

# Abstract





## MIND AND NOESIS: PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTIONS OF THE COGNITIVE SCIENCES

In the present paper we explore the nature of the mind and the role of noesis (understanding) in the interdisciplinary field of the Cognitive Sciences. What is the significance of having thoughts, feelings, memories, intentions? What is the role of personal identity? Is there a connection between the two substances, the body and the mind or are they totally separated? Specifically, the field of the Philosophy of Mind critically examines the theoretical presuppositions as well as the empirical results of studies in the fields of Cognitive Psychology, Linguistics/Semiotics, Neurosciences, Informatics and Artificial Intelligence. Notably, the core of the Cognitive Sciences is primarily formed by Cognitive Psychology and Artificial Intelligence, while collaboration with Philosophy, Linguistics/Semiotics, Neurosciences and Informatics is of great significance. In particular, this interdisciplinarity reflects the interactive relationship between Philosophy, Linguistics/Semiotics, Neurosciences, Cognitive Psychology, Informatics and Artificial Intelligence. Specifically, the main purpose of the interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary co-operation is to understand better the cognitive capacities of humans and / or animals as well as machines, such as computers and so on.

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## THE REALITY OF THE PHOTOGRAPH. A PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

In contrast to those who consider photography as a means to convey conceptual meanings or express subjective states, it is here seen as pertaining to reality as such. Not, however, reality in a past stage, as Roland Barthes believes, and therefore not as a contestation of what has been, but rather as an original presentation. Photography therefore is seen not in terms of its effect on the subject, but in terms

of its action, as it were, on “the object”. As in all art, in photography too we see reality anew and as such enhanced. This is what comprises its mode of being, and establishes its significance.

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### BEAUTY, MATTER AND FORM: PHILOSOPHICAL IDEAS IN THE POEMS OF SARA COPIA SULLAM ON THE OCCASION OF HER DISPUTE WITH BALDASSARE BONIFACCIO

In this article some selected poems of Sara Copia Sullam (1592-1641), Italian Jewish philosopher and poetess who lived in Venice, are studied. Critical points of her poetical confrontation with the priest and scholar Baldassare Bonifaccio will be examined in a way that enables the philosophical context of her poems to come into view, the relationship of the philosophical ideas stemming from her verses to ancient Greek philosophy and the Jewish tradition to emerge, and lastly her innovative philosophical considerations about the nature of beauty and the meaning of the Aristotelian matter and form to be discerned. In this way the importance and the boldness of her thought will become evident within the intellectual environment of 17<sup>th</sup> century Venice as well as the Renaissance *modus pensandi* of entwining poetical discourse with philosophical reflection.

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### THE ACT OF SUICIDE IN STOIC PHILOSOPHY

This study examines suicide through the prism of Stoicism. Throughout the centuries the act of suicide has been confronted in various and different ways. The main question to be answered concerns the understanding of the character of stoic suicide, as formed, expressed

and experienced from the founding of the Stoa through the late Roman period. The discussion of the subject begins with the definition and the determination of the act of voluntary death in the context of moral laws and the doctrines of stoic ethics, followed by a categorization of the reasons that were given to justify suicide. Moreover, the act of suicide is analyzed taking into consideration the ethics of other philosophical systems of antiquity, in order to identify similarities and differences and to contribute to a more complete understanding.

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#### MATHEMATICS AND DIALECTICS IN PLATO'S IMAGE OF THE DIVIDED LINE

This paper attempts to offer a balanced account of the arguments and ideas contained in the image of the divided line towards the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> book of Plato's *Republic* (cf. *Resp.* VI 20-21, 509 d 1-511 e 5). This image depicts quite concretely the differences and relations between the sensible and the intelligible world and reserves for mathematics the second highest place in the hierarchy of knowledge as the externalization of Intellect (*dianoia*) constituting a realm appropriate to calculations and comparisons superior to plain sensual perception but inferior to true knowledge of the highest Principle (*arche*). While it is more than clear that in the image of the divided line there are several interesting epistemological dimensions to the relationship between philosophy, dialectics and mathematics, it should be pointed out that the overall relationship cannot be sufficiently elucidated without also taking into consideration the ethical dimension implied in the predominant role ascribed to the idea of the Good (*agathon*) as the origin of every thought and action. Thus both mathematics and dialectics find their due place through the envisaged realization of the educational-ethical-political order of the ideal city-state.

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## ANIMALS AND ANTHROPOCENTRISM

This paper aims to discuss a non-anthropocentric approach to animals. In the first part, it examines the concept of the “animal”, which originates from a man-made classification of the world and thus proves to be unnatural. In other words, the way we perceive animals is from a human perspective. This is the reason why animals are often described using human terms such as hierarchy, which is a cultural construct. Next, there is a reference to the issue of animal rights and more specifically with regard to the views of Tom Regan, who is in favor of animal rights, of Evangelos Protopapadakis, who disagrees with the attribution of rights to animals and proposes the concept of “moral obligation”, and of Jacques Derrida who also observes problems with animal rights. Moreover, the issue of moral obligation to animals is analyzed too. Specifically, this obligation stems from the fact that animals are mortal living beings. In the last part of the text it is argued that animal rights are important in our contemporary society, but that we need more than this. This implies that we would achieve a better coexistence with animals. In order to do this, education offers the best way.

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## THE TRANSCENDENTAL SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS IN INEFFABLE FORMS OF COMPREHENSION

The main issue of this article is to highlight a fundamental ontological ambiguity between the meaning of the mind (self-consciousness) and its relation to external reality. I will show that there is an inherent contradiction between the constituted self-consciousness and truth itself. This contrast can be avoided in accordance with the Platonic Idea, but it is necessary through Kantian subjective idealism. This task is related to individuation and generally to nominalism-empiricism. In order to solve the problem and to recover realism we have to develop

the *objectivication* process. This can be achieved through the concept of forms, which is applied by the imagistic-cognition part of the mind. A promising and unexplored region that can approach the unconscious area. I shall use the example of the Plotinian *One*, where we need an inner light in order to see It. Accordingly we shall highlight a philosophy of vision, where the ability to see is inextricably connected with the realization that the obstacle to the *One* is the mind's thinking process itself. In other words we have to face an inherent illusion which causes the problem, but at the same time in this illusion we owe our existence. This dilemma will be examined in this article.

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#### CONTEMPORARY READINGS OF ROUSSEAU'S SOCIAL CONTRACT: THE REPUBLICAN PERSPECTIVE

Rousseau's *Social Contract*, as in the case of every classic and fundamental work of political philosophy and theory, invites multiple readings and offers multiple interpretations, as does his work as a whole. A philosopher of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, or a forerunner of Kant and socialist thought – it is extremely difficult for scholars to classify Rousseau within a single school of thought. Such an option would be unfair to the richness of the concepts contained in Rousseau's oeuvre, and particularly the *Social Contract*. Accordingly, this article seeks, in addition to re-reading the *Social Contract* and focusing on celebrated and well-analyzed concepts such as the general will, representation, freedom, equality and political religion, to correlate Rousseau's political and philosophical thought with elements of republican theory, such as mixed government, patriotism and self-governance.

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## THE PERSONAL SELF AND MODERN IDENTITY: A DIALOGICAL APPROACH

The self in social interaction is by itself a crucial and complex issue when bearing in mind the radical changes taking place in the modern world. The personal subject can, as this article tries to show, be located more easily through the notion of dialogue, which puts self and the other side by side in society through a more vital and philosophical relationship. The philosophies of existentialism, together with the thought of certain sociologists and philosophers and thinkers in the sphere of the human sciences and specially that of Mikhail Bakhtin – the latter based on the analysis of Dostoyevsky – may throw more light on how this dialogical existence can occur without losing sight of the personal subject, despite the fact that the world around us is becoming more and more multi-lateral and pluralistic. The challenge that this article recognizes is to provide some lines of thought that can justify a dialogical approach to a more and more contingent world. The moral bases of a dialogical remade reality may be found in these lines of thought but this work can only be left in progress, as dialogue cannot be completed by any man alone but only be continued by another.

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## EXPLAINING DELEUZE. NOTIOS OF SPACE

This paper focuses on the notion of the spatial element in Deleuze's work. The forms of Deleuzian spaces are analyzed and their virtual and formative function within an immanent plane of consistency is stressed, whereby becoming is continuous. It emerges as something chaotic, phenomenal and eventful, as ceaseless folding and unfolding, as an empiricist dismantling of essentialism. What we have then is a dancing landscape, multiple and nomadic. Condensations of potentiality, the assemblages, are also spatial. Their transmutations display a motion-driven geography, produced out of an 'ocean' designated as 'body without organs' and denoting elements' genesis as immanent 'metallurgy'. Affective and corporeal, even the subject is conceived of spatially, as



an element simultaneously compact and divided. The paper rejects the objection that the Deleuzian body- and space-centered immanentism is leveling and thus promotes a proto-fascist attitude; such an objection is connected with 'dialectics' alien to Deleuze, discerning singularities from traditional philosophical subjects. Singularities are transgressive and spiral in their repetition, the spatial nature of which uncovers the co-primordiality of space and pre-reflective time. Following the spatial turn in postmodern philosophy, Deleuze's philosophy might be considered as one of mundane 'affective moods' in the sense of bodies' lived experiences, though not amenable to 'application discourses'. The spatial dimension of Deleuzian thought reiterates and stresses its immanentist radicalism. The paper concludes with a comparison of Deleuze's spatialism to Heidegger's and the possibility of elaborating an alternative law-political project, geopolitical, warlike and collective.

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CONFLICT OF DUTIES IN ADOLESCENT PSYCHOTHERAPY  
AND THE QUESTION OF CONFIDENTIALITY:  
A PROBLEM OF MORAL PHILOSOPHY

In the practice of psychotherapy there are ethics that aim at ensuring it is done in a legitimate way and has the best therapeutic effect. However codes of conduct offer only general guidelines and not ready-made solutions to all possible situations that may arise in the psychotherapeutic context. Accordingly it is very common for cases of conflict of duties in which the psychotherapist will have to violate one ethical principle in order to respect another. Such issues arise in the psychotherapy of adolescents who reveal during psychotherapy various issues that endanger their personal safety, which they have hidden from their parents. At this point the following question arises: the psychotherapist should respect the principle of autonomy and privacy, but violate the principle of benefit and leave the adolescent at risk or should disclose confidential information to parents to protect the adolescent and violate the principle of autonomy? The situation

seems to present a deadlock at first sight because whatever the psychotherapist chooses will have violated the moral principle of either autonomy or benefit. The present study concludes that codes of ethics must be treated critically and according to the specifics of each case in order for psychotherapy to achieve its purpose which is to promote the health, quality of life and well being of society.

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#### VACCINATION REFUSAL, PUBLIC HEALTH, AND THE HARM PRINCIPLE

Refusal to undergo vaccination in normal no less than in emergency circumstances, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, draws its ethical justification from the ethical standpoint that moral agents should be allowed maximum freedom when it comes to issues related to their own, personal health. In this short paper I will assume that health related freedoms or liberties, together with any moral right that draws upon these, cannot be unconditional, but as is the case with all liberties their status and validity are dependent upon their compliance with the harm principle. Subsequently I shall try to substantiate my view that free riding is guilty of bringing about personal as well as impersonal harm, and therefore it cannot count as proper liberty. I will conclude with the view that immoderate rightism is susceptible to partiality and bias, and this demerit becomes even more evident in emergency situations, pandemics included.

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#### HUMANS, ANIMALS AND ETHICS: INTRODUCTORY THOUGHTS ON A SEEMINGLY IMPOSSIBLE RIDDLE

The moral status of non-human animals, the possibility of including them in the “covenant of ethics”, and the implications of such an

endeavor have long been fueling a heated debate in ethics. This paper sets out to provide a brief outline of what I consider to be the two major trains of thought that seem more concerned about the welfare of non-human animals, and more admitting of the possibility of reserving for them some place within our moral horizon.

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### ON ANIMAL DIGNITY

The rise of the animal welfare movement along with the development of scientific knowledge on animals has prompted a large part of the philosophical community to reconsider their moral status. Some proponents of this trend argue that animals should be granted moral rights. However, in such a case, a number of ethical issues are raised. On this basis and since the recognition of animal rights does not seem to be gaining ground at present, the notion of the dignity of animals has been proposed as a possible regulatory principle. In the present study, I discuss the issues that arise in according animals' dignity and try to approach the ethical implications of such an assumption, both for animals and humans. From this analysis, it appears that the philosophical debate on the moral status of animals has not led to date to the expansion of the moral community to include non-human beings. The prevailing philosophical view of the notion of dignity is that it represents a human-centered concept. However, this term seems to be more acceptable with regard to animals, than the theory of rights, which is intertwined with the concept of will and carries the risk of sliding into moral misconceptions. Although it is a central and relatively abstract concept, dignity can be used *lato sensu* in bioethical issues in terms of defending animals' interests and can be a springboard for re-evaluating processes in which animals are subjected to pain or abuse.

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REASON WITHIN DYSTOPIA: THE REDUCTION OF HUMANS TO  
TAMED ANIMALS AND THE DEPICTION OF THIS STATE  
IN THE POST-MODERN SOCIETY OF THE LOBSTER  
BY YORGOS LANTHIMOS

The dystopian narrative of the film *The Lobster* functions as a critique of modern society and reveals the dichotomies at the core of heterogeneous cultural mythologies, rendering the film as political art. This paper attempts an investigation of the ontological transition from human to animal, as well as an investigation of the pressure to comply with predetermined standards, through the establishment of a new biopolitical realm of control and surveillance. In the post-modern dystopian society of Lanthimos, the animal transformation of the incarnate signifies a new social Darwinism through the rationalization of violence that promises a future reintegration into the social body, after the enclosed subject first enters a system of normalization. The only escape can come through political disobedience in the face of the microcosm of incarceration.

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SPECIESISM AS THE BASIS OF RACISM,  
AND ANIMAL-RELATED CUSTOMS

In this article, two distinct attitudes are contrasted – attitudes that our society has reserved over time, or at least a part of it, towards the different. On the one hand, towards people who belong to another race, country, gender, class, religion, or who have some physical or mental handicap, in other words a form of negative discrimination. On the other hand, to non-human living beings, i.e. speciesism. In both cases, the “foreigner” is not treated equally, both ideologically and practically, through a wide range of views and attitudes, such as suspicion, distancing, devaluation, exploitation, aggression. The position held here is that racism can be considered the child of speciesism, and its

companion from antiquity to the present day, examining mainly the conditions in ancient Greece that contributed to their birth.

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#### DO BENEFITS FOR HUMANS JUSTIFY EXPERIMENTATION ON ANIMALS?

This essay outlines the benefits that humans have gained from transgenic animal research to date. Animal experimentation, however, is rejected by the modern philosophers Christine Korsgaard and Peter Singer, while the latter also suggests ways to stop their use. In conclusion, reference is made to the superiority that groups of people feel, not only towards animals but even to other groups of their own species, and the senseless violence they use to offer groups of their advantage, having complete freedom from any kind of punishment.

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#### MEDICAL PROCESSES DEPENDENT ON THE USE OF ANIMALS AND MORAL CONSIDERATIONS

The use of animals in medical activities and therapeutical programs has flourished in recent decades. Most scientists attribute positive results to all these processes, although further research is needed to validate them. This paper analyzes different approaches of moral philosophy and refers to their perspective on animals, animal value, and animal relationship with man. The various forms of medical intervention using animals and views on their effectiveness are exam-

ined, while emphasis is placed on the ethical issues that arise. Finally, we argue that individual schools of moral philosophy may differ in their perception regarding the ethical nature of animal use in medical processes.

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#### COMPULSORY NEUTERING OF PETS: BETWEEN BENEFITS, DUTIES, AND RESPECT FOR RIGHTS

In the context of the debate that has arisen regarding the obligation to neuter pets, an attempt is being made to explore the ethical arguments on its necessity. Increasing the life expectancy of neutered animals and protecting public health through the control of stray animals advocate its legislative implementation. On the other hand, the appearance of some diseases and the possible physical and psychological effects on neutered animals from the operation process cause skepticism. We discern important moral foundations through utilitarianism for the continuation of this practice in the interest of animals, in the context of improving their health and reducing overall pain, as strays. In the context of deontocracy, neutering arises as an indirect or direct moral duty to animals. However, the violation of the right to physical integrity, reproduction and sexual activity of even one animal for the future benefit of many, makes the act unacceptable, while mandatory universal enforcement of the measure could be characterized by animal rights activists even as “Genocide”.

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## A READING OF SNAKE BY D. H. LAWRENCE

In this article an analysis of D.H. Lawrence's poem *Snake* is attempted. The first part of the article offers a brief introduction to the realia of the poem, and then an outline of the socio-political framework which shaped the conditions of the emergence of Modernism as a distinct movement of intellectual production. The third part of the article provides an analysis of the key elements that compose Lawrence's poem.

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