

MOVEMENTS OF THOUGHT IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

This collection of essays aims to present the major developments in philosophical thought during the twentieth century. As it introduces the century's major intellectual movements, it works especially from the interest of the larger artistic and cultural context in Estonia and the West.

Our first author is Arthur Schopenhauer, a younger contemporary of Hegel, a thinker, whose magnum opus *The World as Will and Representation* was published in 1819, more than eighty years before the start of the twentieth century. Yet it would be impossible to speak about movements of thought at the start of the twentieth century without stressing the importance of Schopenhauer. The beginning of the twentieth century, after all, was not the beginning of a new era. And since a narrative about twentieth-century movements of thought inevitably becomes a narrative about the twists and turns of modern modes of thought, an introduction to twentieth-century thought might well start by sketching the birth of modernity in the nineteenth century. For our purposes, that story begins with Schopenhauer.

The story of modernity is commonly told starting from the collapse in traditional value systems, caused by urbanization and mass production, by the rise of bourgeoisie, and by new scientific developments. The narrative of modernity then unfolds along two axes: (1) concern over

the place of the individual and (2) tensions between reason and something that escapes the rational.

The first axis questions the role of the human being in the changing world, fretting about the place of individuality, creativity and free will in the era of capitalism and mass production. The rise of the middle class was opposed by creative thinkers and modernist movements in art and literature, who revolted against the everyday norms of the capitalist world. The modernists opposed their art and philosophy to what they perceived as the boring mediocrity of bourgeois life, but, in the name of freedom, creativity and the transient, many also set themselves against rational models of life more generally. Probably the best known modernist slogan comes from Baudelaire: “Modernity is the transient, the fleeting, the contingent; it is one half of art, the other being the eternal and the immovable” (Baudelaire 1925: 66).

The story of twentieth-century thought can be told, then, through shifts in the understanding of the role of the human being. The turn of the century valued a free, creative being, who could resist the limits of capitalist mediocrity through art; Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Bergson were champions of this value. Later, phenomenology turned its interest towards the primordial, everyday experience of being in the world (Heidegger), existentialist humanism posed the question of human freedom (Sartre), structuralism considered human beings as a function within a structure (Lévi-Strauss), and poststructuralism restored the human, but as a subject rather than a being: the subject was now seen as a construction of ideology or discourse (Foucault).

One way to oppose mass society was to emphasize the irrational, as Nietzsche did. The emergence of the irrational as a theme for philosophical thought was also connected to changes in the sciences: radioactivity, the development of quantum mechanics, new discoveries that complicated the enlightenment image of science as a field of reliable laws. Reality came to be understood as dynamic and inexhaustible. Having associated rationality with capitalism and the ascendant bourgeois system of values, the modernists of the late nineteenth century embraced the irrational. Pantheism and a stress on the irrational linked the most influential movements of the era together as *Lebensphilosophie*, or “life-philosophy”. Further developments in twentieth-century thought can also be interpreted as a dialogue between the irrational and the logical. Schopenhauer and Bergson created rational systems centered around the irrational. Psychoanalysis strove to become a science, but its core notion was the seemingly irrational unconsciousness. Marxism, aiming at revolution, expressed in its philosophical thought the rationalist urge

of all-encompassing explanations. Critiques of structuralism often accuse structuralism of failed scientificity.

Nietzsche was the first thoroughly antirationalist philosopher. Before Nietzsche, philosophers had been “bureaucrats of pure reason” (Deleuze 1992: 149) and philosophy had set themselves the task of coding or decoding reality. Nietzsche, by contrast, was interested in what could not be coded. His “anti-philosophy” attained a place of honor in the sixties, when poststructuralism started to deconstruct the rational systems of earlier thought. At the same time, through the course of the twentieth century, the Anglo-American analytic tradition split from continental philosophy, the first relying largely on formal logic, the second criticizing rational constructs. The end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first has brought a renewed philosophical and cultural interest in science (for example, developments in genetics).

From the nineteenth century

The enormous impact of philosophy on its contemporary cultural sphere is a modern phenomenon that started at the end of the nineteenth century with *Lebensphilosophie*. *Lebensphilosophie* – Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Bergson, and their followers – became a focus of attention in all centers of modernism. Never before had philosophy been read so widely. And, for its part, philosophy had never been so close to real life: the stress on creativity and independent thinking, as distinguished from (or opposed to) rational and fixed meanings, resonated with the fin-de-siècle mood.

Common features among different strains of *Lebensphilosophie* included an emphasis on the irrational and a subtle pantheist undertone (Bollnow 1958: 8). In the philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer, writers and artists were fascinated by his pessimism, his opposition to the ordinary, and his proclaimed belief that human existence is vain and senseless. Yet probably the most important idea that Schopenhauer had to offer to modernists was his world model grounded in an unsatisfiable irrational urge. For Schopenhauer, everything in the world was centered around an unexplainable, ungraspable force, a Will. As an endless striving that cannot reach any conclusion, the Schopenhauerian Will can never find satisfaction. Such a philosophy also implied that at the core of human existence was a constitutive lack, an impossibility for achieving complete satisfaction. This was the same kind of thinking that found a central place in Sigmund Freud’s later elaboration of psychoanalysis.

Among Schopenhauer's many posthumous admirers, the most widely discussed have been the French symbolists and decadents, yet the reach of his influence was very wide indeed. Lev Tolstoy read Schopenhauer during the summer of 1869 and described his experience as a series of excitements of a kind he had never experienced before. He called Schopenhauer the most genial of all people and was convinced that no student ever learned so much in his course as he did during his summer of reading Schopenhauer (Tolstoy 1984: 682–683).

Evidently, Tolstoy was unaware of how intensely a young philosopher named Friedrich Nietzsche was reading Schopenhauer in those same years. According to Brobjer, Nietzsche's relation to Schopenhauer in 1865–1869 was one of "extreme enthusiasm". Nietzsche "frequently read Schopenhauer; persuaded his friends to read him (and to become Schopenhauerians); continually praised Schopenhauer in his letters, referring to him as a demigod, the greatest philosopher during the last thousand years, and so forth; and treated critics of Schopenhauer as personal enemies. Schopenhauer came to affect all of Nietzsche's thinking." (Brobjer 2008: 29) Nietzsche later distanced himself from Schopenhauer, yet even in his period of admiration he turned (as later with Wagner) Schopenhauer's pessimism into a positive critique and an anticipation of change. Nietzsche maintained Schopenhauer's emphasis on the irrational, but he highlighted its joyful features, in which it brought forth Dionysian ecstasy and excitement, rather than morose Schopenhauerian withdrawal.

Cultural life at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century witnessed much the same turn, with the help of Nietzsche and soon Bergson, as a pessimistic vision of decline and decadence was metamorphosed into a celebration of progress.

Nietzsche's thought was crucial in this shift. Modernists were attracted to his radical denial of Western culture, his revaluation of accepted values, and his challenges to conventional thought. The scope of Nietzsche's critique, its reach into the fields of history, morals, language, myth, metaphysics, art and aesthetics was impressive and very much in accordance with the modernist enterprise. Writers were also attracted to Nietzschean literary style. Nietzsche's name reached everywhere: George Bernard Shaw wrote a play entitled *Man and Superman* (1903), Gustav Mahler initially gave his third symphony a Nietzschean title (*The Gay Science*), and André Gide signaled his debt to Nietzsche in the title of his novel *The Immoralist* (1902). The Futurists, to name but one artistic movement, turned both towards Nietzsche's attempts to surpass the "all too human" and towards his denial of history.

The philosophy of Henri Bergson, with its rhetoric of movement, was similarly attractive to the Futurists and groups like them. The special strength of Bergson's philosophy was its close connection not only to philosophy and literature, but also to science and politics – thus Bergson's name was unavoidable in several sets of very different debates at the beginning of the century. Like Nietzsche, Bergson embraced change and contested the absoluteness of reason, but Bergson worked from these assumptions to construct a worldview based on cosmic incompleteness, one that could be expressed only in a fragmentary and incomplete philosophy.

For many thinkers and artists, Bergson was also attractive for his emphasis on the concrete instead of the abstract, a direction later followed by phenomenology. Yet a special place in Bergson's thought was given to his concept of the *durée*, the subjective flow of time and duration. *Durée* and subjective time became one of the keywords of modernity (see Matei Călinescu's definition of modernity through *durée* – Călinescu 1993: 5). Stress on the subjective duration of time is related to the stream-of-consciousness writing techniques explored in the literary works of Arthur Schnitzler, Virginia Woolf, Marcel Proust, James Joyce, Dorothy Richardson. For Bergson, time and the self were inextricable, and the self was considered part of the very movement in time. This view was very well received in an era that thought of itself as constantly in flux. *Lebensphilosophie* finally receded in the 1920s, with Oswald Spengler and his *The Decline of the West* (1918–1922) as its last great highpoint.

Two other decisive influences for the development of modernism, Marx and Freud, both originating in the nineteenth century, also shaped the intellectual atmosphere at the beginning of the century.

The most significant result of Marxism was, of course, the proletarian revolution in Russia, and the now astonishing fact that, for large parts of the world, the Soviet Union became an object of aspiration and admiration. In many Western intellectual circles, it was accepted that a dictatorship of the proletariat was a necessary step toward creating a more just world. The popularity of Marxism only swelled further after the catastrophes of the First World War, when the already evident injustices of capitalism were compounded by the appalling self-destruction of leading capitalist countries in Europe.

The reception of Marxism in the twentieth century led in two directions: the political and the intellectual. As European communist parties responded to movements and directives from Moscow, at the same time, the publication in 1930s of earlier works by Marx initiated a renewed interest in his philosophical thought. The split between political and

intellectual Marxism deepened, as many intellectuals, who tried to collaborate with communist parties found themselves disappointed. There were, of course, many writers with deep and genuine Marxist commitments: Émile Zola, André Malraux, and Bertolt Brecht, to name just a few. But the French surrealists, too, had a vital interest in Marxism, yet their attempts to participate in leftist activities failed, because the French Communist Party, adhering strictly to the Moscow party line, stood together with Soviet regime in discouraging creativity and individuality. The most important Marxist thinker in mid-century France, Louis Althusser, suffered constant conflicts with the Communist party.

The Frankfurt school presented a pointedly reserved position towards political activities. Marxism for Frankfurt school was a starting point for a larger investigation of culture, together with the works of Hegel, Kant, Nietzsche and Freud. The Frankfurt school also became famous for their critical attitude towards mass culture and technology – as is evident in the works of critic Walter Benjamin.

Marxist models that stress the essential role of economical relations within society have by now found an accepted place in the human sciences, though Marx's moncausality has been left behind. Indeed contemporary intellectual Marxism is most often encountered in hybrid and mixed forms – for example in the works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, where it is connected with postcolonialism, feminism and deconstruction, or the works of Slavoj Žižek, where it is connected with psychoanalysis.

As we cannot quite tell the story of human societies without Marx, similarly we cannot tell the story of the human psyche without Freud. Sigmund Freud was a thinker whose thought has penetrated deeply into everyday life and changed the ways we think about ourselves. Freud was the first to speak systematically about the role of the unconscious in the human psyche and the role of sexuality in human existence.

Freudian thought began to revolutionize intellectual life as early as 1906, when Carl Gustav Jung began his relationship with Freud. By the end of the First World War, Freud's fame had spread beyond medical and psychoanalytic circles. And by the 1930s Freud had become a true international phenomenon. For his 80th birthday, in 1936, Thomas Mann brought him a honorary address, in which nearly two hundred writers and artists acknowledged their debt to Freud.

From phenomenology to existentialism

Cultural life at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth relied on movements, which, at that time, were not taken seriously in academic circles. Gradually, this situation changed: phenomenology, which was a serious academic philosophy, began to spread in Germany. When it reached France, it initiated a powerful advancement of French philosophy.

Followers of phenomenology were attracted by its concreteness and its closeness to life, the way phenomenology, it seemed, was able to link an everyday understanding of the world with a philosophical clarity of thought. Merleau-Ponty, the most important figure in French phenomenology, writes about phenomenology in his introduction to *Phenomenology of Perception* as a “philosophy for which the world is always ‘already there’ before reflection begins – as ‘an inalienable presence’; and all its efforts are concentrated upon re-achieving a direct and primitive contact with the world, and endowing that contact with a philosophical status” (Merleau-Ponty 1962: vii).

It was Edmund Husserl who made phenomenology famous. His first important treatise was *Logical Investigations*, 1900–1901. Husserl’s theory of intentionality opposed the view that human beings could only ever access their own perceptions, thoughts, feelings and imaginations. For Husserl, every perception is a perception of something (Husserl 1976: 188): we perceive the thing itself, not its mere sign or mere a mental image of it. Intentionality thus signified the openness of human consciousness to the world itself: “intentionality is the property of mental states such that they are about, or directed to, something in the world” (Kolak, Thompson 2006: 226). Intentionality became later an important aspect of different theories regarding mental states in analytical philosophy.

Martin Heidegger developed Husserl’s thoughts further and, from the 1920s onwards, Heidegger began to eclipse his teacher’s influence. Through Heidegger, many later philosophers became interested in thinking about the everyday experience of being in the world. Heidegger focused his attention on a primordial contact with the world, which he characterized through a “throwness” into the world, through being with others, and through the inescapability of death.

Phenomenology never became a philosophy for masses, however. The pointed, precise language of its texts made understanding difficult for those without academic training in philosophy. Yet the influence of phenomenology upon the future development of philosophy was enormous. In Germany, its heir was the hermeneutics of Hans-Georg

Gadamer. In France, phenomenology was linked together with renewed interest in Hegel, and one of its developments was existentialism, which became a popular movement at least as extensive as Schopenhauer's pessimism some decades earlier.

Existentialism started to take shape at the end 1930s, with the writings of Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus, Simone de Beauvoir and Maurice Merleau-Ponty. One unusual feature of existentialism was the wide range of expressive means employed by its proponents: existentialism was, right from the start, practiced as a mixture of fiction-writing, philosophy and social activity. Sartre, Camus and Beauvoir all wrote both fiction and philosophical (or semi-philosophical) essays. Sartre's most famous novel *Nausea* was published five years before existentialism's major philosophical work, Sartre's monograph *Being and Nothingness*, 1943 (Camus' most famous novel *The Stranger* was likewise published before *Being and Nothingness*). As for social action, Camus withdraw in the 1950s, yet Sartre, often accompanied by Simone de Beauvoir, became a "global public intellectual" (Cohen-Solal 2007: 11), who supported revolutions and attempts for liberation around the world.

Jean-Paul Sartre made acquaintance with phenomenology in 1932, and then spent then a year in Berlin studying phenomenology. Thereafter, his thinking was very seriously shaped by Husserl and especially by Heidegger. Sartre's philosophy presupposed political action and its central theme was freedom. For Sartre, a human being was not a given, but a process of creation through free choices: "This [existentialism] is humanism because we remind man that there is no legislator other than himself and that he must, in his abandoned state, make his own choices and also because we show that it is not by turning inward, but by constantly seeking a goal outside itself in the form of liberation, or of some special achievement, that man will realize himself as truly human" (Sartre 2007: 53). Among other things, Sartre helped and encouraged the critics of colonialism, writing introductions and sponsoring the publication of anticolonial works by Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi.

The core of the existentialist movement gathered around the journal *Les Temps Modernes*, which was founded in 1945 by Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, yet existentialism spread everywhere. It became a kind of pop culture phenomenon, which drew upon a feeling of the absurdity of life. For Sartre, anxiety lead to an authentic way of being, and anxiety became the main feature of existentialist literature and art. Samuel Beckett and Eugène Ionesco sharpened existentialist anxiety and the absurd into a painful laughter.

Simone de Beauvoir supported Sartre for the whole of his life, yet she deliberately kept herself into his shadow. Her main philosophical work *The Second Sex* (1949) was a mixture of existentialism, phenomenology, Marxism, Hegelianism and psychoanalysis. This book is often considered to be the first important work of feminist philosophy. Its influence on feminist intellectual and political movements was considerable, albeit mixed with critique. One might say that its very role as a starting point made it a target for criticism – for example, in its existential approach to social questions like the role of a woman in a society. Beauvoir presented the social determination of a woman together with her existential freedom. For her critics, the existential aspect hindered the analysis of woman's otherness as a social phenomenon. Yet, without doubt, this expansive research was, in its time, a courageous and groundbreaking enterprise.

Existentialism fell apart as a movement years before its influence began to wane. Sartre's commitment to Marxism in the 1950s alienated Merleau-Ponty and Camus. And, in any case, Merleau-Ponty's philosophical work differed substantially from Sartre's. His major work, *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945), was published just two years after Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*, yet it referred to Sartre only rarely, implicitly criticizing several of Sartre's tenets. As an important developer of phenomenology in France, Merleau-Ponty was for years one of the leaders of the French academy. His most important works about the embodied nature of human perception did not, like Sartre's, reach the masses, but, in philosophical circles, Merleau-Ponty's work continues to be read with great interest and respect.

Structuralism

In 1941 in New York, Alexandre Koyré introduced French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss to a Russian linguist named Roman Jakobson. Jakobson had taken interest in the work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and named the linguistic method that grew out of Saussure's work "structuralism". Lévi-Strauss, in turn, adapted structuralist ways of thinking to anthropological questions. Only six years after Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*, Lévi-Strauss's structuralist *The Elementary Structures of Kinship* was published (1949). Thus Saussure's work began to be disseminated outside the field of linguistics and structuralism began to develop into an important new way of making sense of culture in the mid-twentieth century. Sign and sign systems, signifiers and signi-

fied, and, most of all, difference, became new keywords of the period. Saussure understood language as a system of differences, “in language there are only differences and no positive terms” (Saussure 1949: 166). A single language sign doesn’t itself have a meaning; rather, a sign derives its meaning through its difference from other signs. Thus, language and signs of language do not have a substance. These central theses of Saussure haven’t lost their importance. Following Saussure, structuralists started to look for the systems of differences. At the same time, the foregrounding of structures implied reducing the significance of the subjective and singular. Because the structure of language remains the same no matter how a given speaker may express his or her ideas, structuralists devoted themselves to investigating these stable structures, instead of following the ever-changing enunciator.

By the mid-1950s, structuralism had found many supporters, yet, still, Sartre was extremely popular. The 1950s, then, were remarkable as a mixture of existentialism and phenomenology, structuralism, and psychoanalysis. In 1950, Paul Ricoeur published his translation of the first book of Husserl’s important *Ideas*. In 1953, Jacques Lacan began with his famous seminars on psychoanalysis which, by the early 1960s had become a focal point for intellectual life in Paris. Lacan, who sought to renew Freud’s thought, started a friendship with Lévi-Strauss and had read Saussure, and so soon he, too, was regarded as a structuralist.

Even more important than its relation to psychoanalysis was structuralism’s relation to Marxism. Lévi-Strauss asserted: “I rarely broach a new sociological problem without first stimulating my thought by re-reading a few pages of *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* or *The Critique of Political Economy*” (Lévi-Strauss 1977: 50). Structuralist Marxist Louis Althusser became one of the celebrated figures of his time, and the most renowned cultural critic of the time, Roland Barthes, connected Marxism, structuralism and psychoanalysis in his essays.

Merleau-Ponty also played an important role in the diffusion of structuralism, championing Saussure’s views and supporting his friend Lévi-Strauss for an important position at the Collège de France. For Merleau-Ponty, structuralism and phenomenology could support one another, with structuralism providing a basis for further phenomenological investigations.

In 1960 the journal *Tel Quel* was founded – it became the main outlet for structuralist and, later, poststructuralist writings. When Merleau-Ponty died unexpectedly in 1961, phenomenology in France was left without its main proponent and structuralists started to oppose existentialism and phenomenology. Sartre became an object of attacks from

the social sciences, and Lévi-Strauss, Althusser and Barthes took turns resisting Sartre's subject-oriented philosophy. The existentialist paradigm was indeed still gaining force everywhere in the world, enjoying popular success not only in the U.S.A., but also in places like Estonia, and finally reaching even China by the 1980s. Yet, back in France in the 1960s, an extreme antihumanism was gaining influence under the slogan offered by Lévi-Strauss: "The aim of the human sciences is not to constitute man, but to dissolve him" (Lévi-Strauss 1962: 326). Sartre's engaged author, who took an active part in politics and the events of the world, came to be regarded as unimportant and uninteresting, and "texts", not authors or agents, offered the central object for inquiry. In understanding human behavior, interest turned away from the singular experience of being in the world, towards the cultural conventions and social norms that offer human subjects a limited range of possibilities.

Yet structuralism was from the beginning a cluster of differences. For Saussure, the two sides of the sign, the signifier and the signified, were inseparable, like two sides of a sheet of paper (Saussure 1949: 157). Lévi-Strauss pointed out the complexity of the relation between the signifier and the signified: there are signifiers everywhere, yet how was one to find, in the process of signification, a suitable signified for every one of them? During the process of signification, it seems, there is always something left over or left out, signifiers and signified will never fit each other perfectly. (Lévi-Strauss 1987: 62). Lacan went further, separated signifiers and signifieds with a bar, to highlight the disruption that plagues processes of signification. Instead of trying to construct links between a signifier and a signified, Lacan was interested in the relations between signifiers. In Lacan's elaboration, the subject of the unconscious remained split and ungraspable, and structure as a whole was, in practice and in principle, ungraspable and constructed around a lack.

In 1961 Michel Foucault published *Madness and Civilization*, the first of his massive historical investigations. In the 1960s, these works were also considered structuralist. Foucault did not ask the essentialist question, what is the nature of madness, or its inner truth. Rather, he was interested in the ways madness was constructed culturally, and which kind of social practices, values and knowledges form the understanding of madness that is generally accepted in a given society.

After structuralism

Even though its influences reached all spheres of the humanities, structuralism was a movement with a strikingly abstract mode of inquiry and its hegemony in the human sciences could not last for long. The critique of structuralism, which became more audible by the second half of the 1960s, observed that the structures proposed by structuralists did not correspond adequately to the fact that reality is always changing. According to this critique, since reality is always changing, and since changes in reality imply changes in the relations of its components, systems of thought that presuppose fixed structures do not make sense. Thus, a cluster of anti-structuralist movements, later recognized as post-structuralism, took aim at the basic conditions of structuralism. Again, with the return to Nietzsche, universal claims became regarded with suspicion, together with suppositions of anything stable: permanent structures, sustained subjects, unmovable presences. Yet the central importance of the linguistic sign and the basically Saussurian understanding of the conditional, contextual nature of the sign remained unchallenged. Jacques Derrida turned Saussurian difference into *différance*, adding a temporal dimension to Saussure's spatial structure. What happens to the coherence of the structure, if one accepts that each element in the system of differences carries with itself a bit of its past and is moving towards its future? The stability of the system vanishes, the difference is replaced by *différance*. (Derrida 1968: 53–54) Because *différance* is always already there and any kind of stable identity is a construction, the task of a critic is to lay bare the constructed nature of this identity. It was from this position that the subject returned to human sciences – as a construction to be dissected and analyzed.

The shift away from structuralism was smooth and harsh at the same time. Lacan, who had hitherto been considered a structuralist, was now easily received as a poststructuralist. The writings of Roland Barthes, by contrast, changed significantly: instead of about indexes and codes, Barthes started to write about desire and pleasure, and instead of about textual structures, he began to write about the significance of the reader in the construction of meaning. The influence of Lévi-Strauss diminished as structural linguistics were no longer considered the most important model for research in the humanities. The importance of Heidegger and Husserl revived. Derrida had written his first treatise on Husserl in 1954, now, in 1967, his *Speech and Phenomenon* was published. Thus Derrida's works built a bridge of phenomenology over the heyday of structuralism. Derrida's student work in 1954 relied on the discussions

in 1940s France for its background and *Speech and Phenomenon* was one of the works that introduced the poststructural change into the French human sciences.

Derrida's approach to Husserl was critical, however, as Derrida placed Husserl within a long tradition of what he called the "metaphysics of presence". Heidegger's critique of humanism and the metaphysics of presence and his notion of *Destruktion* provided important touchstones as Derrida developed his own philosophical method, deconstruction. At the same time, Derrida also claimed that Heidegger himself did not escape the tradition of metaphysics they both criticized.

Poststructuralism quickly became a vigorous and plural movement, which did not rely on the authority of just one or two principle figures, but produced an intellectual wave of extraordinary force. Its major figures included Michel Foucault and Jacques Lacan, whose seminars on psychoanalysis lasted for 26 years and were visited by almost all French thinkers of importance. But there was also Louis Althusser, who maintained his fame, Emmanuel Levinas, whose ethical thinking found recognition, and a powerful range of other voices: Gilles Deleuze, Maurice Blanchot, Georges Bataille, and feminist scholars from psychoanalytic tradition like Hélène Cixous, Luce Irigaray, and Julia Kristeva, who all rose to prominence in the 1970s.

Poststructuralism is related to another term, postmodernism, which is usually considered not so much a philosophical movement as a mode of living or a cultural situation. The postmodern cultural situation, characterized by postindustrial society, mass media and the internet, multinational corporations, and plurality of opinion, seems in certain respects to go together well with poststructuralism. One could describe postmodernism as a cultural version of poststructuralism, or claim that they both reflected the same general atmosphere in Western societies during the last part of the twentieth century.

If structuralism avoided burning political issues, poststructuralism found itself again face to face with the world of power and social struggle. The acknowledgement of socially constructed subjectivity in the works of Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida made poststructuralism an ally for feminism and postcolonial studies, which welcomed the "discovery" that hidden within the traditional humanist stance was the presumption of a white, middle-class, male citizen.

By the 1960s, feminism already had a long development behind itself. Feminism had relied, during the twentieth century, on different philosophical and social movements. The first goal of feminist movements had been to stand for women's rights. Philosophical movements

in feminism, however, developed sometimes in accordance with a unified political struggle, but also sometimes clashed with these political causes. Thus Simone de Beauvoir stood actively against women's rights and later poststructuralist feminists (Judith Butler), in their stress on differences between women, posed problems for unified political enterprise. One could argue that the conflicts between different feminist movements have contributed to the fact that feminist studies have become one of the most open and philosophically sensitive fields in the humanities.

Postcolonial studies developed into a separate academic discipline after the publication of *Orientalism* (1978) by Edward Said, yet critiques of colonialism from the 1950s, especially those by Frantz Fanon, are still read with appreciation. Edward Said was interested in colonial discourse as a way of constructing knowledge and power relations, where political and cultural had merged together in the way described by Foucault. Critiques of colonialism found support from poststructuralist thought, merging with Marxism, but also with psychoanalysis and feminism.

The history of twentieth century thought includes, of course, many more thinkers. In parallel with continental thought, sometimes clashing, sometimes interweaving, an "analytic tradition" in philosophy also developed, especially in the U.S.A. and Great Britain. Analytic philosophy, with its strivings for logical clarity and scientific exactness, has proved less attractive or less fruitful for the larger cultural sphere, yet turn of the century British thought was definitely influenced by Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein, two founders of the analytic tradition. Without mentioning Russell's influence one could not discuss the Bloomsbury group, which included Virginia Woolf. From Gottlob Frege, Russell and Wittgenstein we could start another extremely important topic during the 20th century: language. Through Pierre Bourdieu's works we could discuss the development of Foucauldian thought, through Alain Badiou contemporary, post-poststructuralist concepts of truth. It is exciting to move in the midst of these webs of attachments and disputes, apprenticeships and friendships. The pleasure of this intellectual wandering is the pleasure of sharing the world with others. Yet it is crucial not to lose sight of the singularity of each thinker in this chain of shared thoughts; all of those, who wrote themselves into the history of the twentieth-century thought, belonged to these same spreading networks, yet each of them brought a particular experience, a particular set of read books, and a particular willingness to speak and write.

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