



## CALL FOR PAPERS

**Azimuth. Philosophical Coordinates in Modern and Contemporary Age  
Special Issue (1/2023)**

**Actual Philosophy.  
Critical Thinking at the Crossroads of Technology, Aesthetics and  
Politics, and the History of Culture**

*Editors:*

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From 2013, the year of its founding, to the present, *Azimuth* has played a role in mapping the contemporary philosophical debate on a variety of topics, mainly focusing on three key thematic areas: the **philosophy of technology, aesthetics and politics**, and the **history of ideas and cultures**. Our editorial work was intended to explore the ways in which the philosophical reflection intersects and confronts other forms of knowledge decisive for a critical understanding of each of these areas. Whether it was the role of STS and media studies in the technological sphere, socio-legal reflections in the field of political phenomena, or more straightforward ethnographic and empirical approaches in the field of anthropological and cultural theory, each issue reconstructed an interdisciplinary perspective, nourished by different approaches: phenomenology, history of ideas, historical and cultural anthropology, deconstruction are some of the philosophical traditions mobilized over time. Ten years after the beginning of its publication, the panorama that *Azimuth* has thus drawn can be weighed and evaluated in relation to the present and the way philosophy continues to articulate itself in the thematic and institutional confrontation with other sciences.

What has the progressive hybridization with disciplines whose methodologies are often radically different from the philosophical one meant for philosophy in the last ten years? Which methodological transformations have become necessary? With respect to which specific problems within the indicated macro-areas is the philosophical contribution recognized as necessary by scholars of other disciplines? What does it mean to "do philosophy", to "practice philosophy" in a historical and cultural horizon of growing complexity and interconnection like the present one?

This issue aims to mark the tenth anniversary of the first publication of *Azimuth* by systematically addressing these questions in reference to the thematic areas and philosophical approaches evoked, calling for the intervention of scholars who, in their respective fields, can offer a diagnosis of the state of the philosophical discipline at the present.

**We, therefore, launch a threefold Call for Papers in the following thematic areas (please specify the section of interest when submitting your proposal):**

### ***1. History of Ideas and Cultures***

The history of ideas and historical anthropology represent two theoretical directions that, although they have different genealogies, authors and methodologies, share a fundamental theoretical assumption: the idea that both the concepts in use in human culture, and the representations of the human beings as producing their own culture, are the result of historical constructions. As such, they are subject to constant change, and contingent at least in the forms of their elaboration, use and mutual combination. The history of ideas, as we know, coined in 1936 by Lovejoy drawing on various historiographic debates and eighteenth-nineteenth-century historicists (Vico, Cousin, Dilthey, the *Kulturgeschichte*), aims to investigate the diachronic evolution of individual concepts in an interdisciplinary, multilingual and collaborative sense. The history of

ideas has seen an epistemological turning point since the 1970s, with the important criticisms made by Skinner, with the reactions provoked by the latter, the demands of both intellectual history and Marxist historiography and Foucault's archaeological proposal.

Historical anthropology, which developed mainly in Germany between the end of the 1980s and the first decade of the new millennium, while taking up some of the reflections that had been at the basis of classical philosophical anthropology (Scheler, Gehlen, Plessner), distanced itself from it in a decisive manner at the methodological level, so as to move towards the question concerning the ways in which, through a series of cultural practices, through the constitution of supra-subjective horizons and intersubjective relations, human beings become what they are in the course of their own historical evolution. A two-faced investigation that simultaneously links elements and methods drawn from historiographic research with theoretical reflection on anthropotechnics and the interaction between nature and technology in human beings.

Keeping this specific conceptual framework as a vanishing point, this section of the issue welcomes contributions aimed at questioning the developments of these disciplines over the past decade: their evolution, their importance for national and international research horizons, as well as their possible crises and prospects.

## **2. Philosophy of Technology**

As a discipline, philosophy of technology is a relatively recent knowledge: before the contemporary era, the topic of technical capabilities and their practical implementation, their success (or failure) and their aims, had remained essentially marginal on the philosophical level, as an aspect inherent to the dimension of everyday life with little theoretical significance. However, it is precisely the everyday experience in its horizon of immediate obviousness that phenomenology has critically re-appropriated to philosophical discourse: *Lebenswelt* (Husserl) and *Alltäglichkeit* (Heidegger) have become, indeed, the two categories around which the understanding of the technological world revolves. The "question concerning technology" has become central, since technology itself has become the dominant factor in the everyday life of mankind to an extent that was unthinkable in previous eras. Our *Lebenswelt* is now a complex, integrated system characterized by the interconnectedness and reciprocal effects of trade and craftsmanship, then industry and automated production, technical science and expanding technology, empirical research, and the political, economic and social demands involved.

For this section, we invite contributions focusing on the following themes:

(i) Technology and the (future of) humankind. The section will discuss the role of technology in the context of the evolution of the human species. We welcome both historical and genealogical contributions as well as contributions of a theoretical and ethical order (exploring for instance the risks associated with the emergence of disruptive technologies).

(ii) Technology and power. The section explores the (forms of) relation between technology and power. Technologies as tools of liberation (think of the access to information thanks to the Internet) but also of domination (global surveillance, privacy concerns etc.) on both the individual level and the social level.

(iii) Technology and myth. Technologies are never just material technical artifacts: they are embedded in worldviews and contribute to form new ones. The section welcomes contributions focused on the possible forms of these narratives.

## **3. Aesthetics and Politics**

This issue of *Azimuth* is concerned with the critical positioning of contemporary thought in relation to current reality: in many cases, this positioning implies a theoretical militancy connected to the political urgency to imagine other forms of experience and relationships. There are many challenges that philosophy needs to face: from the critique of neoliberal power to the search for practices of resistance in relation to feminism or ecogism.

In this section we will analyze the forms, problems, and practices of contemporary philosophy from an aesthetic-political perspectives. We will collect the voices of the main tendencies that in recent years have reflected on the role and the destiny of philosophy from a political position and/or an aesthetic concern. In particular, we invite thinkers concerned with feminism, the challenge of climate change, the relationship between art and politics, and the critique of neoliberalism to analyze how these issues are changing and expanding the conceptual spectrum and epistemic field of contemporary philosophy. In addition, we welcome contributions that allow us to map the debate around border studies. Starting with the theoretical reflections of Étienne Balibar and ending with the work of Thomas Nail and Michel Agier, the 'border' has become in recent years a physical and symbolic place discussed by various disciplines, from geopolitics to anthropology, from history to social ontology.

*What is the general contribution of philosophy to border studies? What are the aesthetic-political uses of the border, from a general reflection on space to that on maps, that have permeated contemporary philosophy in recent years?*

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*Azimuth* invites contributions in English, German, French, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.

Authors, whose papers will be accepted, will be asked to edit their contributions according to the editorial rules of the journal (available at: <http://www.azimuthjournal.com/call-for-papers/>). Contributions should not exceed 34.000 characters (spaces and footnotes included). All articles are subjected to blind review process.

Please send your complete papers to: [editorial@azimuthjournal.com](mailto:editorial@azimuthjournal.com) by **January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023**.

**More info at:** <http://www.azimuthjournal.com/call-for-papers/>