

SPINOZA LEIBNIZ DELEUZE  
COLI 574L/480I, ENG 572L/450T, PIC 550B  
Fall 2009  
Thursdays, 4:25-7:25  
LT 1506

William Haver

LT 1505

777-3327

[zenvampires@yahoo.com](mailto:zenvampires@yahoo.com)

Office hours: W 1:30-3:00, R 2:30-4:00

### Course Description

It's all very well, of course, to invoke concepts such as "multitude," "democracy," or "the common" in our political discourse. The invocation of such concepts often give us the warm and fuzzy feeling that we who invoke such notions are allies of the Good, and even promises to bring back that good old-timey "political" feeling for those of us who remember the days when we thought politics was possible. But if such concepts are to be more than the occasion for episodes of fuzzy nostalgia, they must be thought as rigorously as possible; we must, as Althusser used to say, "produce the concept" in a patient—albeit sometimes boring—reading of texts by Gilles Deleuze on Spinoza and Leibniz, texts that in my view constitute Deleuze's most radical political statements. Our goal is not to become expert specialists on Spinoza, Leibniz, or Deleuze, but to come to some understanding of the importance of Spinoza in particular, but Leibniz as well, for some of the most radical currents in contemporary European political thought. I do not assume that you have any familiarity with Spinoza, Leibniz, Deleuze, or contemporary European political thought; the seminar is supposed to give you the opportunity to explore a sometimes difficulty territory, in the hope that you will find it pertinent to the current situation.

### Course Requirements

Seminar: attendance and participation is expected. A substantial and substantive paper is required at end of term. The University requires me to inform you that plagiarism, the unacknowledged appropriation of someone else's words or thinking, is a bad thing. Now you know.

### Books

The following texts are required:

Gilles Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. Martin Joughin (NY: Zone Books, 1990).  
-----, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, trans. Robert Hurley (San Francisco: City Lights, 1988).  
-----, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993).

The following texts are recommended:

Spinoza, *Ethics*, trans. Curley.  
Leibniz, *Philosophical Texts*.

I ordered these from Barnes and Noble, but really any version you may have of Spinoza and Leibniz that enables you to follow Deleuze's arguments is quite sufficient.

The secondary literature is, of course, overwhelming. But, for the purposes of this course, you might find—as I have—the following texts to be most interesting:

Etienne Balibar, *Spinoza and Politics*, trans. Peter Snowdon (London: Verso, 1998).

Warren Montag and Ted Stolze, eds., *The New Spinoza* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997).

Antonio Negri, *The Savage Anomaly: The Power of Spinoza's Metaphysics and Politics*, trans. Michael Hardt (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991).

Antonio Negri, *The Political Descartes: Reason, Ideology and the Bourgeois Project*, trans. Matteo Mandarini and Alberto Toscano (London: Verso, 2006).

Warren Montag, *Bodies, Masses, Power: Spinoza and his Contemporaries* (London: Verso, 1999).

#### Tentative Schedule

- 9.3 Introduction: no readings.
- 9.10 *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, ch. 1, pp. 3-14; ch. 6, pp. 122-130.  
*Expressionism in Philosophy*, "Introduction," pp. 13-22.
- 9.17 *Expressionism*, pp. 27-67.
- 9.24 *Expressionism*, pp. 69-95.
- 10.1 *Expressionism*, pp. 99-143.
- 10.8 *Expressionism*, pp. 145-186.
- 10.15 *Expressionism*, pp. 191-234.
- 10.22 *Expressionism*, pp. 235-320.
- 10.29 *Expressionism*, pp. 321-335.  
*The Fold*, pp. 3-38.
- 11.5 Continue discussion of *The Fold*, pp. 3-38.
- 11.12 *The Fold*, pp. 41-82.  
and  
11.19

12.3 *The Fold*, pp. 85-137.  
and  
12.10

**YOUR FINAL PAPERS ARE DUE BY 4:00 P.M. ON MONDAY, 14 DECEMBER.**