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Abstracts

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UNESCO, Philosophy, and Human Rights

Giovanni Puglisi

Giovanni Puglisi presents here the theoretical and concrete context in which the Unesco Day of Philosophy took place in 2008 in Palermo, Italy. He insists on the importance for Unesco to publicly discuss issues that constitute the dialogical essence of our time, and argues that Unesco would not survive a loss of its capacity to carry out public reflection. *Rights and Power*, the general theme of the Palermo Day of Philosophy, appears as a very central issue for a global world, where the dynamic between formal law and social and cultural constraints need to be permanently redefined. Unesco is and must be committed to bringing together scholars, intellectuals, and other public actors of this crucial reflection.

Modernity and Subjectivity: Enabling Asian Consciousness of Multi-Identity

In-Suk Cha

This article discusses the dynamic between modernization of Asian cultures and societies and the process of multi- or transculturalization that characterizes an increasingly globalized world. It discusses the concrete case of the *Alliance of Civilizations*, and studies the possible ways to combine specific Asian axiology with a democratic organization of society. It claims that modernization is not only a social process, but the result of an individual education, and argues in favor of a growing network of civic society, calling for international development ethics and global governance as a resource for governments and citizens. It concludes that the more courses in the issues of international development are taught in those Asian universities that will accommodate them, the better. On the other hand, the concern with these issues should reach secondary education in every nation as awareness of both self and other is paramount to subjectivity.

Inherent Dignity: The Essence of Human Rights or How to Get from Dignity to Political Power

Anat Biletzki

The UDHR posits a conjunction of dignity and rights as the basis of ''freedom, justice and peace in the world''. This paper distinguishes between the two, viewing human dignity itself as the ultimate - even though enigmatic - foundation of human rights. Although originally seen as under the purview of sovereign states (while still being international), human rights have travelled into

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the more amorphous territory of civil community. It is, indeed, now fashionable to address civil community (aka civil society) as both the locale for discussion of human rights and the provider of actors (aka NGOs) on the human rights stage. However, this well-meant move harbors a distancing from the centers of power, which should remain responsible and, more so, accountable for human rights. B'Tselem, a leading Israeli human rights organization, is used as a case study and illustration of this problematic relation between civil community and political power.

The Ontology of Coexistence: From *Cogito* to *Facio*

Zhao Tingyang

This paper discusses crisis from the standpoint of philosophical ideas. It argues that philosophy, as a structure of our deep understanding of the world, has been derailed by *metaphysics of things* for a long time, and claims that a philosophical turn to a *metaphysics of facts* might be a useful tool to rethink the problems of the world. It considers ''relational rationality'' as a key theoretical feature to change human coexistence, and conceives coexistence as prior to individual existence. It finally discusses the relations between human duties or obligations and rights.

The Woman between Public Order and Disorder: The Ambiguities of Modernity

Aminata Diaw

In this paper, Aminata Diaw invites discussion on contemporary women's struggle for equality, more equitable representation and complete parity. She argues that effective expression of democracy is dependent on taking gender factors properly into account. She discusses classical Rousseau's position, and observes that the Social Contract needs to be integrated by a Gender Contract. She concludes that the question of the citizenship of women shows that the advent of Modernity did not constitute a veritable rupture with past thought. Modernity has not produced an integration of women into the political dimension and into citizenship.

Governance, Sovereignty and Profane Hope in a Globalised Catastrophe-World

Francisco Naishtat

This is a paper in political philosophy. It starts by an analysis of Walter Benjamin's notion of ''baroque sovereignty'' as an implicit transformation of Schimitt's categories of sovereignty, decision and state of exception. It then discusses whether the dynamic between these concepts, as emanating from Benjamin's work, is fit to make diagnosis of our own current condition, marked by fragilised sovereignties, by global-intensive governance apparatuses and by a horizon-less catastrophe-world in which, paradoxically, the vision of the world diminishes in proportion as its technological visibility becomes ever greater through the simultaneous and instantaneous availability of images. To this effect, it discusses different theses in contemporary political reflection, and takes these concepts onto a concrete political and social situation, i.e. contemporary Argentina.

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The Collision of Marxism and Derrida's Deconstruction in China

Wei Xiaoping

Derrida perhaps most interests Chinese Marxist scholars through his way of separating the spirit of Marx from the ''specter'' of Marx. All those things interpreted by Derrida as ''specters'' are mainly practiced in China after 1949. Since China's historical transition began in 1978 those ''specters'' considered by Derrida include the challenge of economic reform, and economic globalization, and could also include public ownership which has been replaced by multiple ownership or stock ownership, as well as allocation according to contribution which has been replaced by allocation according to contribution combined with allocation according to capital investment. The predictable result is that income equality in theory or in practice has now given way to great income difference. These phenomena are opposite to those ''specters'' of Marx, and they are the targets of the critical spirit of Marx. When Derrida name those things as ''specters'' presumably this means they could never be actualized. So when those things actually disappeared again, people would like to accept the supposition that they are only ''specters'' and could not be objectified, while what actually could be practiced is the critical spirit of Marx. It is just the paradox of the ''specters'' and the spirit of Marx in the actual situation of China that brings it about that Derrida's deconstructive method interests some Chinese Marxist scholars, especially the younger ones. In order to understand Derrida's appeal in China better, we need to look at the general situation of Western Marxism in China.

Durkheim, Wittgenstein and the Norms of Thought

Razmig Keucheyan

In their respective fields of philosophy and sociology, Ludwig Wittgenstein and Émile Durkheim are known for having associated two types of norms usually considered to be distinct: social norms and cognitive norms. They shared the same idea that the rules which govern the activity of the mind – for examples the laws of logic – are fundamentally linked to those which subtend social activity. For Wittgenstein and Durkheim, cognitive norms are thus a type of social norm.

The objective of this article is to compare the way in which Wittgenstein and Durkheim thematise the relationship between social norms and cognitive norms. It begins by clarifying the author's understanding of ''cognitive norms''. It then presents Durkheim's and Wittgenstein's analyses of these norms, and it finally attempts to define some of the similarities and differences existing between their approaches to this problem.

Philosophy as Therapy

Nikolay Omelchenko

Philosophy is deeply rooted in human nature. On the one hand, thinking of an infinite essence of the universe may actualize an infinite essence of humans themselves and thus root them in the Cosmos infinity. On the other hand, to think of infinity is to acquire the power of infinity, i.e., an infinite power. In short, thinking in terms of infinity fills us with infinity. Philosophy allows individuals to overstep the limits of the lived experience, transcends their Selves beyond daily occurrence. Obviously, just this human transcendence into metaphysical reality, into the world of essential relationships ensures a therapeutic effect of philosophy.

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States of Violence and Infatuation in Politics: The Idea of Right at the Heart of their Excesses

Stéphane Douailler

The idea of the political state as a cluster of stability amidst chaos entails an inflation of legal ties that bind the immoderation of the chaos through an immoderate set of laws. This paper suggests an examination of the opposite approach, one attempted by Alexandre Kojève during the Second World War: an investigation of the practice of disassociation. By presenting four loose figures (the judge, the leader, the father, the master) in his book *La notion d'autorité*, Kojève pursued his quest for a disinterested operator in *Esquisse d'une phénoménologie du droit*, where he described its emergence out of the void created by anthropogenic desire in the natural world. As an outcome of this approach, history-laden figures such as the judge, leader, father or master, are replaced by the admission and promotion of the random human being. The quest for other figures starts here: the paper evokes, for example, the case of the misanthrope.

Science and Philosophy

Paolo Parrini

Paolo Parrini discusses here the links between science and philosophy from an epistemological viewpoint, addressing the problem by distinguishing between its historical and theoretical dimensions. He discusses the necessary link between formal epistemology and history, and in this frame identifies different areas of intersection between science and philosophy.

Social Gender Identities and Civil Liberties: The Law and Reality

Ariane Djossou

This paper invites reflection on the gap between law and facts about the equality of women and men as to effective enjoyment of civil liberties. It discusses the question whether the universality of human rights is translatable into real life without referring back to social gender identity. It mainly focuses on West African case studies, particularly Benin, to examine different experiences of gendered civil liberties, and the way how constitutional legislation and other kinds of legal instruments are applied differently according to gender.

Chronicle: Renée Vivien, From One Century To Another

Nicole G. Albert

In this paper, Nicole G. Albert presents a critical portrait of Anglo-French writer Renée Vivien (1877-1909), a major figure of the so-called feminine literature of the turn of the century. By analyzing several of her poems, Albert argues that Renée Vivien's work is marked by a sometimes fatal conception of love, a view of sexual pleasure that is always Sapphic in nature, and a very unconventional idea of the feminine condition. Her homosexuality, her condemnation of marriage, her scorn for family and her absolute refusal of motherhood distinguish her from her contemporaries, and make of her an author worth being rediscovered and studied.

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