

PH9A5-30 Topics in 20th Century French Philosophy I

21/22

Department

Philosophy

Level

Taught Postgraduate Level

Module leader

Credit value

30

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

Frantz Fanon is one of the most important and influential philosophers of the 20th century. This module consists in a close reading of his two major works, *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), and of a series of other writings on racism, colonialism and mental illness. By addressing Fanon's engagement with (and critique of) phenomenology, existentialism and psychoanalysis, it reconstructs his intellectual trajectory from his theorisation of blackness and anti-Black racism to his original views about a postcolonial culture and society.

Module aims

This module aims (a) to provide students with an in-depth knowledge of Fanon's philosophical work, especially on topics such as race and racism, colonialism, violence, language, affect, sexuality, mental illness; (b) to provide them with a detailed understanding of the work of some of Fanon's main (direct and indirect) interlocutors, such as Hegel, Marx, Benjamin, Césaire, Sartre, Foucault; (c) to get them to think critically about the relevance of Fanon's work for contemporary issues in philosophy and society at large; (d) to encourage them to develop their own original philosophical arguments and research projects. No prior knowledge of Fanon's thought is required.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Week 1: Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (introduction & chapter 1); Sartre, 'Black Orpheus'

Week 2: Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (sections from chapters 2-4); Capécia, *I Am a Martinican Woman* (sections); Guex, *The Abandonment Neurosis* (sections)

Week 3: Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (sections from chapters 5-8); Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit* (sections); Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* & 'Anti-Semite and Jew' (sections)

Week 4: Fanon, 'Racism and Culture'; Césaire, 'Discourse on Colonialism'

Week 5: Fanon, *Decolonising Madness* (sections from chapters 1-4); Foucault, *History of Madness & Psychiatric Power* (sections)

Week 7: Fanon, *Decolonising Madness* (sections from chapters 5-9); Foucault, *On the Government of the Living & Wrong-Doing, Truth-Telling* (sections)

Week 8: Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (chapter 1); Benjamin, 'Critique of Violence'

Week 9: Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (sections from chapters 2-3); Marx, *The Class Struggles in France 1848-1850 & The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (sections)

Week 10: Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (sections from chapters 4-5 & conclusion); Sartre, 'Preface to *The Wretched of the Earth*'

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Understand and write critically on some of the major figures of the twentieth-century French tradition in philosophy.
- The ability to expound and explain, in both oral and written form, difficult modern philosophical texts.
- Understand and interpret certain texts that are central to modern Continental philosophy, and relate them to on-going philosophical debates.
- Understand a significant portion of the modern Continental philosophical landscape.

Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

Subject specific skills

Students will acquire an in-depth knowledge of the philosophy of Frantz Fanon, from *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) to *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961).

Students will acquire a familiarity with and develop a critical assessment of key figures in post-Kantian European philosophy, such as Hegel, Marx, Sartre and Foucault.

Students will acquire an in-depth understanding of how race has been conceptualised in 20th century French philosophy.

Transferable skills

Communicate clearly and substantively at an advanced level both in speech and in writing on the main issues addressed in the module.

Provide a clear analysis of complex arguments and consistently compare the substance of different philosophical views.

Properly evaluate conflicting interpretations and critically engage with them.

Study

Study time

| Type | Required |
|---------------|----------------------------|
| Lectures | 10 sessions of 1 hour (3%) |
| Seminars | 10 sessions of 1 hour (3%) |
| Private study | 280 hours (93%) |
| Total | 300 hours |

Private study description

Private study and essay preparation

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group A2

| | Weighting | Study time | Eligible for self-certification |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|------------|---------------------------------|
| Assessment component | | | |
| Assessed Essay A 7500-word essay. | 100% | | Yes (extension) |

Weighting

Study time

Eligible for self-certification

Reassessment component is the same

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback on essays

Availability

Courses

This module is Core option list A for:

- Year 1 of TPHA-V7P2 Postgraduate Taught Continental Philosophy

This module is Option list A for:

- TPHA-V7PN Postgraduate Taught Philosophy and the Arts
 - Year 1 of V7PN Philosophy and the Arts
 - Year 2 of V7PN Philosophy and the Arts