



**Я ЕСТЬ ДРУГОЙ:  
Post-human, Post-Soviet Poetics**

**Directed Reading  
in Slavic Literature and Critical Theory**

**Adviser:** Marijeta Bozovic, Slavic Dept.

**Graduate Student:** Ingrid Nordgaard

**Time:** Mondays 11:00-1:00

**Description:**

Cary Wolf describes posthumanism as what “comes both before and after humanism: before in the sense that it names the embodiment and embeddedness of the human being in not just its biological but also its technological world, the prosthetic coevolution of the human animal with the technology of tools and external archival mechanisms (such as language and culture)...and all of which comes before that historically specific thing called ‘the human’ that Foucault’s archeology excavates. But it comes after in the sense that posthumanism names a historical moment in which the decentering of the human by its imbrication in technical, medical, informatics, and economic networks is increasingly impossible to ignore, a historical development that points toward the necessity of new theoretical paradigms (but also thrusts them on us), a new mode of thought that comes after the cultural repressions and fantasies, the philosophical protocols and evasions, of humanism as a historically specific phenomenon” (*What is Posthumanism?* xv-xvi).

This directed reading course will survey the critical theories that shaped, echo, or build on notions of the posthuman, focusing on the making/unmaking of the subject, subjectivisation and collectivization, the human and the machine, the human and the animal, trauma and affect theory. The majority of primary readings for the course will be theoretical, but discussions, the final two weeks of reading, and assignments will build towards application of such theoretical tools to post-Soviet cultural productions.

**Requirements:**

- Weekly reader’s diary: extended notes summarizing each reading, situating in theoretical and historical context, and speculating on applications to Soviet/post-Soviet cultural productions
- Intervention assignment: critical pushback, historicizing or amending a particularly tempting theorist
- Prospectus: for an article, conference talk, or multiple projects, illustrating applications of course material to further research

## Syllabus:

### Week 1:

Cary Wolfe, *What is Post-Humanism?* (Animal Studies, Disability Studies, after the Subject)  
+ Alexandre Kojève, footnote to the *Introduction to the Reading of Hegel*  
+ Oxana Timofeeva, "History of Animals"  
(+ "The End of the World" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZZ6haWym3hw>)

### Week 2:

Michel Foucault, *The Birth of Biopolitics Lectures*  
+ *The Government of Life: Foucault, Biopolitics, and Neoliberalism*, ed. Vanessa Lemm, Miguel Vatter

### Week 3:

Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*  
+ *The Open: Man and Animal*

### Week 4:

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*  
+ selections from *A Thousand Plateaus*

### Week 5:

Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits*  
+ selections from *Jacques Lacan (Routledge Critical Thinkers)*, ed. Sean Homer

### Week 6:

Jacques Rancière, *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*  
+ selections from *Jacques Rancière: Politics, History, Aesthetics*, ed. Phil Watts, Gabriel Rockhill

### Week 7:

Judith Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself*  
+ selections from *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political*

### Week 8:

Barbara Johnson, *Persons and Things*  
+ selections from *Mother Tongues*

### Week 9:

Donna Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs and Women*  
+ selections from Fred Jameson, *Archeologies of the Future*

### Week 10:

Elaine Scarry, *Body in Pain*  
+ Etienne Balibar, "Racism and Nationalism"

### Week 11:

*The Future of Trauma Theory*, ed. Gert Buelens, Samuel Durrant, Robert Eaglestone  
+ Judith Butler, "Trauma and the Victim" (2006 lecture)

**Week 12:**

Brian Massumi, *What Animals Teach Us about Politics*

+ selections from *The Affect Theory Reader*, ed. Melissa Gregg, Gregory Seigworth

**Week 13-14:**

*Chto delat'* and the new Russians:

Theories and practices by Aleksei Penzin, Artem Magun, Igor Chubarov, Keti Chukhrov