



The European Graduate School  
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**Alenka Zupančič** is a Professor of philosophy and psychoanalysis at European Graduate School where she teaches an intensive summer seminar on Friedrich Nietzsche.

## BIOGRAPHY

**Alenka Zupančič, Ph.D.**, is a Lacanian philosopher and social theorist, based as a full-time researcher in the philosophy department of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts. She was born in 1966 in Slovenia. Alenka received her Ph.D. from the University of Ljubljana in 1990 and currently is a member of the the Ljubljana School for Psychoanalysis. At the European Graduate School, she holds a position as a lecturer where she teaches an intensive summer seminar on Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche.

The foundation for Alenka Zupančič's philosophical work is influenced primarily by Slovenian Lacanian scholars, such as Mladen Dollar and Slavoj Žižek, but also uses the tools and methodologies of classical philosophers, including Emmanuel Kant, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, and Henri Bergson. Zupančič is a particularly interested in the works of Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche and Jacques Lacan, and often uses their work as a conduit through which to explore conceptual spaces

defined on one hand between the psychoanalytic and philosophical, and delimited on the other by the frenetic nature of contemporary culture.

Since the early nineties, Zupančič has been continuously published in numerous psychoanalytic and philosophical anthologies (i.e., *Think Again. Alain Badiou and the Future of Philosophy*; *The Cambridge Companion to Lacan*) and journals; she has appeared in print in *Filozofski vestnik*, *New Formations*, *The American Journal of Semiology*, *Problemi*, *Razpol*, *Umbr(a)*, *Lacanian Ink*, *Identiteti*, *Parrallax* and others.

Her primary and most exhaustive work on Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *The Shortest Shadow: Nietzsche's Philosophy of the Two* (MIT Press, 2003) is a book, appropriately bisected at its center; the structural duality of the text itself exposes the central philosophical tension at the spiritual hour designated by Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche as "Noon." She presents in her the first section, the outlaw philosopher as *essentially* an outlaw, rejecting reductionist notion that academics have long held in order to update his thinking to apply to the ethics of contemporary society; in the second she examines his notion of the "shortest shadow," and the irreducible duality of the subject at the moment of minimal difference.

Alain Badiou has championed Zupančič's writing as a "spiritual explosion," and Slavoj Žižek included her most recent English language book, *The Odd One In: On Comedy* (2008), in his Short Circuits series, defined as "short Lacanian interventions in art, philosophy, theology, and ideology."

In her book on Comedy she writes, "Comic subjectivity does not reside in the subject making the comedy, nor in the subjects of egos that appear in it, but in this very incessant and irresistible, all-consuming movement." Thus locating the point of popular comedy in the impossible location, which can only be located through a series of dialectical movements. These absences defined by a prevailing dialectical current are one of Zupančič's major subjects of exploration, along with the undefined spaces, or voids inherent in the symbolic order bestowed upon ethics,

language, the arts, love, and comedy by popular and professional/academic discourse, and the impossible duality that arises from the impossibility of these absences as it resides in the possibility of their symbolic representation.

Alenka Zupančič's work often focuses around the idea of evil. In an interview with *Cabinet Magazine* published in their Winter Issue 2001/2002 she says the following on the subject of evil:

The theoretical necessity of rethinking the concept of evil is linked to the more general interest in the question of ethics. To a considerable extent, this interest is polemical: The way the word "ethics" has been used lately in public discourse is bound to provoke some theoretical and conceptual nausea. It is used either to back up some political or legal decision that nobody is willing to assume fully, or else to keep in check certain developments (in science, for instance) that seem to move much more quickly than our "morals" do. To put it simply, "ethics" is thought of as something strictly restrictive; something that, in the hustle and bustle of our society, marks a place for our intimate fears. In philosophy as well as in psychoanalysis, a conceptual revolt against this notion of ethics took place. The question of evil and its possible definitions arose in reaction to this broader conceptual frame.

Alenka is the author of the following books: *The Odd One In: On Comedy* (The MIT Press, 2008), *Why Psychoanalysis?: Three Interventions*. (NSU Press, 2008), *Warum Psychoanalyse? drei Interventionen*. (Diaphanes, 2009), *Poetika. Druga Knjiga* (Analecta, 2005), *Nothing/nichts*. (Filozofski Inštitut, 2005), *Esthétique du Désir, Éthique de la Jouissance* (Théétète Editions, 2002), *Das Reale einer Illusion* (Suhrkamp, 2001), *Realno iluzije* (Naklada Jesenski i Turk, 2001), *Nietzsche: filozofija dvojega* (Društvo za teoretsko psihoanalizo, 2001), *The Shortest Shadow. Nietzsche's Philosophy of the Two* (The MIT Press, 2002), *En kisa gölge: Nietzsche'nin "İki" Felsefesi* (Encore, 2005), *L'être et le réel : Kant, Lacan*. (Dissertation, 1997), *Argument za strpnost* (Društvo za teoretsko psihoanalizo, 1997), *Claudel z Lacanom*. (Analecta, 1996), with Slavoj Žižek (Advisor) *Dejanje in zakon, nezavedno in pojem: doktorska disertacija* (Dissertation 1995), *Etika realnega - Kant, Lacan* (Teoretsko Psihoanalizo.

1993), *Ethics of the Real: Kant and Lacan* (Verso. 2000), *Ethik des Realen. Kant, Lacan* (Verlag Turia + Kant. 1995), *L'éthique du réel: Kant avec Lacan* (Nous. 2009) and *Riaru no rinri : Kanto to Rakan* (Kawade shobou shinsha. 2003).

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