.* Trans. by Anthony Wilden. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University, 1968.

Week one. Introduction

Week Two. *Systems: Displacements & Substitutions*

Ferdinand de Saussure. *Course in General Linguistics.* Trans. by Wade Baskin. New York, 1959.

Sigmund Freud. *The Interpretation of Dreams.* Trans. A. Brill. Wordsworth Edition Limited, 1997. Ch.6. The Dream-Work, pp. 169-352.

Week Three. *The Art of Estrangement*

Viktor Shklovsky. Art as Device. In: Viktor Shklovsky. *Theory of Prose.* Dalkey Archive Press, 1991, pp.1-15.

Viktor Shklovsky. Everything in Life Can Be Montaged – You Just Need to Find a Right Way. In: Viktor Shklovsky. *Energy of Delusion: A Book on Plot.* Trans. by Shushan Avagyan. Dalkey Archive Press, 2007, pp. 177-204.

Carlo Ginzburg. Clues: Roots of an Evidential Paradigm (pp. 96-125); The Inquisitor as Anthropologist (pp.156-164). In: Carlo Ginzburg. *Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method.* Trans. by John and Anne Tedeshi, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986.

Fredric Jameson. The Formalist Projection. In: Fredric Jameson. *The Prison-House of Language: A Critical Account of Structuralism and Formalism,* Princeton, 1972, pp. 43-101.

Optional: Boris Eikhenbaum. The Theory of the “Formal Method” (pp.99-140). In: *Russian Formalist Criticism, Four Essays.* Trans. by Lee T. Lemon and Marion J. Reis. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965.

Week Four. *Metaphor & Metonymy*

Roman Jakobson. Two aspects of Language and Two types of Aphasic Disturbances. In: Roman Jakobson and Morris Halle. *Fundamentals of Language.* The Hague: Mouton Publisher, 1956, pp. 69-96.

Jacques Lacan. Metaphor and Metonymy (I): “His sheaf was neither miserly nor spiteful”. Metaphor and Metonymy (II): Signifying articulation and transference of the signified. In: Jacques Lacan. *The Psychoses. 1955-1956. The Seminar of Jacques Lacan. Book III.* New York: WW Norton and Co, 1997, pp.214-230.

Marshall Sahlins. *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities. Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom.* Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1981.

Week Five. *Discoursing Subject*

Jacques Lacan. *Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis.* Trans. by Anthony Wilden. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University, 1968.

Jeffrey Mehlman. The "Floating Signifier": From Lévi-Strauss to Lacan, *Yale French Studies*, No. 48, *French Freud: Structural Studies in Psychoanalysis*. (1972), pp. 10-37.

Week Six. *Structuralists' Tales*

Vladimir Propp. *Morphology of the Folktale*. Trans. by Laurence Scott. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1968 (excerpts).

Claude Lévi-Strauss. Structure and Form: Reflection on a Work by Vladimir Propp. In: Vladimir Propp. *Theory and History of Folklore*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1968, pp. 167-188.

Vladimir Propp. The Structural and Historical Study of the Wondertale. In: Vladimir Propp. *Theory and History of Folklore*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1968, pp.67-81.

Claude Lévi-Strauss. The Structural Study of Myth. In: *Myth: A Symposium*. Ed. by Thomas A. Sebeok. Bloomington, 1972, pp. 81-106.

Week Seven. *Ordering Things*

Claude Levi-Strauss. Language and the Analysis of Social Laws (pp.55-66); Linguistics and Anthropology (67-80). In: Claude Levi-Strauss. *Structural Anthropology*. Trans. Claire Jakobson and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf. New York: Basic Books, 1963.

Michel Foucault. *The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences*. New York: Vintage Books. Preface, pp.xv-xxiv.

Michel Foucault. *The Archeology of Knowledge, and The Discourse on Language*. Trans. by A. M. Sheridan Smith. New York: Pantheon Books, 1971. Part I: Introduction (pp.3-20). Part II: The Discursive Regularities (pp.21-78). Part V. Conclusion (pp.199-214)

Michel Foucault. *The History of Sexuality. An Introduction. Vol.1*. Trans. by Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage Books, 1976. Part One We "Other Victorians" (1-14). Part Two The Repressive Hypothesis (15-49).

Week Eight. *Language: Aesthetics vs. Ideology*

Valentin Voloshimov. *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. Trans. by Ladislav Matejka and I.R. Titunik. Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1973. Part 1. The Philosophy of Language and Its Significance for Marxism (1-44); Part 2: Ch. 3. Verbal Interaction; Ch. 4. Theme and Meaning in Language (45-108).

Clifford Geertz. Ideology as a Cultural System. In: Clifford Geertz. *The Interpretation of Cultures*, New York, Basic Books, 1973, pp. 193-234.

Michele de Certeau. *The Capture of Speech and Other Political Writings*. Minneapolis, 1997, pp. 1-49.

Week Nine. *Writing Cultures*

- Sergei Eisenstein.** The Unexpected (pp.18-27); Cinematographic Principle and the Ideogram (pp.28-44); A Dialectical Approach to Film Form (pp.45-63); Methods of Montage (pp.72-83). In: Sergei Eisenstein. *Film Form: Essays in Film Theory*. Trans. by Jay Leyda. New York: A Harvest Book, 1949.
- Victor Turner.** Liminal to Liminoid, in Play, Flow, and Ritual. An Essay in Comparative Symbology. In: *Victor Turner. From Ritual to Theater: The Human Seriousness of Play*. NY, 1982, pp. 20-61.
- Optional reading: **Roland Barthes.** *Empire of Signs*. Trans. by Richard Howard. New York: Hill and Wang, 1982.

Week Ten. *Signifying Practices*

- Julia Kristeva. Revolution in Poetic Language.** In: The Kristeva Reader, ed. by Toril Moi. New York: Columbia UP, 1986, pp.89-136.
- Julia Kristeva.** Approaching Abjection. In: J. Kristeva, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1982, pp. 1-32.
- Julia Kristeva.** Life and Death in Speech. In: J. Kristeva, *Black Sun: Depression and Melancholia*. New York: Columbia UP, 1989, pp. 31-69.
- Pierre Bourdieu.** Symbolic Violence and Political Struggle. In: Pierre Bourdieu. *Pascalian Meditations*. Stanford, 1997, pp. 164-206.
- Optional Reading: **Julia Kristeva.** Symbolic Castration: A Question; The Inexpressible Child. In J. Kristeva, *New Maladies of the Soul*. New York: Columbia UP, pp. 87-113.

Week Eleven. *Structure, Sign, and Play*

- Jacques Derrida.** Force and Signification (pp. 3-30); Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences (pp.278-295). In: Jacques Derrida. *Writing and Difference*. Trans. by Alan Bass. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978.
- Jacques Derrida.** Signature Event Context (pp.307-330). In: Jacques Derrida. *Margins of Philosophy*. Trans. Alan Bass. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986.
- Judith Butler.** On Linguistic Vulnerability (1-43); Implicit Censorship and Discursive Agency. (127-165) In: Judith Butler. *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative*. NY: Routledge, 1997.

Week Twelve. *Floating Signifier*

- Slavoj Žižek.** Which Subject of the Real? In: Slavoj Žižek. *The Sublime Object of Ideology*. London: Verso, 1989, pp. 152-201.
- Homi Bhabha.** On Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse. In: Homi K. Bhabha. *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge, 1993, pp.85-93.
- Ernesto Laclau.** Why Do Empty Signifiers Matter to Politics? In: Ernesto Laclau. *Emancipation(s)*. London: Verso, 1996, pp. 36-47.
- Georgio Agamben.** *Means Without End: Notes on Politics* (excerpts). Minneapolis, 2000.