

Why do we like to argue?

A theory of positionality
between philosophy,
language and psychoanalysis

A WORKSHOP WITH DR. YURI DI LIBERTO

(Institute for Cultural Inquiry, Berlin)

Wed., Jan. 8, 2025

2.00 p.m. - 6.00 p.m.

GD 03/230 & online over ZOOM

For questions, please contact kkc@rub.de



Whether it is between people, couples, friends, or among groups, politicians, or scholars, arguing is the quintessential activity in which a play of positions unfolds. In arguing, conflictuality emerges as a dynamic play of positions, both defended and attacked.

Being a subject, with all its vulnerabilities and stances, means inhabiting an invisible matrix of characters, masks, and, once again, positions. Explicit or implicit reflections on what such positions are articulated run through diverse but often interconnected authors, such as psychoanalysts (Freud, Lacan), philosophers (Hegel, Deleuze), structuralists (Petitot, Lévi-Strauss), sociolinguists (Flahault) and sociologists (Goffman). One can speak, for example, of neurotic or perverse “positions”, but also of “feminine” and “masculine” positions, as well as the Hegelian conflicts between *master and slave*.

What does it mean to speak from a given position? To what extent are our affective lives shaped by these shifty entities swarming in our discourses and thoughts?

By sifting through different frameworks and canons, this workshop aims to answer these and other related questions.

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