# Course title: Michel Foucault’s epistemology. Philosophy of modern human sciences.

**Course description**:

This course is devoted to the slightly forsaken domain of Foucault’s *oeuvre* i.e. his archeology. The concept of an “archeology” – in its amplifica­tions like "the archeology of libido", "archeology of the text", "the arche­ology of silence", "archeology of medical perception", "archeology of human sciences" and finally "archeology of knowledge" – is the exceptional term in Foucault's *oeuvre*. He never gives it up, like many other terms which he exhausted completely. As a consequence of this, liquidity of the term "archeology" emerges as a problem. We can follow the dynamic of the concept from the very beginnings, i.e. from his encounter with phenomenology, psy­choanalysis, and Marxism to his hermeneutics of the subject. The domain which is spanned by this concept, grasped in Foucault's meaning, is the domain of epistemological investigations of human sciences.

Human sciences as a field of epistemological investigation is an old and classical question in modern philosophy. Its significance was appreciated by Kant, Cassirer, Husserl, and many other prominent figures of modern phi­losophy. But in spite of the best endeavors, two main epistemological project of validation of human sciences – Husserlian and Cassirerian one, was collapsed. This entailed destruction not only this, crucial, however particular task, but entailed a disintegration of transcendental philosophy as a general philosophical project too. *Memento* for both these enterprises is the Husserl's apothegm: "Philosophy as a science, as serious, rigorous, indeed apodicti­cally rigorous, science – *the dream is over*”. So, the main source of “awaken­ing" was the realization of the paradoxes of conceptualization of "Man" as the main object of this sciences. Because of this reappearance of the human sci­ences as an object of epistemological investigations in the archeological approach was a challenge. Foucauldian archeology of knowledge is a kind of epistemol­ogy situated beyond standard approaches to the sciences. The Foucauldian interpretation of problematic situation for archeology is as follows: the main epis­temological issue of human sciences is not a validation of its, but consist in a simple question: how to explore human sciences? Human sciences were the primary field for archeological investigations but not because of its preten­sions to be solid, the valid ground of particular claims about a man. The peculiarity of human sciences, as an object of epistemological investigations, consists in its history and specific forms of conceptualizations of its object.

The archeology, which we can find in *The Order of Things*, is archeology of our epoch considered as an epoch of knowledge. This epoch, an epoch of "Man", ascribes to Anthropology signifi­cantly ambiguous function: as a transcendental soil of totality of knowledge and – at the same time – the empirical knowledge of empirical object such as human beings. The "death of man" is then an end of the epoch, to which we are ascribed, and archeology sanctionize this end. The last archeology, *Archeol­ogy of Knowledge*, is a very abstract and very ambitious study which aim is to provide a methods of description of any body of knowledge in terms of its discursive organization. At the same time, it is a study of archeological self-consciousness.

But why Foucault abandoned this entire epistemological enterprise? What kind of obstacle closes the door on the archeological investigation as a main Foucauldian philosophical project? To answer to this crucial question is to answer the question which revolves around the role in the archeology of two figures – Nietzsche and Heidegger – which are "non-archeologizable".

**Recommended reading:**

Bernauer J.W., *Michel Foucault's Force of Flight Toward an Ethics for Thought*, Humanity Books, New York 1990.

*Continental Philosophy of Science*, ed. G. Gutting, Blackwell Publishing, Malden, Oxford, Victoria 2005.

Dreyfus H.L., Rabinow P, *Michel Foucault, Beyond Structuralism Second edition With an Afterword by and an Interview with Michel Foucault*, The Univ Chicago Press, Chicago 1983.

*Foucault and His Interlocution*, ed., Introduced A.I. Davidson, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London 1997.

*Foucault and Heidegger. Critical Encounters*, ed. A. Milchman, A. Rosenberg, The University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis 2003.

*Foucault and Philosophy*, ed. T. O’Leary, Ch. Falzon, Wiley-Blackwell, Oxford 2010.

Gutting G, *French Philosophy in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge2001.

Macey D., *The Lives of Michel Foucault. A Biography*, Vintage Books, New York 1993.

Soussloff C.M., *Foucault on Painting* Univ. of Minnesota Press Minneapolis London2017.

Foucault M., *The Archeology of Knowledge*, trans A Sheridan, M Smith, Random House/ Pantheon, New York 1972).

Foucault M., *The Order of Things An Archeology of the Human Sciences*, Routledge, London - New York 2002.

Foucault M., *The Politics of Truth* [ed S. Lotringer] Semiotexte 2007

Foucault M., *This is not a Pipe* University of California Press Berkeley Los Angeles London 1983

**Lecture schedule:**

1. Preliminary lecture – science or sciences? Modern models of a philosophy of science(s).
2. Historical background of Foucault’s epistemology.
3. Foucault in search of the model for the history of thought.
4. "Archeology" as a philosophical term in the XX century: Husserl, Freud,
5. French philosophy of sciences – G. Bachelard, G. Canguilhem.
6. Structuralism – “I am not a structuralist. I’m not an analytic philosopher – nobody is perfect.”
7. Archeology of the human sciences. The death of “Man”
8. What is an “episteme”? Two kinds of knowledge: *savoir* and *connaisance*.
9. „Positivie unconscious of knowledge”
10. The uniqueness of historical process of human sciences
11. Man, and his doubles.
12. Science and Art – opposition or complementarity?
13. Literature and epistemic fiction
14. Regimes of representation in art and its critical function
15. Archeology of the knowledge. Discourses of sciences.
16. What is a "discourse"?
17. What is truth?
18. “Epistemologization” of a discourse – historical *a priori*
19. “another archeologies”
20. Extended Foucauldian discourse theory. The power of discourse.
21. Discourse in action. What is pharresia?
22. Nietzsche and Heidegger –“non-archeologizable” knowledge.

**Course type**: Tutorials, analysis, interpretation and discussion of texts

**Assessment method**: Class participation and an oral presentation

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