

PHRA 4322 **PHILOSOPHICAL AESTHETICS II**

Anselm Ramelow, O.P.

Spring 2020

TH 12:40-3:30pm

DSPT class room #2

3 units

Office Hours:

By appointment; I can be reached under (415) 567 7824 (St. Dominic's parish, ask for Fr. Anselm) or aramelow@dspt.edu.

I am also generally available after class.

Course description:

Aesthetics has become a major field of philosophical investigation since the 18th century, particularly since Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgment*. This class will, however, try to integrate these insights with older metaphysical traditions of talking about art and beauty.

Aesthetics does not only explore the important question of value judgments in aesthetics. It also leads philosophy into the investigation of very concrete phenomena and problems: the structure of the human mind and the concrete materials of art and music, but also the society and its problems that are reflected therein.

Nevertheless, philosophy and the arts find it difficult to talk to each other. This class will try to bridge the gap. The first part will focus on the philosophy of beauty in general. This second semester (Spring 2017) will explore the concrete fields of architecture, painting, music and literature. *Philosophical Aesthetics I* is a prerequisite for this class.

The format of the class is a seminar; attendance and participation in the discussion is therefore important. Intended audience: MDiv, MA/MTS, PhD/ThD.

As an outcome, the student will have gained an understanding of the development of philosophical aesthetics and will be able to relate various thinkers and their positions. The student will have been exposed to the vast implications of this field of thought and gained insight into many fruitful applications of the questions of philosophical aesthetics. A further outcome for the student should be the ability to articulate him-/herself reflectively about art, music and other areas of aesthetics, be it orally or in research and writing.

Evaluation is based on:

- 1) **Class participation and contribution to the discussions.**
- 2) Taking turns in **preparing texts** that are to be discussed in class and possibly by a presentation on the paper research.

1) and 2) include an evaluation of the following DSPT [Institutional Goals](#):

B.3 Collaborative Learning:¹

based on class participation and work on paper proposal and your contribution to the common good of the class by class preparation and oral participation as appropriate

¹ For some rubrics of evaluation for the [Institutional Goals](#), please refer to the [Rubrics](#) on the DSPT website.

A.2 **Intellectual Humility:**

listening to your peers in class

3) a 15-20pp **research paper** (75% of grade)²

This includes an evaluation of the DSPT [Institutional Goals](#):

A.1 **Integrative Thinking** (as explained in the paper guidelines)

A.2 **Intellectual Humility:**

a. Academic work includes listening to the scholarly community; this is demonstrated in your research and use of your sources (books and journal articles) in the research paper.

A.3 **Self-Direction**

Finding your own paper topic will demonstrate this ability.

B.1 **Prophetic dimension**

Your paper and its topic can be an opportunity to show that you can identify relevant issues and address them.

B.3 **Collaborative dimension**

Integrating feedback on your paper proposal.

Students will take turns in the **class preparation**: the format will be a *three sentence summary* of the main point the text is trying to make. These three sentences should be printed out and distributed to the other students at the beginning of class. This will not only help us to focus our discussion, it should also be a good exercise in trying to grasp the point of a text. Further details of the text will be developed from there in the session. An additional expectation is that you give at least one **example** (more is not always better) to illustrate the author's theory/issue (we will have a "smart" classroom). This can be prepared in consultation with me (long literary examples or long pieces of music are less practical, poems or images are always easiest). I will often have examples on my own as well.

The **research paper** can consist in a comparison of two authors on a particular topic of aesthetics. It could be also the investigation into a particular problem of aesthetics, with the use of relevant authors and resources. It can also be (and this is more difficult) a case-study of a specific work of art, music or literature, provided it includes research on this work, and the application of one or more of the theories that are studied during the semester.

For this purpose, I ask you to give me a **paper proposal** by **TH 4/9**. This proposal should consist of a short paragraph, describing the topic of your choice, and a **bibliography**. The bibliography is most important. Please make your bibliography *as specific as possible*. Do not quote general handbooks or the textbooks of the class. As one possible research tool, I recommend the "[philosopher's index](#)" that is available on the GTU library website. But for this field there are obviously many more resources, partly even outside of philosophy (e.g. art history).

The **dead line** for the **paper** is **TH 5/21**

Class attendance is mandatory. Attendance and participation will impact the grade.

I would like you to forgo the use of laptops during the class sessions.

² Please refer to the attached **paper guidelines** and the [Research Readiness Paper Review Form](#).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Required Books:

- Andy Hamilton:** *Aesthetics and Music* (Continuum Aesthetics)
Continuum (August 29, 2007)
ISBN-13: 978-0826485199; paperback, list price: 26.95\$
- Jason Gaiger:** *Aesthetics and Painting* (Continuum Aesthetics)
Continuum (December 23, 2008)
ISBN-13: 978-0826485212; paperback, list price: 24.95\$
- David Davies:** *Aesthetics and Literature* (Continuum Aesthetics)
Continuum (August 19, 2007)
ISBN-13: 978-0826496126, paperback, list price: 29.67\$

You should already have **from Fall 2016:**

Continental Aesthetics: Romanticism to Postmodernism: An Anthology (Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies); by Richard Kearney (Editor), David Rasmussen (Editor)
ISBN-13: 978-0631216100; paperback, list price: 60.95\$

There will another **reader** available at **Vick Copy** (1879 Euclid, corner of Hearst and Euclid) at the beginning of the semester.

Recommended:

The pertinent chapters in *The Routledge Companion to Aesthetics*,
ed. Berys Gaut and Dominic McIver Lopes [available at the GTU library]

For additional **background information** please consult:

The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, ed. Paul Edwards
(New York: Macmillan [1967])

And on the **internet:**

[Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#)
[The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#)

CLASS SCHEDULE

The class schedule is subject to revision. Please note that, unfortunately, I will have to ask three sessions to be moved to a mutually agreed upon time; please find my suggestions below.

TH 2/6 **Introduction:** *Nature and the System of Arts; “Three Triads”*
(Please review the essays by Marga Vega and Robert Spaemann.)

ARCHITECTURE:

1) **The Nature of Architecture**

Reader: p. 3-69 (Vitruvius to Durandus)

TH 2/13 *Nature of Architecture* continued (Reader: p. 3-69)

2) **Some Ideas on the History of Architecture**

Reader: p. 70-77 (Hegel, Bayer, Laugier)

TH 2/20 3) **Contemporary and Older Critiques**

Reader: p. 77-93

(Semper, Sitte, Le Corbusier, Scruton, Habermas,
Jencks, Eisenman)

TH 2/27 *[I will have to travel for a Conference on this day;
could we move the class to W 2/26, at the same time?]*

PAINTING:

1) **Windows and Ideal Forms**

Gaiger p. 1-37 (27-33 = review of Plato)

TH 3/5 2) **Surface and Subject**

Gaiger p. 38-62

Maurice Merleau-Ponty: *Eye and Mind*

Kearney/Rasmussen: p. 288-306

TH 3/12 3) **Resemblance and denotation, Pictorial style** (Goodman et alii)

Gaiger: p. 63-90

TH 3/19 4) **Modernism and Avant-garde**

Gaiger p. 116-143

Michel Foucault: *This Is Not a Pipe*

Kearney/Rasmussen: p. 374-387

Photography (Scruton)

Reader: p. 117-143

TH 3/26 **READING WEEK**

TH 4/2 **MUSIC:**

1) **Music in Ancient Greece and Romanticism**

Hamilton p. 1-39; 67-94

- TH 4/9 *(This is **Holy Thursday**:*
*can we move the class to **Wednesday 4/8**, same time?)*
paper proposals due
 2) ***Sound and Concept of Music***
 Hamilton p. 40-66; 95-118
- TH 4/16 3) ***Rhythm and Time; Composition and Improvisation***
 Hamilton p. 119-152; 192-217
- TH 4/23 4) ***Autonomy and “Culture Industry”*** (Adorno and Scruton)
 Hamilton p. 153-191
 Reader p. 93-112 (Adorno; Scruton)
 and Greenberg (please see [here](#))
- TH 4/30 **LITERATURE:**
 1) ***Ontology of Literature***
 Davies: p. 1-31
Jean-Paul Sartre: *What is Literature?*
 Kearney/Rasmussen: p. 276-287
- Epos, Poetry and Drama***
 Reader: p. 113-116 (on Hegel’s analysis)
- TH 5/7 *[I will have to travel to a conference in Munich this week,*
*once more: can we move the class to **Wednesday 5/6**, same time?)*
Ontology continued
 2) ***Fiction***
 Davies: p. 32-70
 Reader: p. 144- 155 (Slade)
- TH 5/14 3) ***Author and Reader***
 Davies: p. 70-98, 141-163 (recommended: p. 164-187)
Roland Barthes: *The Death of the Author*
 Kearney/Rasmussen: p. 371-373
- TH 5/21 *evaluations; paper due*
 4) ***Modernity and the Novel***
György Lukács: *The Ideology of Modernism*
 Kearney/Rasmussen: p. 222-234
Mikhail Bakhtin: *Discourse in the Novel*
 Kearney/Rasmussen: p. 254-270
Jean Francois Lyotard: *Note on the Meaning of the Word “Post”*
 Kearney/Rasmussen: p. 363-370 (Lyotard)

Paper Guidelines

The topic of your paper can be a comparison of two philosophers on a given issue. There are many other possibilities, although I discourage papers that are merely descriptive of one philosopher's thought. I would like you to integrate two thinkers or a conversation around an issue across the ages. I do encourage you to use topics of your own interest or background. There are many graduate student conferences now; you might want to write a paper with an eye to presenting it in such a venue. An increasing number of students have done so successfully. The topic is, however, subject to approval. You can talk to me before or after your proposal.

The paper is a **research paper (15-20 pages, 12pt, double space)**. Hence I expect you to research and use secondary literature. This is to be documented in the use of footnotes (**not endnotes!**) and in a **bibliography**.

The **bibliography** is most important. Please make your bibliography *as specific as possible*. I would like to see at least **three pertinent journal articles** in your bibliography; this is more important than generic books. As a help: please use the "[philosopher's index](#)" at the [GTU library](#), although this might only provide you with a starting point. Topics without pertinent literature are not viable; if it requires extensive research on primary texts, you should leave it for your dissertation.

To avoid some common pitfalls: please **focus on your topic**. There is no need for biographical introductions on philosophers. (Biographical details can, of course, be brought in, if they explain some subject matter.)

Please avoid flowery or cryptic **language**. Be as sober as possible. Building literary smoke screens will not make your paper appear more profound, but only less intelligible. Focus on making arguments and positions clear.

Do some **proofreading**. If English is your second language, it can be a good idea to ask someone else to help you. Please do write complete sentences that have a grammatical structure. (Unfortunately that does not always seem to be self-understood.) Shorter sentences can make that easier. Grammatical correctness is more important than political correctness (e.g. do not use "they" as a singular).

Subdividing it into chapters (with headlines) can help the structure of your paper. It will help the clarity of your own thought process – as well as that of the reader. Please use page numbers.

Plagiarism is unacceptable and will result in a failing grade.

Proposal

The proposal is due the class after reading week. It consists in 2 or 3 sentences, stating your topic, plus a pertinent bibliography. (Please do not include the textbooks of the class.) This exercise is meant to help you to clarify your topic and focus your bibliography; after that, the paper should come easy. It is also a good exercise for a future thesis proposal. The topic is subject to approval.