

Bruno Bosteels

THEORIES OF THE SUBJECT

**University of Toronto
Fall 2013
COL 2100H**

Course Description

This seminar will revisit some major texts and concerns in the theoretical humanities that develop genealogical, psychoanalytical or political theories of the subject, roughly from Marx until today. The goal is to come to a critical understanding of the centrality of this notion of the subject as one of the founding concepts of modernity, as well as to draw out all the consequences of its crisis in radical humanistic (or even posthumanist) thought today. Thinkers to be discussed further include Freud, Foucault, Badiou, Butler, Althusser, and Rozitchner.

Reading Assignments

Week 1: September 20

10:00-12:00: Introduction

13:00-15:00: Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality* (Essays 1-2)

Week 2: October 4

10:00-12:00: Freud, *Group Psychology and Analysis of the Ego*

13:00-15:00: Freud, *Moses and Monotheism*

Week 3: October 18

10:00-12:00: Marx, Introduction, *Grundrisse*

13:00-15:00: Marx, Fragment on machines from *Grundrisse* (pp. 690-712 Penguin)
Paolo Virno, "Ten Theses on the Multitude and Post-Fordist Capitalism"
(available [here](http://www.generation-online.org/c/fcmultitude3.htm)) <http://www.generation-online.org/c/fcmultitude3.htm>

Week 4: November 1

10:00-12:00: Foucault, *Hermeneutics of the Subject* (pp. 491-505, 1-42, 81-106, 125-146, 247-270, 331-355, 453-476)

13:00-15:00: Rozitchner, *El terror y la gracia* and *La Cosa y la Cruz*
(selected translations in English)

Week 5: November 15

10:00-12:00: Althusser, "Marxism and Humanism," *For Marx*
Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses"

13:00-15:00 Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power*

Week 6: November 29

10:00-12:00: Badiou, *Theory of the Subject* (parts I-III)

13:00-15:00: Badiou, *Theory of the Subject* (parts IV-VI)
Badiou, "Theory of the Subject," in *Being and Event*

Course Requirements

All students are expected to have read the assigned texts before coming to each class. Active participation in the class discussion is central to the good functioning of the seminar. All students will also be expected to give a concise 10-minute oral presentation on one of the assigned readings, or a segment thereof. A final paper of 15 pages is due at the end of the seminar, on a topic to be discussed beforehand with the instructor.

Evaluation

The course evaluation will be based on the following criteria:

- (1) active participation in class discussions (20%)
- (2) oral presentation on assigned reading (20%)
- (3) final paper of 15 pages double spaced including MLA style bibliography (60%)

Deadline for final paper: TBD