



Prof. William Watkin (Brunel University)

# Multiplicities of Silence

Jan. 11, 2023 | 6-8pm  
Lecture Hall JO 1 (Johannisstr. 4)



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**Biography:** William Watkin is a Professor of Contemporary Philosophy and Literature at Brunel University, West London. He is a specialist in contemporary continental philosophy and has published seven books. His most recent, *Bioviolence: How the Powers That Be Make Us Do What They Want* looks at contemporary geopolitics, technology and new forms of force and coercion. He is also a published journalist specialising in technology, data and the limits of truth.

### Guest Lecture: Multiplicities of Silence

Sigetics is the name for the philosophy of silence. It is concerned with what philosophers cannot say or name. As such it constitutes the outside of philosophy, that thinkers need to make their various systems consistent. Yet sigetics as a discipline is also marked by an essential paradox, the saying of the unsayable. In his brief history of sigetics, Prof. Watkin visits the quiet cells and still offices of many thinkers (the Gnostics, Hegel, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, Husserl, Bataille, Blanchot, Derrida, Agamben, Ranciere and Badiou) and asks if their multiplicities of silences might be less a limit to philosophy, than a mute indication of its future. For what is silence but that which has no distinction, discernibility or difference? And what is sigetics but the philosophy of this radical *indifference*?

Termin/Ort: 11.01.2023, 18-20 Uhr, JO 1 (Johannisstr. 4)  
Teilnahme: ohne Anmeldung

### Workshop: The Philosophy of Indifference

The last 40 years or so have been dominated by continental philosophy's investigation of difference in all its myriad forms. Indeed, ideas such as deconstruction, marginality, deterritorialisation, otherness, and so on still dominate much of the conversation in multiple disciplines, across social media, out on the streets, even in parliaments. However, while we remain passionately engaged with difference, continental philosophy has moved on. Contemporary thinkers like Agamben, Badiou, and Laruelle are openly critical of the philosophy of difference since Hegel, favouring a new conceptual architecture which Prof. Watkin calls "indifference".

In this workshop Prof. Watkin will present a unique opportunity to engage with contemporary philosophical indifference as the future direction for 21st century thought. Beginning with Hegel, he will trace the recent history of indifference as pure abstract difference, extensional logic, post-deconstructive indifferential suspension, and set theoretical ontology, before arriving at what he calls pure, generic, indifferential thinking. Using examples from disparate fields—literature, visual arts, film, ethics, politics, architecture and social media—Prof. Watkin will also engage with a wide variety of thinkers—Hegel, Heidegger, Frege, Wittgenstein, Derrida, Kristeva, Deleuze, Foucault, Agamben, Badiou, Esposito and Laruelle. During the workshop he will map out the basics of indifference as abstract, extensional thought, Agamben's application of indifferential suspension to a post-deconstructive potential, before ending with the centrality of indifferent multiples and infinities in the work of Badiou.

Termin/Ort: 12.01.2021, 9-16 Uhr, JO 101/102 (Johannisstr. 4)  
Teilnahme: begrenzte Plätze; Anmeldung per E-Mail  
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