French Thought (2nd part)

Post-structuralism & Deconstruction

Michel Foucault

Deleuze & Guattari

* We will look at **post-structuralist** theories regarding the concepts of **“self”** and **“other”**, and we will consider how these are impacting on the world today.
* We will also concentrate on works by 20th century philosopher and historian of ideas **Michel Foucault** (extract from *Histoire de la Sexualité* *I*, 1976), and by 20th century philosophers **Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari** (extract from *Mille Plateaux*, 1980).
* To start with, we will look back at **Structuralism**, a way of thought which is partly based on the idea that the world is organised in binary structures. We will consider what this means for the concept of “alterity” by reading an extract of philosopher **Emmanuel Levinas**’s *De l'Existence à l'Existent* (1947), and by discussing the legacy of anthropologist **Claude Levi-Strauss**, linguist **Roman Jakobson**, and psychoanalyst **Jacques Lacan**.
* We will then focus on Post-structuralism, which is partly an **anti-Structuralism**. We will look at the **deconstruction** of the concepts of “self” and “other”, the idea that these are mere constructs of the human mind and that there are other possible ways of constructing our world.
* The extracts from Foucault and Deleuze & Guattari will provide examples of deconstruction, but we will also look at **Jacques Derrida** very briefly, the French philosopher who is usually regarded as “the father of deconstruction”.