

Abstracts



SPINOZA AND NUMBERS.
SOME OBSERVATIONS ON SPINOZAN “MONISM”

According to Spinoza, number is nothing but an “aid to the imagination” (Letter 12). Accordingly, it can express neither the substantial reality of God nor the modal reality of finite beings. Numbers, when applied to modal beings, represent them as discrete entities; thus, modal distinction is fallaciously conceived of as a real one. On the other hand, “unity” or “unicity” are not attributes of God and add nothing to God’s absolutely infinite being; hence, “monism” can by no means be considered as an adequate conception of Spinoza’s philosophy from a strictly intellectual standpoint. At best “monism” can be better understood as a mnemonic aid to orientate oneself in the history of philosophy.

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ON A THEORY OF CREATIVITY
AS THE BASIS OF AUTHENTICITY

In this paper I propose a novel account of creativity. In contrast to the vast majority of prominent thinkers, who base their conceptions of authenticity on rationality and reflection, my aim is to base mine on creativity. Creativity has been widely understood as the creation of something both original and valuable. I trace the origins of the notion, and sketch a map of its various treatments in philosophical thought. I present and discuss some dominant contemporary conceptions of creativity and then I develop a conception of creativity designed specifically to help us understand authenticity. I focus on what a creative process is, and understand it in terms of a psychological conception of novelty and of sensitivity in regard to the intrinsic value of the creative outcome. While almost all theories of creativity and authenticity necessarily require the existence of a true self or at least some kind of self –the existence of which has been widely questioned

by empiricists, neuroscientists and post-modern thinkers– the conception that I put forward is not a self-expression view of these notions.

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REASON AS A MODIFIER OF SELF-INTEREST IN ARISTOTLE'S ACCOUNT OF FRIENDSHIP

Eudaimonia is the ultimate good in Aristotelian moral philosophy, and love for one's self is of primary importance. The pursuit of good for the self involves the practice of all moral virtues that constitute an undivided unity. Virtue requires of an agent the pursuit of another person's own good for his own sake. Interest for a friend, another self, is an independent goal and not a medium for the actualization of the agent's own good. Interest for the self is primary but does not come into conflict with interest for the other, for the friend. That is because reason transforms our own selfish desires and directs them towards the ultimate goal of self-fulfillment. The term enlightened self-interest is related to reason's intervention and influence on our own desires and behaviors in the sense that our own self-interest is transformed and guided by reason according to virtue.

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THE TERMS NATURE-SUBSTANCE AND PERSON-HYPOSTASIS IN LEONTIUS OF BYZANTIUM

This paper examines the philosophical and theological context of notions such as nature-substance, person-hypostasis and others, as perceived by Leontius of Byzantium. Leontius aimed, on the one hand, at tackling the issue of the Triune God, specifically, to determine the consubstantiality (*ὁμοούσιον*) of the three persons of the Holy Trinity. On the other hand, he tries to explain how Christ is both perfect God and perfect man. In the unity of divine and human nature in Christ their particularities are absolutely maintained without inferences leading to a static monism or Neo-platonic types of mediation. More specifically, the Neo-platonic School

is here discussed since its representatives were constantly engaged in how they might all the more formalise, based on ontological connections, congruent sequences in the workings of intermediate powers and beings. In verification of this we have no more than to study Proclus' commentary on the Platonic dialogue *In Platonis Parmenidem* and, above all, his six-volume discourse *Platonica Procli Theologia*.

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AUTONOMY, INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY: INTERPRETATIVE APPROACHES

The word autonomy appears within the tragedy *Antigone* for the first time where the chorus specifically says that “*ἀλλ’ αὐτόνομος ζῶσα μόνη δὴ θνητῶν Αἰδην καταβήσει*”. This phrase manifests a vigorous demand for autonomy. For *Antigone*, the decision to die is a decision to live. The issue of whether man is able to think and act freely is discussed mainly in Hellenistic times and primarily within the context of epicurean thought. Epicurus is transformed into a preacher of self-consciousness. Self-consciousness is expressed through man's *παρέγκλισις*, which is strongly related to freedom of will and action. The concept of autonomy has a determinant role within Castoriadis' work, to such an extent in fact that Castoriadis calls himself the “philosopher of autonomy”. He argues that all societies have been living within an institutional heteronomy that can express the collective will only when citizens have consciously reached autonomy. This autonomy is associated with doubt about the laws and their foundations and the capability of acting and institutionalizing. Social autonomy means that society not only establishes its own laws but also recognizes this kind of autonomy as the source of laws. Castoriadis believes that the existence of autonomous subjects is a prerequisite for the establishment of an autonomous society. However, what are the limits of individual autonomy vis-à-vis social rules, and what is the meaning of social autonomy? Is it possible to reconcile individual autonomy with the existence of social laws and power? On the other hand, in his later work regarding the subject of autonomy, the imaginary is the primary source of

meaning of social life and the transition from already existing to new social forms. Emphasis is placed on the unique role of “imaginary significances”, the process of formation of both individuals and social forms. Originated from the unconscious, these significances (the magma) aim to stress uncertainty and creativity and form the main characteristics of the historical and social being. However, is it possible to relate the interpretation of social evolutionary dynamism to a theoretical soul-analytical system? This relationship is considered to be incompatible with the premise of autonomy.

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THE MATHEMATISATION OF COSMOS ACCORDING TO PLATO

This paper sets forth basic questions of interpretation of Plato’s *Timaeus*, generally concerning the mathematisation of the cosmos. Such questions are: why did Plato resort to mathematics, specifically triangles and right-angled ones in particular, to construct the material world? Why does the equilateral triangle, which forms the basis of the three bodies –the pyramid, the octahedron and the icosahedron– consist of six, rather than any other number of fairest triangles? Why must the equilateral triangle be constituted in a specific way, by diameter, and what does this phrase mean? Does it mean that fairest triangles are united in pairs along the hypotenuse or crosswise? Which is the intelligible and which the tangible world? How was *Timaeus* interpreted by posterity?

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THE PHILOSOPHICAL IMAGINARY IN PLATO. THE CONDITIONS OF ITS AUTONOMY

Plato, prompted by his radical proposal of the abolition of the institution of the family –which implies the community of women and children– sets out in the *Republic* (457c10-458b7) to determine the terms of the

autonomy of the philosophical imaginary, which are the following: (i) the philosophical imaginary, while propounding its radical proposal, escapes from the issues concerning its proposal's utility and possibility of realization. (ii) The wording of this radical proposal occurs at an interruption in everyday life: a time that is compared with the time of festivity. (iii) During the process of the formulation of the radical proposal the philosophical imaginary lives alone, remote from the thought of other people. (iv) In addition, within the process of the formulation of this radical proposal, the Platonic philosophizing subject perceives this proposal as already realized, or at least as potentially realized. (v) Finally, the feeling that the Platonic philosophizing subject feels while its desire and its will to word this radical proposal is unobstructedly fulfilled, is joy, the joy –as we are told– of the escape from its punishing confinement to the thought of everyday life.

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IMAGINATION AND RATIONAL DISCOURSE FROM KANT TO HEIDEGGER

In this paper we investigate the multiple types and functions of imagination in philosophical modernity and late modernity. Immanuel Kant was the first to take the emphasis away from the reproductive function of imagination as imagery or fancy and towards a productive function, which he defines as transcendental. In his *Critique of Pure Reason* and *Critical of Judgment*, as well as his anthropological writings, Kant laid out the outlines of a new, revised approach to imagination. The nineteenth century, especially within the framework of philosophical Romanticism, made a further step in the direction of promoting creative imagination, while in Friedrich Nietzsche's physiology of art the «deromantization» of imagination served to bring it down to earth. In the early twentieth century, phenomenological philosophy in its ontological (Martin Heidegger) or existentialist (Jean-Paul Sartre) versions provided a renewed understanding of imagination. In particular, in Heidegger's account of imagination in Kant we find a challenging attempt to bring together imagination with time and Dasein's finitude in relation to theoretical, but also practical

reason. Accordingly, Heidegger advances an ontological understanding of Kant's insights into the nature and multiple functions of imagination away from its idealistic and subjectivistic receptions.

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THE DIALECTIC OF THE POTENTIAL, THE POSSIBLE AND
 THE POTENTIALIZED IN THE AGE OF DIGITAL COMPLEXITY.
 THE PARADIGM SHIFT

Cyberspace is referred to as the digital place of techno-science, for others it is a specific place for subjects, practices and technologies. Sometimes cyberspace is presented as an escape space from "reality". The word «virtual» was and remains a very grand word, shockingly underrated, a major signifier of dialectical potential. The application of logical symbols is obvious since one handle is information in innumerable manifestations. Diversity is an element of the signs-symbols and gradually distracts from the obvious or downright obvious. Consistently one looks forward to the qualitative constitution of symbols, strength documentation of internal hidden nature and does not adhere to the quantitative measurement, numerical endless parameters and aspects of reality. Kant sounds extremely crucial when he speaks of the negation of negation and the particularity of the conception of truth. According to Durkheim, the system of causes and laws is formed solely from the range of combinations. Strictly applying philosophical terminology, we should talk about potential images in H/PC, in order to characterize the digital images— such powerful images displayed (placed) on the screen.

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FROM SELF-INSTITUTION TO POSTMODERNITY AND THE
 CREATION OF THE IMAGINED IN THE POLITICAL

This paper examines the transition of the political condition of society

from the human self-institution of ancient Greece to the postmodern political state. Post-modernity signals the beginning of a philosophical debate between the psychoanalytic subject (who is the captive of political austerity and sociological situations) and the institutions of the postmodern state. Postmodernity posits the message of a materialist way of living through which the meaning of social life is absent. The subject becomes vulnerable to the will of the state and the market. In our societies the stranger becomes a human being without political and social rights and commences his life as a naked being. Our postmodern civilization does not allow differentiation to exist.

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CHANTAL JAQUET'S THEORY OF THE TRANSCASSES: A SPINOZIST APPROACH OF THE PHENOMENON OF NON-REPRODUCTION

Chantal Jaquet, in her work, *Les transclasses ou la non reproduction* (The transclasses or the non-reproduction) (P.U.F., 2014), philosophically examines the phenomenon of social non-reproduction, namely of the transition of certain individuals from one social class to another, or what is commonly known as upward social mobility. From an interdisciplinary perspective, engaging in an unremitting dialogue with major philosophers, sociologists (notably, with P. Bourdieu's and J.-Cl. Passeron's theory of social reproduction, as well as Bernard Lahire's innovative endeavour "which clears the way towards a differential sociology"), social psychologists (above all V. de Gaulejac), as well as great novelists, she attempts to trace, in its making, the sum total of causes (familial, social, economic, political, as well as personal) which lead to the phenomenon of non-reproduction. She particularly emphasizes the role of school, referring to the mark of a "great teacher" in the life-trajectory of numerous transclasses who excelled in the areas of education and literary production. The neologism transclass, coined by her, describes all the forms of non-reproduction (not merely social, but also biological, sexual, racial etc.) often closely tied to each other. According to Jaquet, Spinoza's anthropology and ethics, and especially his concept of ingenium, as well as his analyses regarding

affective states and encounters, allow us to understand the phenomenon of transclasses better than Bourdieu's concept of habitus, even of divided habitus (*habitus clivé*). Jaquet engages in nuanced and profound analyses of a number of affective states (mainly, ambition and shame, as well as desire, remorse, and pride) in their interrelations, as well as of the fundamental phenomenon of the imitation of affective states. The writing and publication of her work –which recognizes and highlights the importance of “auto-socio-biographical narratives” propounded by Annie Ernaux, Didier Eribon, and Richard Hoggart (“which aim at considering the life or the destiny of an individual in relation to their environment as a product of the social”), and deconstructs the notions of personal and social identity– is explicitly presented as a political act. Jaquet points out the moral and political dimensions of the phenomenon she studies, she concedes no ground either to individualism, or to the self-made-man ideology, and denounces the illusion of a struggle-against-the-oppressors as a unitary phenomenon, in other words [she denounces] the total assimilation of the struggle of feminists, homosexuals, and anti-racists, into class-struggle.

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THE THEORY OF NATURAL LAW IN THOMAS AQUINAS

Thomas Aquinas' theory of natural law was a great innovation at a time when the world of jurists was still under the influence of Augustinian legalism, which remained attached to the ecumenical character of canonical law and the authority of the Gospels. Thomas Aquinas' great contribution was his focusing on the secular nature of law; in other words, the “de-sanctification” of law, the acknowledgement of its role in a secular context, that is, within a society; not in solitude and contemplation. The nature of things lies in the foundation of natural law, which is taken for granted in the context nature. On the other hand, positive law has been formulated by the divine or human law, being the result of an agreement. Thomas Aquinas' great originality lies in transforming law in the pages of his *Summa Theologiae* into a means of harmonizing human relations,

in close association with social needs. The thomistic theory of natural law consists of a community of essence between law and “nature”, and the end of the antithesis between “nature” and law. The main features of Thomas Aquinas’ theory on natural law are the incorporation of Aristotle’s philosophy on law in his work, and the juxtaposition of justice and law, as well as justice and ethics; thanks to them, thomistic philosophy of law became a forerunner of the modern era, while still retaining the essence of natural law, that is, the philosophical legitimization of law in general.

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ALBRECHT WELLMER READING THEODOR ADORNO:
REVISING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRUTH,
SEMBLANCE AND RECONCILIATION

Theodor Adorno’s *A esthetic Theory* (1970) has been the object of several critical appreciations despite its unfinished and fragmentary character. Albrecht Wellmer’s critical approach holds a special place among the other encounters with Adorno’s philosophical aesthetics, for his aim was to reactivate the potential of *A esthetic Theory* in the light of its critics’ claims and contemporary artistic phenomena. A significant contribution of Wellmer is his «stereoscopic» reading purported to render visible the latent depth of Adorno’s writing and thereby liberate layers of meaning that, although existent, could not be explicitly present in the limited medium of philosophical dialectic of subject and object that Adorno employs. In the present analysis, we shall focus on Wellmer’s essay «Truth, Semblance, Reconciliation», where the incisiveness of Wellmer’s reading is evident throughout his text. We will try to follow up and appreciate the various ways that Wellmer sets out to reach a new interpretation of the relationship between the categories of truth, semblance and reconciliation in Adorno’s writing with the final aim of revealing the truth-content of Adorno’s aesthetics and developing it through critique and interpretation.

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PHILOSOPHICAL ASPECTS OF GREEK TRAGEDY

1. The aim of the article is to explore the philosophical background of ancient Greek tragedy in connection with the tragic and its complex function.

2. The concept of the tragic is considered as an intrinsic element of the sociopolitical life and consequently as a characteristic feature of the poetic logos of Greek tragedy.

3. The latter is a component of success of the polis; and the polis, in turn, an existential element of tragedy.

4. The philosophical background of tragedy relates thus with human existence, which is enervated by a creative act of violence (in the Heideggerian sense) of the tragic, and experiences it as its eminently tragic element.

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CRIME AND ART: PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOANALYSIS IN THEATRE. A SMALL BUT SIGNIFICANT SAMPLE OF THE WIDE INTERTEXTUAL CONTACT BETWEEN SHAKESPEARE AND PLUTARCH

Plutarch narrates in his *Life of Pelopidas*, that once, while attending a performance of Euripides' *Trojan Women* in the ancient theatre of Pherai, the city's tyrant, Alexander (369-358 BC), infamous for his crimes against the citizens, was forced to leave, afraid that he would shed tears at the torments of Hecuba and Andromache, although he had hitherto shown no remorse for his victims in "real" life. How does Shakespeare, an author deeply influenced by his classical counterparts, Greek and Roman, and Plutarch in particular, work the above episode into his masterpiece *Hamlet*? And what do such episodes reveal regarding the effective power of Art generally – a power which has been studied from the viewpoint of both philosophy and psychoanalysis, starting from no less than Plato? These questions are the focus of the present article.

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ASPECTS OF A NON-RELATION: ON THE LIMITS, IMPLICATIONS
AND FURTHER UNFOLDING OF ALAIN BADIOU'S READING
OF GILLES DELEUZE'S PHILOSOPHY

In the present article, we shall attempt to address the question of the rapport between Alain Badiou's and Gilles Deleuze's distinct philosophical endeavours, mainly by examining the key thesis of the monograph that the first devoted to the latter (*The Clamor of Being*). In that work, Badiou infamously presented a reading of deleuzian metaphysics as the most brilliant –but no less doomed to fail– modern effort to create a coherent, systematic and renewed metaphysics of the One, in a (neo)platonian fashion. In the course of the present reconstruction of this bizarre interpretation, further issues, problems and possibilities concerning the «cartography» of the (non-)relation between these two thinkers will come to light.

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