

AZIMUTH

Philosophical Coordinates in Modern and Contemporary Age

XI (2023), nr. 21

Philosophy and the Present
Critical Thinking at the Crossroads of Technology,
Aesthetics and Politics, and the History of Culture

Filosofia al presente
Il pensiero critico all'intersezione tra tecnologia,
estetica e politica, e storia della cultura

edited by • a cura di

C. BASILI, F. BUONGIORNO, M. CARASSAI,
S. GUIDI, A. LUCCI, I. PELGREFFI, L. PISANO, A. ROMELE

GIOVANBATTISTA TUSA, GEOREALISMO. CONTINGÊNCIAS DA FILOSOFIA

Abstract: This text hypothesizes that while our epoch is characterized – on the one hand – by the impact of human activity on the entire surface of the earth, from the mountains to the glaciers to the atmosphere, it is also characterized – on the other hand – by the eruption of forces that are indifferent to this historical process. Thus, a *georealism* is evoked that can account for the magmatic forces that act as a diffuse yet deep trauma on all the strata of our life. These material forces, however, do not have the monolithic character usually attributed to geological aggregates, but preserve the turbulent traces of the processes of construction and destruction, of composition and decomposition, from times when the living and the non-living did not oppose each other. Times when intimacy with foreign forces made visible the tumult of matter as the very form of its existence. A materialistic form of realism in a world without unity must start from the obvious fact that we are not alone, that we are immersed in an environment infinitely greater than the human as our only reality. This requires a new sense of presence that precedes any representation, and also the ability to comprehend a reality populated not by things but by forces, by parts of a discontinuous formation of incommensurable worlds.

Keywords: georealism, contingency, materialism, actuality, extinction

MELANIE SEHGAL, TECHNIQUES OF SENSING AND THE ARTS OF THE ANTHROPOCENE

Abstract: Amitav Ghosh states that the «climate crisis is also a crisis of culture»; therefore, it is crucial to identify the assumptions and practices within the arts and humanities that contribute to the current socio-ecological crises, termed the Anthropocene. In this paper, I respond to this call which I read as a call to critically reflect on the humanities' enmeshment in the current crisis as well as to inquire in their potential contribution transformation. I begin by briefly sketching how a key assumption of modernity according to A.N. Whitehead – a particular way of conceptualizing nature – continues to be operative today, structuring our way of thinking about 'Nature', 'Culture' or 'Society', and informing the role the realm of culture and the humanities are accorded (or not) today. Second, I develop the repercussions this wide-spread but implicit assumption has on thinking about experience within a modern cosmology. On this basis, I continue to explore the issue of sensing and experience in the context of today's ecological disruptions in which, I argue, thinking beyond modern assumptions takes on prime importance. With the help of Jakob Johann von Uexküll and Thom van Dooren I think about the effects of extinction on various modes of experience. By means of ending, I ask whether cultural practices in the arts and humanities could contribute to working for transformation through what I call 'the arts of the Anthropocene'. Could the humanities help with fostering new techniques of sensing in view of developing other sensibilities than those harbored by the Great Acceleration?

Keywords: anthropocene, experience, humanities, A.N. Whitehead, arts of noticing

DAN BOSCOV-ELLEN, A POLITICAL-PHILOSOPHICAL TIPPING POINT? DUAL DENIALISMS AND INCONVENIENT TRUTHS

Abstract: One of the questions raised by this special edition is how the climate crisis is «changing and expanding the conceptual spectrum and epistemic field of contemporary philosophy». In this paper I attempt to understand why, in important sectors of contemporary philosophy, the climate crisis has actually *failed* to effect a meaningful transformation. In particular, I note that the observed changes in the field of normative political philosophy, for which one might expect climate breakdown to be

especially disruptive, have in fact been quite modest. I argue that an expanded model of climate denialism – one that understands denialism concerning the existence of climate change and denialism concerning its structural causes and political-theoretical entailments as two species with a common underlying source – can help to explain this gap between the current state of normative political philosophy and the exigencies of our planetary reality.

Keywords: climate change, climate denial, political philosophy, liberalism, capitalism

FRANCESCA R. RECCHIA LUCIANI, LO INCONSCIENTE, LA DIFERENCIASEXUAL Y LAS TRAMPAS DE UNA ONTOLOGÍA BINARIA

Abstract: This essay investigates heterosexual binarism through a number of conceptual junctures, focusing on the difficult relationship between “feminism of sexual difference” and psychoanalysis, especially around the “gendered” nature of the unconscious as an influential political factor. The extraordinary persistence, at the level of the collective unconscious, of the heterosexual dual ontology is analysed in its historical evolution from de Beauvoir and through the 1970s, with Lonzi, Irigaray and Melandri. The useful nexus for understanding the durability and solidity of the binary ontology, both at the conscious and unconscious level, lies in the intertwining of the political action that feminist movements undertook to claim rights, the theoretical-conceptual and epistemological critique of those devices on which the social organisation and the patriarchal material and symbolic order is structured, and the collective experiences of self-consciousness and the “practice of the unconscious” probed to unhinge male domination based on compulsory heterosexuality.

Keywords: feminist philosophies, heterosexual binarism, psychoanalysis, self-consciousness, unconscious

ANDREW FEENBERG, LA CRITICA DELLA TECNICA DI MARCUSE, OGGI

Abstract: Marcuse was the main representative of the Frankfurt School in the 1960s and 1970s. His reputation grew and fell along with the New Left he supported. His eclipse led, among other unfortunate consequences, to the disappearance of his critique of science and technology. Indeed, he was the only member of the Frankfurt School to develop the concept of instrumental reason beyond its early beginnings in Horkheimer and Adorno’s *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. This critique is again relevant today as we face imminent environmental catastrophe due to climate change. Thus Marcuse’s study today is not merely academic, but once again politically significant. In this article I will discuss his concept of nature in relation to his critique of science and technology, and argue that his work contains valuable resources for contemporary struggles.

Keywords: Herbert Marcuse, Frankfurt School, critique of technology, instrumental reason, nature

HELENA DE PREESTER, ART IN TIMES OF STUPIDITY. STIEGLER’S POLITICIZATION OF ART IN THE HYPERINDUSTRIAL AGE

Abstract: According to Stiegler, contemporary toxic technologies have led to aesthetic disindividuation and aesthetic ‘conditioning’, substituting aesthetic ‘experience’ and amounting to its exploitation. Stiegler, however, also contends that the loss of individuation can be restored because of the pharmacological nature of technology. Moreover, he believes in the possibility of a “renaissance of the symbolic” in which art, artists and amateurs play a role. First, Stiegler considers

the repeated encounter with works of art as a cure for symbolic misery and as an opportunity for individuation. Second, the role art and artists can play is part of the larger process of ‘adoption’ of contemporary forms of technology. More in particular, Stiegler points out that digital media occasion the restoration of the intimate connection between artistic production and aesthetic reception. Even though Stiegler is well aware that symbolic misery will not be lifted on the basis of artistic activity alone, he may be too optimistic about art’s possibility for deproletarianization and for adopting contemporary technologies.

Keywords: Stiegler, art, aesthetics, symbolic misery, amateur

JANINA LOH, WAS IST FEMINISTISCHE TECHNIKPHILOSOPHIE? ÜBER DAS SPANNUNGSVERHÄLTNIS EINER FEMINISTISCHEN BEWEGUNG ZWISCHEN THEORIE UND PRAXIS

Abstract: Already since about the middle of the 20th century and thus since the so-called second wave of the women’s movement, a feminist interest in the discussion of technology and science can be observed. After first explaining my understanding of the three components of feminist philosophy of technology – feminism, technology, and philosophy – in what follows, I turn to the five most prominent feminist philosophy of technology movements: Donnay Haraway’s cyborg feminism, Judy Wajcman’s technofeminism, the Laboria Cuboniks Collective’s xenofeminism, net feminism as seen by Annekathrin Kohout, and Legacy Russell’s glitch feminism. It will turn out that all of these currents can be understood as philosophical feminist currents without any doubt. However, they differ in terms of their theoretical complexity and critical claim on the one hand, and in terms of their activist or practical impetus on the other.

Keywords: technofeminism, feminist philosophy, cyborgfeminism, Donna Haraway, xenofeminism

THOMAS MACHO, VON FALL ZU FALL. METHODISCHE ÜBERLEGUNGEN ZU EINER KONSILIARISCHEN KASUISTIK

Abstract: This paper proposes a reflection on the concept of “case”. Starting from the Kantian difference between determining and reflecting judgment, it offers first a reconstruction of the history of case studies in the legal field. Then, through an analysis of Ludwig Wittgenstein and Hans Blumenberg, it investigates the concept of the case in relation to that of chance. Finally, through an analysis of some of Franz Kafka’s works, the paper addresses the question of the relationship between legal case and individual experience.

Keywords: Case, Wittgenstein, Blumenberg, Kafka, case, chance

CHRISTOPH WULF, RATIONALITY OF PURPOSE, REIFICATION AND THE DIALECTIC OF ENLIGHTENMENT. PERSPECTIVES OF THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL

Abstract: The article examines the topicality of central concepts of Critical Theory. The focus is on the “theory/practice” relationship and the concepts “rationality of purpose”, “reification”, “dialectic of enlightenment”, “negative dialectics”. It becomes clear that these terms are of central importance for understanding the Anthropocene and its dynamics.

Keywords: theory/practice relationship, rationality of purpose, reification, dialectic of enlightenment, negative dialectics

RICCARDO POZZO, UEBERWEG *IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY*. GRUNDRISS ONLINE

Abstract: The *Grundriss online* database gives access to the complete edition of the *Ueberweg Grundriss der Philosophie*. In the end we will be talking of about 14,000 book pages. Although currently the online version grants access only to six volumes of the Ueberweg, it is to be assumed that all twenty-seven volumes that have already been published so far will be available online shortly. Most importantly, however, work at the Ueberweg is still in the making: volumes are planned for the Renaissance, philosophy of the twentieth century as well philosophy in East Asia, philosophy in Africa, and philosophy in Latin America. The achievement can be reasonably hoped for by the end of this decade.

Keywords: corpus linguistics, digital humanities, history of Philosophy, Ueberweg, *Grundriss*