

Pregătire pentru biletel de la examenul de filozofie (7 - 11 were checked with the slides)

1. Worldview: Definition, Components, and Impact

1. What is a Worldview?

A **worldview** is a foundational framework through which an individual or culture interprets reality, makes sense of life, and guides behavior. It consists of the **basic assumptions, commitments, and guiding truths**—often subconscious—that shape how we see the world, much like a pair of glasses through which we view everything.

As defined by **James Sire**, a worldview is:

"A commitment, the fundamental orientation of the heart... expressed as a story or a set of presuppositions... about the basic constitution of reality, and that provides the foundation on which we live and move and have our being."

2. Main Components of a Worldview

Worldviews are structured around several philosophical categories:

Component	Focus	Example Questions
Ontology	Nature of reality, being, existence	What is real? Does God exist?
Epistemology (Gnoseology)	Nature of knowledge and truth	How do we know what is true?
Axiology	Values, ethics, and aesthetics	What is good? What is beautiful?
Anthropology	Nature of humanity	Who are we? What is human purpose?
Logic	Principles of reasoning	How do we reason validly?
Ethics	Moral principles	How should we act?
Aesthetics	Nature of beauty and art	What is art? What moves us?

3. How a Worldview Shapes Individuals and Decisions

- **Shapes perception:** Filters how we interpret events, information, and relationships.
- **Guides behavior:** Informs moral choices, goals, and daily actions.
- **Provides meaning:** Answers existential questions (purpose, death, identity).
- **Influences identity:** Defines personal and collective sense of self.
- **Directs decision-making:** Acts as an internal compass in uncertain situations.

4. Importance of an Explicit Worldview

- **In academic life:** Encourages critical thinking, helps evaluate arguments, and reveals biases in research and theory.
 - **In social life:** Promotes self-awareness, improves communication, and fosters empathy by understanding diverse perspectives.
 - **For critical thinking:** Helps identify underlying assumptions, avoid logical fallacies, and engage in reasoned debate.
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5. Hypothetical Situation: University Discussion on a Controversial Issue

Scenario:

You are in a university discussion on a controversial social/ethical issue (e.g., abortion, climate policy, AI ethics). Participants strongly disagree and talk past each other. You realize the disagreement is rooted not only in facts but in **different worldviews**.

A) Which worldview assumptions may be influencing positions?

- **Ontological differences:** Is human life sacred from conception? Is nature intrinsically valuable?
- **Epistemological differences:** Do they trust science, religion, personal experience, or tradition as sources of truth?
- **Axiological differences:** What is prioritized—individual rights, collective good, freedom, or security?
- **Anthropological differences:** Is humanity inherently good, flawed, or neutral? Are humans separate from or part of nature?
- **Ethical differences:** Is morality absolute or relative? Based on consequences, duties, or virtues?

B) What options do you have to engage constructively?

1. **Ask clarifying questions:** "What underlying values or beliefs inform your position?"
2. **Identify common ground:** Find shared goals or concerns (e.g., "We all care about human dignity").
3. **Map worldview differences:** Make implicit assumptions explicit without judgment.
4. **Practice active listening:** Paraphrase others' views to ensure understanding.
5. **Shift from debate to dialogue:** Aim to understand, not just to win.
6. **Use respectful language:** Avoid labels, generalizations, and emotional triggers.

C) Why is it important to recognize and reflect on worldviews?

- **Promotes understanding:** Reveals why people think and act differently.
 - **Enables respectful dialogue:** Reduces hostility by separating person from position.
 - **Improves critical thinking:** Helps evaluate the strength of one's own and others' arguments.
 - **Supports responsible decision-making:** Encourages decisions based on examined beliefs, not unconscious bias.
 - **Fosters intellectual humility:** Recognizes that our worldview is one among many, not absolute truth.
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Conclusion: A worldview is the invisible architecture of the mind. Making it explicit allows for more intentional living, deeper dialogue, and wiser decisions in both personal and public life.

2. Metoda socratică. Arta de a pune întrebări

3. Metoda socratică. Conceptul de a te cunoaște pe tine însuși

4. Plato. Alegoria peșterii

5. Aristotel. 4 cauze

6. Aristotle. Golden mean

7. Christian thought. How it formed western thought

1. Human Dignity

- The concept of Imago Dei is the direct ancestor of universal human rights.
- Without it, human value was tied to social utility (as in ancient Rome).

2. Modern Science

- Paradoxically, it appeared in a Christian environment.
- The idea that the universe is created by a rational God ("Logos") means the universe is ordered, predictable, and can be studied.

3. Universities

- They are a direct invention of the medieval Church (Bologna, Paris, Oxford).

4. Institutionalized Charity

- The idea of caring for the weak (hospitals, orphanages) as a sacred duty, not just as an occasional act of mercy.

IMPACT ON WESTERN CIVILIZATION

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8. Modern Philosophy. What is it, premises, 2 main currents (bonus: the philosophers of the movements)

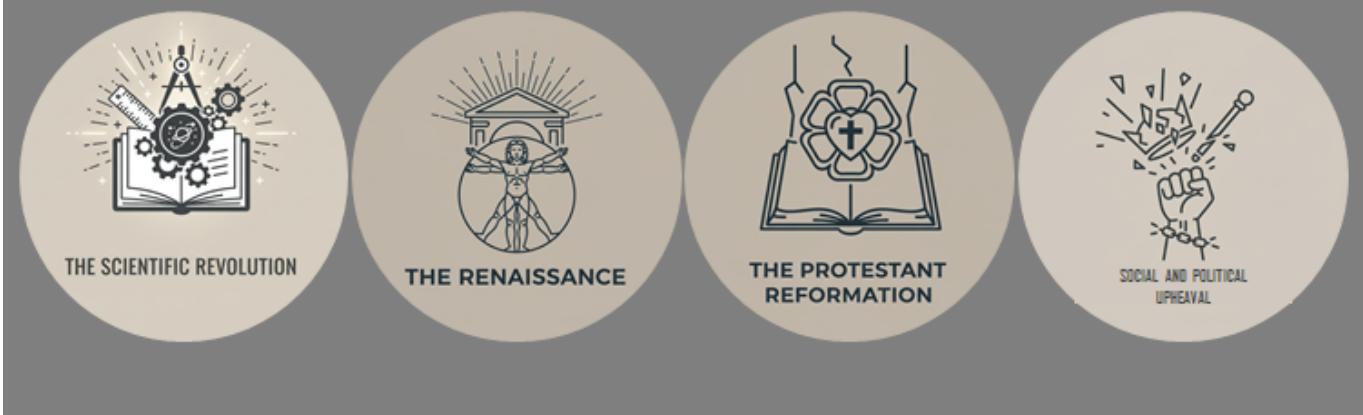
Modern Philosophy is characterized by a decisive turn toward reason, individualism, and scientific methodology, moving away from religious authority as the primary sources of truth.

Premises:

- **Scientific Revolution:**
- **The Renaissance**
- **The Protestant Reformation**
- **Social and Political Upheaval**

THE PREMISES FOR ITS APPEARANCE

The modern era did not emerge in a vacuum. It was the result of massive cultural, scientific, and social shifts that shattered the medieval worldview.



Two Main Currents:

1. Rationalism

- **Core Tenet:** Certain knowledge can be derived through reason and logical deduction alone, independent of sensory experience. The mind possesses innate ideas or principles.
- **Key Philosophers:** René Descartes, Baruch Spinoza, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz.

2. Empiricism

- **Core Tenet:** All knowledge originates in sensory experience. The mind at birth is a *tabula rasa* (blank slate), and concepts are built from impressions.
- **Key Philosophers:** John Locke, George Berkeley, David Hume.

9. Modern Philosophy. Francis Bacon. The 4 idols (the names will be given and you will have to define each)

Francis Bacon described four categories of mental obstacles, or "idols," that distort human perception and hinder scientific progress.

The Four Idols:

1. Idols of the Tribe (Idola Tribus)

- **Definition:** These are flaws inherent in human nature itself. We are all prone to wishful thinking, oversimplifying complex issues, and seeing patterns and order where none exist.
- **Example:** Thinking that the sun moves around the earth because it looks that way.

2. Idols of the Cave (Idola Specus)

- **Definition:** These are the personal biases of an individual. Your unique upbringing, education, favorite books, and personal experiences create a "cave" that colors how you see the world.
- **Example:** A person trained in mathematics might think everything can be explained by numbers.

3. Idols of the Marketplace (Idola Fori)

- **Definition:** These are errors that come from language. We use words that are ambiguous or refer to things that don't even exist. People can end up debating the meaning of words rather than the nature of reality.
- **Example:** Arguing endlessly about the word "nature" or "soul" without defining it properly.

4. Idols of the Theater (Idola Theatri)

- **Definition:** These are flawed philosophical systems (like Aristotle's) that are accepted without question. Bacon saw these as "stage-plays" that present a fictional, neat-and-tidy version of the world that doesn't match reality.
 - **Example:** Accepting Aristotle's philosophy or Church doctrines or scientism as absolute truth without testing them by observation or experiment.
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10. Modern Philosophy. Descartes. The Basis method (bonus: Bacon vs Descartes)

René Descartes (1596–1650), the father of modern rationalism, established a method of radical doubt to find an indubitable foundation for knowledge.

Descartes' Method (Methodic Doubt / Cartesian Method):

1. **He doubts his senses:** A stick in water looks bent, but it's straight. Our senses can deceive us, so they cannot be the foundation.
 2. **He doubts the physical world (The Dream Argument):** How do I know I'm not in an elaborate dream right now? There are no certain signs to distinguish waking life from a dream. Therefore, I must doubt the existence of the entire external, physical world.
 3. **He doubts reason itself (The Evil Demon Argument):** This is his hyperbolic (extreme) doubt. He imagines a "malicious demon" (un malin génie) with god-like power who is dedicated to deceiving him. This demon could be making him believe that $2+2=4$ when it is, in fact, something else. This allows him to doubt even mathematics and logic.
 4. After doubting everything, Descartes is left in a void of total uncertainty. But in this void, he finds one, single, indubitable truth: "Cogito, ergo sum." (I think, therefore I am.)
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11. Modern Philosophy. German Idealism. Kant. Rationalism – Empiricism. Categorical Imperative

(Morality)

German Idealism was a dominant philosophical movement in late 18th and early 19th century Germany. It reacted to Kant's philosophy by emphasizing that reality is fundamentally mental or spiritual, constructed by the mind or absolute spirit.

Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) aimed to resolve the conflict between Rationalism and Empiricism and establish a secure foundation for both science and morality.

Kant's Synthesis of Rationalism and Empiricism (in *Critique of Pure Reason*):

- **The Problem:** Rationalists claim pure reason can know reality. Empiricists claim all knowledge comes from sense data, making metaphysics impossible.
- **Kant's Solution (The "Copernican Revolution"):** Knowledge is not the mind conforming to objects, but **objects conforming to the mind's inherent structures**.
 - **A posteriori knowledge:** The *content* of knowledge comes from sensory experience (Empiricism).
 - **A priori knowledge:** The *form* or structure of knowledge (space, time, and 12 categories like causality) is provided by the mind itself (Rationalism).
- **Conclusion:** We can have certain, universal knowledge about the world *as it appears to us* (the phenomenal world), but we cannot have theoretical knowledge about reality *as it is in itself* (the noumenal world, e.g., God, soul, free will).

Categorical Imperative (Moral Philosophy in *Critique of Practical Reason & Groundwork*): Kant's deontological (duty-based) ethics is grounded in pure practical reason. The **Categorical Imperative** is an unconditional moral command that applies to all rational beings.

Main Formulations:

1. **The Universal Law Formulation:** Before you do something, ask: "What if everyone did this all the time?" If the action becomes self-contradictory (e.g., "If everyone lied, no one would believe anyone, and lying would be impossible"), then it is morally forbidden.
2. **The Humanity Formulation:** Don't use people. All rational beings have intrinsic worth and autonomy. You must respect their dignity and not treat them as mere tools for your own goals.

12. Nihilism. Nietzsche. What it is, premises, main ideas, his solutions

What is Nihilism?

Nihilism is a philosophy that **rejects fundamental aspects of human existence** such as objective truth, meaning, morality, and intrinsic value. Derived from the Latin *nihil* ("nothing"), it posits that life is ultimately meaningless and that traditional frameworks for understanding the world—like religion, science, and ethics—are illusory or baseless.

Key Premises of Nihilism (according to Nietzsche's diagnosis):

1. **Collapse of Metaphysical Foundations:** The decline of religious belief, especially Christianity ("God is dead"), removes the foundation for meaning, morality, and order in society.
2. **Scientific and Enlightenment Influence:** The rise of science and rationalism exposed the universe as indifferent and purposeless, undermining religious and moral certainties.
3. **Influence of German Philosophy:** Thinkers like **Arthur Schopenhauer** argued that existence is driven by a blind, irrational "Will to Live," leading to endless suffering and meaninglessness.
4. **Social and Political Upheaval:** Revolutions and social transformations eroded trust in traditional institutions, creating a vacuum of values.

Nietzsche's Core Ideas

1. "God is Dead" (*Gott ist tot*)

- **Meaning:** Not a celebration but a **warning** that the idea of God can no longer serve as the foundation for Western culture, morality, or meaning.
- **Consequence:** This creates a **crisis of nihilism**—a state of "active nihilism" marked by destruction, despair, and the potential rise of dangerous substitutes like political ideologies or dictatorships.

2. The Will to Power (*Der Wille zur Macht*)

- **Concept:** A fundamental drive in all living things **not just to survive** (Schopenhauer's "Will to Live") but **to overcome, grow, conquer, and create.**
- **Expression:** For an artist, it is the drive to create; for a philosopher, to seek truth; for an individual, to expand and express their strength.

3. The Übermensch (Overman / Superman)

- **Ideal:** The *Übermensch* is Nietzsche's **solution to nihilism**—a person who creates their own values and meaning after the death of God.
- **Traits:** Self-overcoming, affirmation of life, independence from the "herd" morality of society/religion, and the ability to say "Yes" to life despite its suffering.

4. Love of Fate and Eternal Recurrence

- **Eternal Recurrence:** The thought experiment that **you would have to live your life over again, exactly the same, infinitely.**
- **Amor Fati ("Love of Fate"):** The ideal attitude of **embracing and loving your life completely**, including all suffering and joy, so that you would willingly relive it eternally.

Nietzsche's Solutions to Nihilism

Nietzsche diagnosed nihilism as a disease but offered a **cure** through **life affirmation and value creation**:

1. **Overcoming through Creation:** Replace lost religious meaning with **self-created values**. The *Übermensch* does not mourn the death of God but sees it as an opportunity for human greatness.
2. **Affirmation of Life (Amor Fati):** Instead of escaping suffering (as Schopenhauer advised), **embrace it** as part of a fully lived life. Suffering can be a source of strength and depth.

3. **Revaluation of All Values:** Critically examine and reject "slave morality" (Christian ethics of humility, pity) and promote a "master morality" that celebrates strength, creativity, and health.
 4. **The Will to Power as a Guiding Principle:** Channel the drive for power into **creative, intellectual, and personal mastery**, not mere domination.
 5. **Psychological Resilience:** Use the idea of **Eternal Recurrence** as a test for living authentically: live so that you would joyfully repeat your life forever.
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13. Existentialism. Sartre. (Basic Definitions and Concepts)

Existentialism is a philosophical movement that emphasizes **individual existence, freedom, and choice** as the fundamental realities of human life. It asserts that **existence precedes essence**, meaning that humans are not born with a predetermined purpose or nature, but must **create their own meaning and values** through their actions and decisions.

Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980) – The defining figure of existentialism, who formalized the philosophy in his work *Being and Nothingness* and popularized it through plays and novels.

1. The "Blueprint" Rule (**Existence Precedes Essence**)

- **Definition:** The central principle of Sartrean existentialism.
- **Explanation:** For manufactured objects (like a paperknife or smartphone), their **essence** (purpose, design) is determined *before* they exist. In contrast, **humans are not created with a predefined purpose** because there is no God ("Divine Engineer"). Humans **exist first**—they are born—and only later **define their own essence** through their choices, actions, and way of living.
- **Key phrase:** "Existence precedes essence."

2. We are "Condemned to be Free"

- **Definition:** The idea that human freedom is absolute and inescapable, but also a source of anguish.
- **Explanation:** Because there is no God or predetermined human nature, we have **no excuses** for who we are. We are **fully responsible** for every choice we make. This total freedom is experienced as a **burden**—a "condemnation"—because it forces us to create ourselves and our values without any external guidance. This responsibility creates **anguish** (*angoisse*).

3. "Bad Faith" (**Mauvaise Foi** – Lying to Yourself)

- **Definition:** The act of denying one's own freedom and responsibility by pretending to be determined by external factors.
- **Example – The Waiter:** A waiter who over-performs his role, acting as if "being a waiter" is his fixed nature, is in **bad faith**. In truth, he is a free person *choosing* to perform that job. He lies to himself by saying "I have to do this" instead of acknowledging, "I choose to do this."
- **Result:** Bad faith is a flight from freedom and self-deception.

4. "Hell is Other People"

- **Definition:** A famous line from Sartre's play *No Exit*, often misunderstood.
 - **Explanation:** "Hell" is the experience of being **objectified** by the **gaze** (*le regard*) of another person. When someone looks at us, we become an object in their world, subject to their judgment and interpretation. This **robs us of our subjective freedom** and makes us aware that we cannot control how others see us. Hell is thus the **loss of control** and **feeling of being permanently judged**.
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14. Existentialism. Camus. Absurdism. Meaning of Life

Albert Camus (1913–1960) – Often called an **absurdist**, his work addresses how to live with dignity in a meaningless universe.

The Absurd

- **Definition:** The conflict between the **human need for meaning, purpose, and clarity** and the **universe's complete indifference and silence**.
- **Explanation:** Humans naturally ask, "Why are we here?" The universe provides **no answer**. This mismatch—our search for meaning in a meaningless world—is **the Absurd**.

The Question of Suicide

- Camus begins *The Myth of Sisyphus* with the statement: "**There is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide.**"
- **Reasoning:** If life has no inherent meaning, is it worth living? Camus argues that **suicide is a surrender** to the Absurd—it lets meaninglessness win.

Philosophical Suicide

- **Definition:** The act of **inventing false meaning** to escape the Absurd (e.g., believing in an afterlife, a divine plan, or a utopian future).
- Camus rejects this as **self-deception**—a refusal to face the truth of an indifferent universe.

The Solution: Revolt, Freedom, and Passion

Camus proposes three responses to the Absurd:

1. Revolt (Rebellion)

- Accepting that life is meaningless but **refusing to be defeated by it**.
- Living **fully and authentically** despite the absence of inherent purpose.

2. Freedom

- Recognizing that without divine or natural rules, we are **free to create our own values** and live according to our own choices.

3. Passion

- Embracing **physical and sensual experience**—enjoying the present moment, love, beauty, and earthly pleasures.

The Myth of Sisyphus as a Metaphor

- **The Story:** Sisyphus is condemned by the gods to eternally roll a boulder up a hill, only for it to roll back down each time—a **pointless, repetitive task**.
- **Camus' Interpretation:** Sisyphus becomes **conscious of his absurd condition** and, by accepting it, **finds happiness and freedom**.
- **The Lesson:** We must imagine Sisyphus **happy**, because "**the struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart.**" Meaning is found not in a final goal, but in **the act of living, choosing, and rebelling**.

15. Postmodernism. Identity. Fragmented Identity vs. Stable Identity. (bonus: type of ontology: weak vs strong)

Postmodernism is a broad intellectual and cultural movement that emerged in the mid-20th century as a reaction to modernism and the Enlightenment. It rejects universal truths, absolute meanings, and grand narratives, emphasizing instead pluralism, relativism, fragmentation, and the role of language, power, and culture in shaping reality.

Identity in Postmodernism: Fragmented Identity

In postmodern thought, identity is **fragmented**, fluid, and constructed—not fixed or essential.

- **Fragmented Identity (*Identitate fragmentată*):**
 - The self is **decentered** and composed of multiple, often contradictory identities shaped by social context, culture, history, and discourse.
 - Identity is **performative** (we "become" through repeated actions) and changes across different contexts (e.g., social media profiles, professional roles, personal relationships).
 - There is **no stable core** or "true self"; instead, the self is like an **onion** with layers but no center.
 - Influenced by theorists such as **Michel Foucault** (power and subjectivity), **Jacques Lacan** (the split subject), and **Judith Butler** (gender performativity).

Key Metaphors and Concepts of the Fragmented Self (from the slides):

1. From "Captain of the Ship" to "Node in a Network"

- **Modernist View:** The self is like a **captain of a ship**—a stable, autonomous soul or ego in control of identity and destiny.
- **Postmodern View:** The self is a **flow** or a **node in a network**—constantly shaped and reshaped by social, technological, and cultural connections.

2. The Onion Theory (No Center)

- **Modern View (Descartes – Peach Metaphor):** Identity has a **hard core** (the "Real You") beneath surface behavior.
- **Postmodern View (Onion Metaphor):** Identity is **layer upon layer** of social roles, cultural influences, and biological drives. Peel all layers and you find **nothing at the center. The layers are the self.**

3. The Narrative Self: "We are a Story, not a Thing"

- Identity is not a stable entity but an **ongoing autobiography** we constantly rewrite.
- We **edit our memories and past** to create a coherent plot, meaning the "self" is always a **work-in-progress narrative**, not a fixed truth.

4. The "Saturated Self" and Multiphrenia

- **Historical Context:** In the past, identity was stable due to limited social exposure (e.g., village life).
- **Digital Age Crisis:** Today, we are exposed to **thousands of identities, opinions, and roles** online (e.g., professional on LinkedIn, anonymous on Twitter, personal on Instagram).
- **Result: Multiphrenia**—the splitting of the self into **multiple, often contradictory self-investments**. We don't just wear masks; we live **parallel lives**.

5. "We Are 'Spoken' by Language"

- **Concept:** We do not use language to express inner thoughts; **language uses us**.
 - **Explanation:** We can only think thoughts for which we have words, and those words are **socially constructed**. Therefore, our "inner self" is made of **recycled cultural scripts**.
 - **Quote (Rimbaud):** "*Je est un autre*" ("I is another")—the speaking "I" is already shaped by external language and culture.
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Stable Identity (*Identitate stabilă*)

- Associated with **modernism** and premodern thought (e.g., Descartes, essentialism).
- Assumes a **unified, continuous, and coherent self**—an inner essence or soul that remains consistent over time.
- Identity is seen as **innate, authentic, and discoverable** through introspection or reason.

16. Postmodernism. Language, in Modernism vs. in Postmodernism, Metanarratives, Death of the Author

Language: Modernism vs. Postmodernism

Aspect	Modernism	Postmodernism
View of Language	Transparent, representational – language acts like a clear window or mirror, accurately reflecting reality.	Opaque, constitutive – language is a stained-glass window that colors and shapes reality. We only ever see concepts shaped by language, not reality itself.
Function	Neutral tool for labeling and describing pre-existing objects and ideas.	Active system that constructs our understanding of reality. Meaning is created through language, not discovered through it.

Aspect	Modernism	Postmodernism
Relation to Truth	Language can convey objective, universal truth.	Truth is linguistically and socially constructed; there is no direct access to objective reality outside of language.
Metaphor	Clear window/mirror	Stained-glass window

Key Postmodern Ideas About Language:

1. The Arbitrary Sign (Ferdinand de Saussure)

- **Signifier:** The sound or written form of a word (e.g., "T-R-E-E").
- **Signified:** The mental concept or idea it represents (the concept of a tree).
- **Arbitrariness:** There is **no natural connection** between the signifier and signified. The word "tree" is arbitrary—it could be "arbre" (French) or "copac" (Romanian). Meaning is a social convention, not a reflection of reality.

2. Différance and the Infinite Delay of Meaning (Jacques Derrida)

- **Meaning Through Difference:** Words gain meaning only in **relation to other words** (e.g., "light" vs. "dark," "up" vs. "down").
- **The Dictionary Trap:** Looking up a word leads to more words, in an endless chain. Meaning is **deferred**—always postponed, never final.
- **Result:** There is **no stable, ultimate truth** in language; meaning is always slippery, contextual, and open to reinterpretation.

3. We Cannot Think Outside of Language

- Language **shapes the limits of our reality**. We can only think thoughts for which we have words.
- If a language lacks a word for an emotion or concept, speakers may not fully experience or understand it.
- **We do not use language to express thoughts; language creates our thoughts.**

4. Language is Political (Michel Foucault)

- **Discourse:** The way language is used within institutions (medicine, law, education) shapes what is considered "true," "normal," or "deviant."
- **Example – Mental Illness:** In the past, unusual behavior was labeled "possession"; today, it is "schizophrenia." The **label changes social treatment** (exorcism vs. medication).
- **Power:** Those who control discourse (doctors, politicians, media) **control reality** by defining terms and categories.

Metanarratives (Grand Narratives)

- **Definition:** Overarching stories or theories that claim universal truth and explain history, society, or human purpose (e.g., Progress, Marxism, Christianity, Science).
- **Postmodern Critique (Lyotard):** Postmodernism is defined by **incredulity toward metanarratives**. These stories are seen as **totalizing, oppressive, and exclusionary**—they mask diversity and serve

power structures.

- **Why They Crumble:** Because language is unstable (words like "freedom," "progress," "truth" have no fixed meaning), the grand narratives built on them are also unstable.

Death of the Author (Roland Barthes)

- **Concept:** The **author's intentions, biography, and authority are irrelevant** to interpreting a text. Meaning is not fixed by the author.
- **Why?** Language is a public, slippery system. Once a text is written, it enters the "ocean of language," where meaning is shaped by readers, culture, and context.
- **Reader's Role:** The **reader creates meaning** through their own interpretation, based on their cultural background and the shifting meanings of words.
- **Analogy:** The author throws a message in a bottle (the text) into the ocean (language/culture). The person who finds it (the reader) decides what it means.

17. Posthumanism. Post- vs trans-, their roots, what is common, the difference, how we apply it (AI?)

18. Transdisciplinarity. Defineste cele 3 axiome, multi vs ... vs trans

19. Philosophy of the mind. Reductionism. What is it, how we apply it here, subject, perception, mind - body
