

AP2170P/ 2179P/ 3170P/3179P Modern Self as Subject

Semester 2: Classroom-based (AP2170P, AP3170P);

Online (AP2179P, AP3179P)

Description

Can my experience of myself be trusted as what is finally real? Or is this experience just another obstacle to knowing things as they are? This unit explores the modern project, beginning with Descartes, and continuing through Hume and Kant, to place the knowing self at the centre of existence.

Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, it is expected that students will be able to:

1. Debate and appreciate the issues informing origination of the term “subject” (with Aristotle), and its link with the question of "substance", as this continues into medieval philosophy
2. Distinguish philosophically the successive “turnings” by which the notion of the substantial subject evolves into “self” through the modern period (with Descartes, Hume and Kant).
3. Critically explain the philosophical issues involved in the post-Kantian attempt to salvage the substantiality of the self.
4. Classify the various accounts of the substantial self in relation other philosophical categorisations and distinctions. (Examples of these: epistemology vs. ontology, soul vs. body, mind vs. matter, freedom vs. necessity, human vs. animal, rationalism vs. empiricism).
5. **(For Level 3 only)** develop a sustained argument for or against a given philosophical account of subjectivity, as regards its internal coherence and/or consistency with wider accounts of experience.

Assessment

Assessment Type	Weighting
Level 2: Classroom-based	
Essay (2500words)	50%
Essay (2500words)	50%
Level 2: Online	
Essay (2000words)	40%
Essay (2000 words)	40%
Weekly participation online (1000 words)	20%
Level 3: Classroom-based	
Essay (3000words)	50%
Essay (3000words)	50%
Level 3: Online	
Essay (2400words)	40%
Essay (2400 words)	40%
Weekly participation online (1200 words)	20%

Pre-requisite: N/A

Lecturer: John Martis

Recommended reading

* = set texts recommended for purchase

*Descartes, René. *“Discourse on Method” and “The Meditations.”* Trans. and introd. F.E. Sutcliffe. Penguin Classics. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968.

*Hume, David. *A Treatise on Human Nature.* Introd. Ernest C. Mossner. Penguin Classics. London: Penguin Books, 1969.

Guyer, Paul, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Kant, Immanuel. *Critique of Pure Reason.* Trans. and ed. Paul Guyer and Allen W. Wood. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

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*Melchert, Norman. *The Great Conversation: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy*. 4th ed. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2001.

Robinson, David, and C. Garratt. *Introducing Descartes*. Cambridge: Icon Books, 1999.

[** A book sought in the “Introducing -----” Series (Introducing Kant, Introducing Descartes, etc.) can often be found under the alternative title “----- for Beginners” (Kant for Beginners, Descartes for Beginners, etc.), and vice versa.

*Schacht, R. *Classical Modern philosophers: Descartes to Kant*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984.

Snell, R.J., and Steven F. McGuire, eds. *Subjectivity: Ancient and Modern*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2016.

Uleman, Jennifer K. *An Introduction to Kant’s Moral Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Want, Christopher and Andrzej Klimowski. *Introducing Kant*. Cambridge: Icon Books, 1999.

AP9170P/ AP9179P Modern Self as Subject

Semester 2: Classroom-based (AP9170P);

Online (AP9179P)

Description

Can my experience of myself be trusted as what is finally real? Or is this experience just another obstacle to knowing things as they are? This unit explores the modern project, beginning with Descartes, and continuing through Hume and Kant, to place the knowing self at the centre of existence.

Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this unit, it is expected that students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate a grasp of Aristotle's notion of "the subject", as that relates to "substance" and continues into medieval philosophy.
2. Grasp insights and analyse arguments by which the Aristotelian substantial subject evolves into the modern "self" (with Descartes, Hume and Kant).
3. Integrate the above knowledge with other philosophical concepts and distinctions (epistemology vs. ontology, soul vs. body, mind vs. matter, freedom vs. necessity, human vs. animal, rationalism vs. empiricism).
4. Develop a sustained argument for or against a particular philosophical account of subjectivity, in terms of its internal coherence and/or consistency with lived experience.
5. Reflect at meta-level on the legacy afforded our own time by the above approaches to locating "subjectivity".

Assessment

Assessment Type	Weighting
Classroom-based	
Essay (3000words)	50%
Essay (3000words)	50%
Level 2: Online	
Essay (2400words)	40%
Essay (2400 words)	40%
Weekly participation online (1200 words)	20%

Pre-requisite: N/A

Lecturer: John Martis

Recommended reading

* = set texts recommended for purchase

*Descartes, René. *Discourse on Method* and *The Meditations*. Trans. and introd. F.E. Sutcliffe. Penguin Classics. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968.

*Hume, David. *A Treatise on Human Nature*. Introd. Ernest C. Mossner. Penguin Classics. London: Penguin Books, 1969.

Guyer, Paul, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

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