

Subject card

Subject name and code	Phenomenological Epistemology of Mysticism: A Case Study, PG_00208742						
Field of study	Philosophy						
Date of commencement of studies	October 2025		Academic year of realisation of subject		2026/2027		
Education level	Master's studies		Subject group		Obligatory subject group in the field of study Optional subject group		
Mode of study	full-time studies		Mode of delivery		at the university		
Year of study	2		Language of instruction		Polish		
Semester of study	4		ECTS credits		2.0		
Learning profile	academic		Assessment form		exam		
Conducting unit							
Name and surname of lecturer (lecturers)	Subject supervisor		dr Tomasz Kąkol				
	Teachers						
Lesson types	Lesson type	Lecture	Tutorial	Laboratory	Project	Seminar	SUM
	Number of study hours	30.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	30
	E-learning hours included: 0.0						
Learning activity and number of study hours	Learning activity	Participation in didactic classes included in study plan		Participation in consultation hours		Self-study	SUM
	Number of study hours	30		0.0		20.0	50
Subject objectives	To introduce students to some of the consequences of radical empiricism by way of example (the justification of religion through mystical experience or its dejustification in the absence of such an experience, or by demonstrating its falsity), and to explore the (dangerous) intersection of philosophy, psychiatry, theology, and possibly other disciplines.						
Learning outcomes	Course outcome		Subject outcome		Method of verification		
	[FILOZMU2_U01] The graduate searches for, analyses, evaluates, selects, and integrates information from written and electronic sources.		(S)he searches for, analyzes, evaluates, selects, and integrates information from written and electronic sources		[SU3] text preparation/written work		
	[FILOZMU2_W01] The graduate has a comprehensive knowledge and deep understanding of the role of philosophical reflection in shaping culture.		(S)he understands how philosophy shapes culture		[SW1] oral statement/ conversation/discussion		
	[FILOZMU2_K07] The graduate has deepened awareness of the importance of humanistic reflection for the formation of social bonds.		Through these reflections, (s)he can build new relationships or strengthen existing ones		[SK8] observation of student's independent or team work		
	[FILOZMU2_K01] The graduate knows the scope of his/her knowledge and skills, understands the need for constant learning and professional development.		The more (s)he knows, the more (s)he realizes how much (s)he still doesn't know (after Socrates and others)		[SK8] observation of student's independent or team work		
	[FILOZMU2_W03] He/she knows and understands the relations between philosophy and sciences on the level which enables interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary work with specialists from other sciences.		(S)he understands that there are areas where disciplines as seemingly different as philosophy (epistemology), theology, and psychiatry can intersect		[SW1] oral statement/ conversation/discussion		

Subject contents	I am a poem written by the One who is still writing. This poem is not yet finished. I am almost burning with expectation that He will finally write its last line! Fernando Rielo [trans. T. Kąkol] The author of the above words is known, among other things, for a radical empirical thesis close to the ideas of classical phenomenology: the first and last word must be given to experience, and any theory that fails to understand this is doomed to failure from the outset regardless of what that theory might concern. In particular, if any religion comprises a set of propositions (and there is no religion to which this does not apply), they must be verifiable and if not, so much the worse for religion. Speaking of classical phenomenology, it is well known that, unlike traditional empiricism, in addition to sensory perception and introspection (some traditional and contemporary empiricists would already have doubts about the latter), it holds that essential cognition, so-called empathy, or possibly quasi-perception (of works of art or values). The fate of (various) religions thus depends on the answer to the question of whether there is also an experience of the divine or the sanctity of course, an experience in this life (since we cannot assume in advance that there is an other one). A natural candidate for this title is what is called a mystical experience. In accordance with the principle of originality, it would be best to experience it oneself, and in the (temporary?) absence of such experiences, to refer to their descriptions in the meantime: especially since there are numerous accounts of this experience, from the earliest times through the writings of philosophical classics (e.g., W. James) to the present day. The lecturer studied many descriptions of mystical experiences even before he turned to philosophy, and in this lecture he would like to first present the accounts left by Stefania Horak (1909-1993), making the course a case study. The accounts left by this woman, who was, among other things, a philosophy student (!), stand out from others due to their exceptional clarity. It is important to emphasize the interreligious (and even inter- and a-religious, if one may say so) nature of these analyses: the lecture will not be a kind of apologetics within a specific denomination on the contrary, the ideal would be a series of lectures or, even better, a recurring discussion among a broad group of scholars studying mystics of various religions, which would lay the groundwork for a comparative study of mysticism: in addition to Stefania Horak, we would have, for example, Rabia al-Adawiyya (perhaps the most famous Muslim mystic), a representative of Hinduism, a Buddhist, the shaman from the Amazonian Carapana tribe described in Rio Anacondas fascinating reportage, and many others. Second, the course will be interdisciplinary in nature: we will consider, among other things, the similarity of certain described phenomena to psychiatric symptoms and whether it would be possible to demonstrate the delusional nature of the mystical experience, thus going beyond phenomenology (which, from a natural sciences perspective, is sometimes referred to as symptomatology as opposed to etiology). If there is enough time, we will also look at other characters, including those suggested by the course participants!		
Prerequisites and co-requisites			
Assessment methods and criteria	Subject passing criteria	Passing threshold	Percentage of the final grade
	written work – formal correctness, content accuracy, creativity	50.0%	100.0%
Recommended reading	Basic literature	Stefania (Fulla) Horak, "Święta Pani", Warszawa 1939/Kraków 2020 Idem, "Niewidzialni. 1938-1956", Kraków 1997/Nowy Światów 2009 (digit.) DSM-5-TR Ian Hacking, "Rewriting the Soul", Princeton 1998 Robert Rieber, "Bifurcation of the Self", Springer 2006 Marek Łagosz, "Ontologia Boga", Universitas 2022	
	Supplementary literature	(examples!) Tomasz Kąkol, Is a patient suffering from dissociative identity disorder really a group of patients? Or, on a certain overinterpretation Anna Katarzyna Emmerich, The Passion Anna Katarzyna Emmerich, Secrets of the Souls in Purgatory Renzo Allegri, The Miracles of Padre Pio Faustyna (Helena) Kowalska, Diary	
	eResources addresses		

Example issues/ example questions/ tasks being completed	
Work placement	Not applicable

Document generated electronically. Does not require a seal or signature.