

ABSTRACTS

1.

The Humanist Controversy of the 60s and the Vicissitudes of Anti-Humanism. Once Again on the 'Rationality' of the Holocaust

The essay, which in this book edition is divided into three chapters, examines some recent discussions in the humanities that appear under the label of post-humanism and which extend the 'humanist controversy' from the 1960's, assuming new connotations and directions both in the arts and humanities and in sciences and technology. It offers, from a historical and systematic perspective, arguments for the thesis that post-humanism appears no less reductive and question-begging than its anti-humanist predecessor. Contrary to a rather general and uncritical appropriation of Heidegger's identification of anthropocentrism and humanism, the paper undertakes a comprehensive account of how ancient anthropocentrism and its critique morphed into modern humanism and tries to sharpen the fundamental difference between essentialistic and historicistic notions of man, especially in Hegel and Marx. Furthermore, while today's posthumanism takes over the anti-humanist critique of humanism along with the thesis that the Holocaust is the organic and legitimate offspring of modern instrumental rationality, the paper questions the epistemological and historico-philosophical implications of this assumption by applying Heidegger's existential categories of *facticity* and *truth* on death-camps established by the Nazis. In order to provide an alternative to the reductionist notion of humanism in the post-1945's European anti-humanism and today's posthumanism, the paper points at other resources for a critique of rationalism, largely dismissed in post-humanism.

2.

Philosophy's Eichmann Syndrome. Once More on Heidegger's "Critique" of National Socialism

The essay addresses anew the old issue of Heidegger's own testimonies and assurances concerning his "active antagonism" to National Socialism, given in his post-war writings from 1947-1953, as well as in his later public statements and, particularly, in recently published private notes from 1932-1947 (the so-called "Black Notebooks"). It aims to work out additional arguments for the existence of a close relationship between Heidegger's philosophy, critique of technics and the notion of the political in his early work, which are not included in the two main lines of contemporary interpretations of the Heidegger-controversy, one of which derives his hermeneutical ontology from his political inclinations and the other which strictly separates these two aspects of his highly influential thought.

In the second part, the paper tackles Heidegger's delusional idea of the Holocaust as a form of "self-destruction of Jewishness" through technics; this figure is interpreted as an instance of a non-biological, quasi socio-theoretical conception of race overlapping, in the background, with social-Darwinist motives and, ironically, with the socio-critical analysis of anti-Semitism in Horkheimer and Adorno.

On this basis, the paper critically reassesses Giorgio Agamben's analysis of Auschwitz as "biopolitical paradigm of modernity", relying on early Emmanuel Lévinas's synthesis of the "philosophy of Hitlerism" and Heidegger's hermeneutics of Being-there (*Dasein*). Ascribing value-ideology only to National Socialism and not to Heidegger's analytics of 'facticity', Agamben disregards Heidegger's own (national-socialist) value-based thinking, which—though explicitly denied in his 1935 *Introduction to Metaphysics*—remains implicit in his conception of the "will to *Dasein*" and which motivates a series of exclusions of the 'non-authentic' (in thought and language, in philosophy, in modes of being, at the university, in the 'ability for homeland' etc.). Contrary to separating Heidegger's philosophy from his political engagement, and in accordance to his explicit intention and last will, arguments are outlined in favor of a *foundational* relationship between ontology and ideology in Heidegger.

3.

Man, Yet the Best One: Roma Cought in Labour, Language, and Biology-Based Theories of Race

Starting with the paradox that the Roma, as traditional inner-European itinerant people, scarcely represent a topic in recent Europe's debates on "Migration Crisis", the essay addresses the notion of labour associated with the negative figure of "lazy nomad", which, from the beginnings of academic reflection about Roma in the 18th century, determines both their public picture and their ethnic, racial, and linguistic origin. Within this frame, special attention is paid to the fact that Roma generally appear in art and culture as carriers of the "orientalistic" syndrome of 'gypsiness' consisting of idealized and sexualized otherness and libertinage although the fictional narratives they appear with often provide evidences of a different self-understanding of Roma opposing the stereotypes and prejudices concerning labour. Contrary to literature, the rather rare presence of Roma in the *theoretical* discourse of philosophy is characterized by *tacite* recycling of their history for the conceptual apparatus of contemporary philosophy. Their anonymous presence can be illustrated by the post-modern inversion of Kant's *negative* simile of sceptics in philosophy *as nomads* for a positive concept of 'nomadic thought'. This figure is traced back to its origin in Kant's texts and submitted to a more detailed analysis of Kant's relationship to the first known "Gypsy-Project" by his fellow Christian Kraus.

In the second part, the paper deals with the "re-discovery" of Roma by the middle of 20th century's Indian cultural and national politics based on ideological assumptions of the late 19th century's neo-Hinduist movement *Arya Samaj*, aiming at "Making the Universe Aryan"; it is confronted with the pre-war national-socialist movement, established and directed by H. Himmler, for "Aryanization" (*Arisierung*) of the "entire cultural world" under the name *Ancestors' Heritage* (*Ahnenerbe*). In the final part, the *total symbolic deprivation* of Roma by National Socialists' misappropriation of "Aryanness" is interpreted as the most radical form of dehumanisation, which—in contrast to the annihilation of European Jews and Slavs—was carried out *without any justifying propaganda*. On this basis, it is contrasted with the *paradigmatic* human self-understanding by Roma themselves implied in their very name.

4.

Philosophy and Posthumanism in the Time of Corona. Records of a Debacle

The essay questions public interventions by certain leading critical thinkers, as they are recognized by the media, concerning the 2020's coronavirus pandemic, which has deeply marked the entire year worldwide and brought the biopolitical philosophy once again into the focus of public interest. Although biopolitics plays a central role in so-called posthumanist trends in contemporary humanistic as well as bio-technological sciences, it nevertheless causes deep controversies when applied to the current pandemic and the global social effects it is causing. The paper scrutinizes three main contributions: S. Žižek's declaration of humans as "fragile entities" that are exposed not to an "alien intelligent being" but the "most stupid form of life"; secondly, the suspicion of G. Agamben that the epidemic is an invention of the Italian government, which aims at extending the temporary state of emergency to permanent biopolitical control of society; and, finally, A. Badiou's conclusion that, since the virus Sars2 has been named after Sars1, the actual corona pandemic is also merely a repeat of the 2003 epidemic, which only calls for serious criticism of the authorities for not having funded research to provide genuine instruments to counteract the disease. On close reading, all three arguments — about the nature of virus, the epidemic, and the virus's identity — beg the question and compromise not only their explanatory intentions but also their philosophical integrity. Moreover, while these assumptions are just incorrect within the bio-sciences, within philosophy they serve as methodological *a priori* views that yield grotesque results, such as foolish self-contradicting mind-changes (with Žižek), self-destructive fidelity to one's own conceptual schemes ending up in mystification of biopolitics (as with Agamben), or the opposite, namely, a good basis for criticizing of regressive interpretations of fellow philosophers (as with Badiou).

To conclude, the paper confronts these three cases of philosophers failing to represent the current biopolitical reality with Hegel's conception of philosophy as "its own time comprehended in thoughts". I argue that Hegel's formulation, far from being an expression of the *a posteriori*, conclusive and sovereign power of philosophy over the world, as mostly interpreted, is properly

explained by Hegel's continuation in the same sentence : "It is just as foolish to imagine that any philosophy can transcend its contemporary world as that an individual can overleap his own time or leap over Rhodes" without coming to exist "only within his opinions". Recent attempts of renowned philosophers to provide a sound interpretation of the corona-pandemic seem only to suffer under Hegel's spell of "vain consciousness" while merely applying ready made patterns of their thought instead of rethink them in a radically different context. ●