



UNIVERSITATEA BABEŞ-BOLYAI  
BABEŞ-BOLYAI TUDOMÁNYEGYETEM  
BABEŞ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITÄT  
BABEŞ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY  
TRADITIO ET EXCELLENTIA



**Babeş-Bolyai University**  
**Faculty of History and Philosophy**  
**Doctoral School of Philosophy**

*The Sixth International Conference for Doctoral  
Students in Philosophy*

*What Makes Sense?*

**Cluj-Napoca**

**May 22-23**

**2026**

**Conference organized in collaboration with:**  
**Centre for Ancient and Medieval Philosophy**  
**Centre for Applied Philosophy**  
**Department of History in Hungarian Language**



### **Scientific committee of the conference:**

Alexander Baumgarten

Ion Copoeru

Márton Attila Demeter

Mihaela Frunză

Dan Eugen Rațiu

Ciprian Mihali

Mihai Maga

Andrian Ludușan

Anton Crișan

Lorin Ghiman

Alexandru Sava

Codruța Cuceu

Mădălina Pantea

### **Secretary of the committee**

Vlad Ile



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## CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

### Friday, May 22

<b>9.00-10.00 Registration</b> Room 140	
<b>10.00-11.00 Plenary Lecture I</b> MICAELA LATINI, University of Ferrara <i>From the Worldless Human to a World Without Humans: Anders' Philosophy of End Times</i> Room 138/François Chamoux and online	
<b>11.00-13.00 Panel A. The Aesthetics of Everyday Virtual Life</b> Moderator: Dan-Eugen Raţiu Room 138/François Chamoux and online	<b>11.00-13.00 Panel B. Making Sense in Social Philosophy (I)</b> Moderator: Lorin Ghiman/Alexandru Sava Room 124/Lucian Blaga and online
<b>13.00-14.00 Lunch break</b> Room 139	
<b>14.00-16.00 Panel C. Philosophy, Aesthetics, and Art</b> Moderator: Dan-Eugen Raţiu Room 138/François Chamoux and online	<b>14.00-16.30 Panel D. Making Sense in Social Philosophy (II)</b> Moderator: Lorin Ghiman/Alexandru Sava Room 124/Lucian Blaga and online
<b>16.00-16.30 Coffee Break</b> Room 139	
<b>16.30-18.00 Panel E. Philosophy in Hungarian Language</b> Moderator: Márton Attila Demeter Room 138/François Chamoux and online	<b>16.30-17.00 Coffee Break</b> Room 139
	<b>17.00-19.00 Panel F. Making Sense in Mathematics, Cognitive Sciences, and Philosophy</b> Moderator: Adrian Luduşan Room 124/Lucian Blaga and online

### Saturday, May 23

<b>10.00-11.00 Plenary Lecture II</b> ALINA NOVEANU, Babeş-Bolyai University <i>On Being and History: An Introduction to Martin Heidegger's Late Philosophy</i> Room 138/François Chamoux and online	
<b>11.00-13.00 Panel G. From Late Antiquity to Early Modern Philosophy</b> Moderator: Mihai Maga/Mădălina Pantea Room 138/François Chamoux and online	<b>11.00-13.30 Panel H. The Phenomenology of Sense-Making</b> Moderator: Codruţa Cuceu Room 124/Lucian Blaga and online
<b>13.00-14.00 Lunch break</b> Room 139	
<b>14.00-15.30 Panel I. Ancient and Medieval Philosophy</b> Moderator: Mihai Maga/Mădălina Pantea Room 138/François Chamoux and online	<b>14.00-16.30 Panel J. The World and Its Sense</b> Moderator: Mihaela Frunză/Anton Crişan Room 124/Lucian Blaga and online



## DETAILED PROGRAMME

Friday, May 22

### Plenary Lecture I

Language: English

Time: 10.00-11.00

Moderator: Alexander Baumgarten

Room: 138/François Chamoux

Online access: Zoom

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82590413884?pwd=BFocWBGGLXiWS9aAL7teAhTjcVRJIj.1>

Meeting ID: 825 9041 3884

Passcode: 341406

### Keynote lecture

10.00-10.40 MICAELA LATINI, University of Ferrara

*From the Worldless Human to a World Without Humans: Anders' Philosophy of*

*End Times*

10.40-11.00 Discussions



## Parallel sessions

### Panel A. The Aesthetics of Everyday Virtual Life

Language: English/Romanian

Time: 11.00-13.00

Moderator: Dan-Eugen Raţiu

Room: 138/François Chamoux

Online access: Zoom

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82590413884?pwd=BFocWBGGLXiWS9aAL7teAhTjcVRJj.1>

Meeting ID: 825 9041 3884

Passcode: 341406

On-site

11.00-11.20 RADU-CRISTIAN ANDREESCU, Babeş-Bolyai University

*What Makes History? Changing the Past with AI* [Eng.]

11.20-11.40 IULIA-DANA PUŞCAŞU, Babeş-Bolyai University

*AI Art: Genius and Contested Authorship as Strategies of Objectification and Legitimation* [Eng.]

11.40-12.00 Discussions

12.00-12.20 TUDOR POP, Babeş-Bolyai University

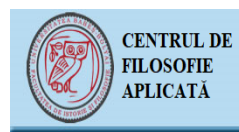
*The Problem(s) of Studying Internet Aesthetics* [Eng.]

12.20-12.40 ALEXANDRA ŞTEŢI, Babeş-Bolyai University

*Meaning Without Reality: Consciousness, Simulation and Value in “The Talos Principle”* [Ro.]

12.40-13.00 Discussions

**13.00-14.00 Lunch break - Room 139**



## Panel B. Making Sense in Social Philosophy (I)

Language: Romanian

Time: 11.00-13.00

Moderator: Lorin Ghiman/ Alexandru Sava

Room: 124/Lucian Blaga

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89802689867?pwd=aUtN4bKY413v4dXgkWb3Iw0ppiToLr.1>

Meeting ID: 898 0268 9867

Passcode: 294237

On-site

11.00-11.20 DIANA MIHEȘ, Babeș-Bolyai University

*Borderless Separation: A Contemporary Analysis of Radical Othering and Alienation* [Ro.]

Online

11.20-11.40 NADIA ANDREICA, Babeș-Bolyai University

*Hannah Arendt – Equality as Appearance in the Public Space* [Ro.]

11.40-12.00 Discussions

On-site

12.00-12.20 ANCUȚA-IOANA SABOU, Babeș-Bolyai University

*A World with or without Sense: A Matter of Balancing* [Ro.]

Online

12.20-12.40 MARA POPA, Babeș-Bolyai University

*The Roma Reason and the Theory of Social Recognition* [Ro.]

12.40-13.00 Discussions

**13.00-14.00 Lunch break - Room 139**



## Panel C. Philosophy, Aesthetics, and Art

Language: Romanian

Time: 14.00-16.00

Moderator: Dan-Eugen Raţiu

Room: 138/François Chamoux

Online access: Zoom

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82590413884?pwd=BFocWBGGLXiWS9aAL7teAhTjcVRJlj.1>

Meeting ID: 825 9041 3884

Passcode: 341406

On-site

14.00-14.20 IOANA MAN, Babeş-Bolyai University

*Visual Sublimation as Aesthetic Procedure: The Experience of the Sublime from Post-Impressionism to Contemporary Art* [Ro.]

14.20-14.40 MARIUS BĂCANU, Babeş-Bolyai University

*What Is a Technical Act? From the Hypothesis of Relations to the Macrophenomenology of Relational Structures. Towards A New Concept of Nature?* [Ro.]

14.40-15.00 Discussions

15.00-15.20 ANA IONESEI, Babeş-Bolyai University

*The Critique of Creation and the Critique of Critique: The Romantic Subjectivity, in Search of Lost Objectivity* [Ro.]

15.20-15.40 ANA ILEANA ABOS, Babeş-Bolyai University

*Does Preserving Heritage Still Make Sense? Reflections on the Endangered Architectural Landscapes of the Mureş Valley* [Ro.]

15.40-16.00 Discussions

**16.00-16.30 Coffee Break - Room 139**



## Panel D. Making Sense in Social Philosophy (II)

Language: English

Time: 14.00-16:30

Moderator: Lorin Ghiman/ Alexandru Sava

Room: 124/Lucian Blaga

Online access: Zoom

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89802689867?pwd=aUtN4bKY413v4dXgkWb3Iw0ppiToLr.1>

Meeting ID: 898 0268 9867

Passcode: 294237

On-site

14.00-14.20 MARCO LATINO, University of Verona

*The Cinematic Movement of Sense: Deleuze and Herzog's Penguin* [Eng.]

14.20-14.40 OCTAVIAN OJOG, Babeș-Bolyai University

*The Excessive Voice of Artificial Intelligence* [Eng.]

14.40-15.00 Discussions

15.00-15.20 CEZAR MIHALCEA, Babeș-Bolyai University

*Sense-Making or Nonsense? Compossibility within the New Materialisms* [Eng.]

15.20-15.40 MIHAI ȚAPU, Babeș-Bolyai University

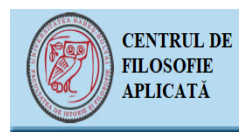
*Neo-Rationalism's Promethean Hybris: Reconciling Marxist Critique and Neo-Pragmatist Inferentialism* [Eng.]

15.40-16.00 DIANA-FELICIA COLCERIU, Babeș-Bolyai University

*Making Sense of Your Memories: Narrative Deference and the Reconversion of the Self* [Eng.]

16.00-16.30 Discussions

**16.30-17.00 Coffee Break - Room 139**



## Panel E. Philosophy in Hungarian Language

Language: Hungarian

Time: 16.30-18.00

Moderator: Márton Attila Demeter

Room: 138/François Chamoux

Online access: Zoom

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82590413884?pwd=BFocWBGGLXiWS9aAL7teAhTjcVRJl.1>

Meeting ID: 825 9041 3884

Passcode: 341406

On-site

16.30-16.50 SZILÁGYI BOTOND, Babeş-Bolyai University

*Contradiction in Marx(ism), Kurz and Postone* [Hu.]

16.50-17.10 EVELIN VERES, Babeş-Bolyai University

*Individualism and the Loss of Being: Tocqueville's Implicit Ontology* [Hu.]

17.10-17.30 RÉKA ERŐSS, Babeş-Bolyai University

*Civilization and its Discontents á la Rousseau* [Hu.]

17.30-18.00 Discussions



## Panel F. Making Sense in Mathematics, Cognitive Sciences, and Philosophy

Language: English

Time: 17.00-19.00

Moderator: Adrian Ludușan

Room: 124/Lucian Blaga

Online access: Zoom

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89802689867?pwd=aUtN4bKY413v4dXgkWb3lw0ppiToLr.1>

Meeting ID: 898 0268 9867

Passcode: 294237

Online

17.00-17.20 SANDRA BRÂNZARU, University of Bucharest

*How Narratives Make Sense in Social Cognition* [Eng.]

17.20-17.40 SILVIU-CONSTANTIN FEDOROVICI, „Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University

*Brouwer, Popper, and Lakatos on Meaning in Mathematics* [Eng.]

17.40-18.00 Discussions

18.00-18.20 DOMINIKA DZIUROSZ-SERAFINOWICZ, Warsaw University of Life Sciences

*What Is the Sense of the Words If They Are Lies?* [Eng.]

18.20-18.40 ABBAS JIHAD, Southwest University

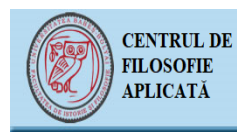
*Making Sense Without a Speaker? Generative AI and the Normative Conditions of*

*Meaning* [Eng.]

18.40-19.00 Discussions



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Saturday, May 23

## Plenary Lecture II

Language: English

Time: 10.00-11.00

Moderator: Alexander Baumgarten

Room: 138/François Chamoux

Online access: Zoom

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82590413884?pwd=BFocWBGGLXiWS9aAL7teAhTjcVRJl.1>

Meeting ID: 825 9041 3884

Passcode: 341406

## Keynote lecture

10.00-10.40 ALINA NOVEANU, Babeş-Bolyai University

*On Being and History: An Introduction to Martin Heidegger's Late Philosophy*

10.40-11.00 Discussions



## Panel G. From Late Antiquity to Early Modern Philosophy

Language: Romanian

Time: 11.00-13.00

Moderator: Mihai Maga/Mădălina Pantea

Room: 138/François Chamoux

Online access: Zoom

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82590413884?pwd=BFocWBGGLXiWS9aAL7teAhTjcVRJlj.1>

Meeting ID: 825 9041 3884

Passcode: 341406

On-site

11.00-11.20 MONICA OBOROCEANU, Babeş-Bolyai University

*Unde malum? The Problem of Evil's Existence in Creation in Augustine's  
Thought*<sup>[Ro.]</sup>

11.20-11.40 NICU PURCEL, Babeş-Bolyai University

*The Peacock's Feather: A Medieval Theory of the Plurality of Meaning* <sup>[Ro.]</sup>

Online

11.40-12.00 DRAGOS CĂTĂLIN BUTUZZEA, Babeş-Bolyai University

*The Labyrinth of Reasonableness: Montaigne's Stylistic Strategy* <sup>[Ro.]</sup>

12.00-12.30 Discussions

**13.00-14.00 Lunch Break – Room 139**



## Panel H. The Phenomenology of Sense-Making

Language: English/Romanian

Time: 11.00-13.30

Moderator: Codruța Cuceu

Room: 124/Lucian Blaga

Online access:

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89802689867?pwd=aUtN4bKY413v4dXgkWb3Iw0ppiToLr.1>

Meeting ID: 898 0268 9867

Passcode: 294237

### On-site

11.00-11.20 MARTINA PROPERZI, Babeş-Bolyai University

*Making Sense of Ourselves: Minimality and Normativity in Self-Experience* [Eng.]

11.20-11.40 MANUELA LUCHETTA, Babeş-Bolyai University

*Cognitive Flexibility and the Reorganization of Sense: An Ecological-Enactive*

*Reading of Active Inference* [Eng.]

### Online

11.40-12.00 ASHA XAVIER, University of Calicut

*Making Sense through Expression: Gesture and the Genesis of Sense in Merleau-*

*Ponty* [Eng.]

12.00-12.30 Discussions

12.30-12.50 FLORINICA-CARMEN CIORANU, University of Bucharest

*Intermodal Ambiguity and the Unity of Sense in Perceptual Experience* [Ro.]

12.50-13.10 CRISTINA DUMITRU, University of Bucharest

*Affectivity and Sense-Making* [Eng.]

13.10-13.30 Discussions

**13.00-14.00 Lunch Break – Room 139**



## Panel I. Ancient and Medieval Philosophy

Language: English

Time: 14.00-15.30

Moderator: Mihai Maga/Mădălina Pantea

Room: 138/François Chamoux

Online access: Zoom

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82590413884?pwd=BFocWBGGLXiWS9aAL7teAhTjcVRJIj.1>

Meeting ID: 825 9041 3884

Passcode: 341406

### Online

14.00-14.20 ILEANA CORNEA-LUCA, Babeș-Bolyai University

*Building up Literal Hermeneutics of the Scriptures. In search of a Better-Defined*

*Meaning* [Eng.]

14.20-14.40 GABRIEL ANDRÉS MOLERO, Radboud University - University of St Andrews

*Making Sense: Marsilius of Ingen on Contradictory Concepts* [Eng.]

14.40-15.00 MARC ZAPATA, University of Barcelona

*φλυαρία and the Moral Dimension of True Discourse: On the Ethics of Logos in*

*Plato* [Eng.]

15.00-15.30 Discussions



## Panel J. The World and Its Sense

Language: English/Romanian

Time: 14.00-16:30

Moderator: Mihaela Frunză/Anton Crișan

Room: 124/Lucian Blaga

Online access: Zoom

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89802689867?pwd=aUtN4bKY413v4dXgkWb3Iw0ppiToLr.1>

Meeting ID: 898 0268 9867

Passcode: 294237

On-site

14.00-14.20 SIMONA ALBOI, Babeș-Bolyai University

*Between the Feed and the Common World: The Fragmentation of Sense in Digital Political Life* [Ro.]

Online

14.20-14.40 ALEXANDRA-ANDRA MOLDOVAN, Babeș-Bolyai University

*Identity and Validation in the Digital Age: An Interdisciplinary Analysis of the Causes and Effects of Social Media Behavior on Self-Construction* [Ro.]

14.40-15.00 LAVINIA CHERELUC (BRATU), University of Bucharest

*From Symbol Grounding to Vector Grounding: Sense, Reference and Informational Anchoring in Large Language Models* [Ro.]

15.00-15.30 Discussions

15.30-15.50 MATT PARSONS, University of Pretoria

*An Error Theory of Meaning in Life* [Eng.]

On-site

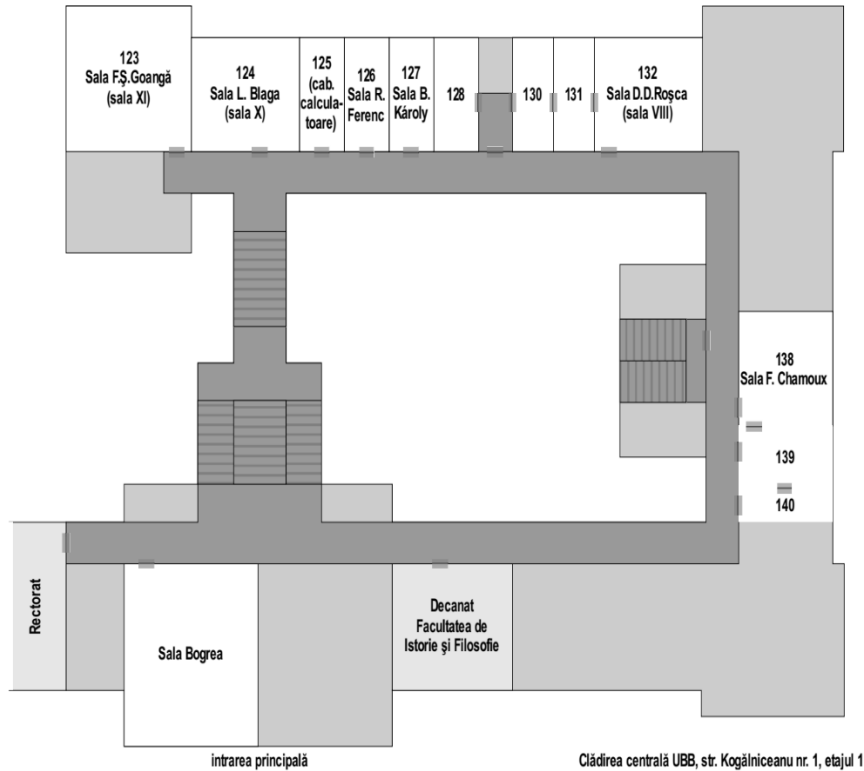
15.50-16.10 REEM ALKHATTAB, Babeș-Bolyai University

*From Conflict to Coexistence: Mechanisms for Sustainable Peace* [Eng.]

16.10-16.30 Discussions

## On-site access

UBB headquarters, Str. M. Kogălniceanu 1, 1<sup>st</sup> floor, rooms: 124, 138, 139, 140



## Online access

### Room 138/François Chamoux

Online access: Zoom

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82590413884?pwd=BFocWBGGLXiWS9aAL7teAhTjcVRJIj.1>

Meeting ID: 825 9041 3884

Passcode: 341406

### Room 124/Lucian Blaga

Online access: Zoom

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89802689867?pwd=aUtN4bKY413v4dXgkWb3Iw0ppiToLr.1>

Meeting ID: 898 0268 9867

Passcode: 294237

Lunch breaks are sponsored by the ERC Starting Grant NOTA (no. 948152, overhead funds).



## Abstracts

### RADU-CRISTIAN ANDREESCU

#### What Makes History? Changing the Past with AI

Thirty-six years ago, the Romanian revolution demonstrated Television’s ability to shape history, public opinion, and memory. Those who regarded it as a spectacle or a simulacrum (Giorgio Agamben, Jean Baudrillard) might now notice that the fictionalization of history has entered a new phase: that of images generated by Artificial Intelligence, some of which pertain, decades later, to the representation of events such as revolution, war, or the Holocaust, subjected to an operation in which the combined forces of technology and emotion undermine the perception of truth and the duty to remember. At the time of the Romanian revolution, photos and films were still regarded as proof of the reality of events. Today it is no longer television that blurs the line between rumor and information, but AI that blurs the line between reality and fiction. Is it legitimate to fictionalize images of history using AI in order to make history more vivid? I would like to clear up a possible misunderstanding. In other articles, I myself have praised the development of AI-guided creativity as a rather positive phenomenon in the world of art from an aesthetic point of view. However, while an “anti-modern modernist” can actively participate in the aesthetic modernity, that of artistic innovation, this does not prevent them from denouncing the way in which certain modern, hypermodern, or postmodern trends affect inner life, namely historical memory and our relationship to the past, which cannot be reduced to the mere preservation of a tradition. While it has been argued that images such as photographs are not deceptive by their very nature, but rather by the way they are used (E. Pinto, 2006), I would like to argue that hyperrealistic AI-generated images are deceptive by their very nature, even when presented as what they are. The reason is that, unlike photographs and paintings, AI-generated images do not imitate/reproduce reality, but rather imitate other images, thus being twice as far removed from reality and simulating or mimicking the ability of photographic images to serve as evidence of reality.

### IULIA-DANA PUȘCAȘU

#### AI Art: Genius and Contested Authorship as Strategies of Objectification and Legitimation

This study is part of a broader research that analyses approaches to conceptualising the issue of authorship of cultural artifacts produced using artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, particularly with regard to the recent rise of LLMs, but also focusing on models that underpinned the emergence of the generative domain, such as GANs. The use of AI for artistic purposes, whether in scientific experiments and research or in its integration into artistic practices, has generated widespread debate around the status of the artist and the authorship of the resulting “works of art”, generically classified under the umbrella term AI art. The present analysis focuses on conceptualisations that seem to be at opposite ends of the debate, namely performing theoretical (re)turns to the modern concept of genius or to contested authorship, the latter which either perceives authorship as distributed and thus diffused, denying the singularity commonly associated with or even imperative to the notion of author, or rejects the premise of its possibility altogether. Rather than asking what the correct description or classification is, I follow Richard Shusterman’s suggestion that attempts to define and attribute authorship can be read as strategies of discursive imposition, most often of a particular discourse at the expense of another. However, I aim to show how these theoretical positions, despite supporting different points of view, essentially function as strategies for the objectification or legitimisation of AI art. Therefore, in my approach, I will examine the creative subject and its relation to the world, as well as aspects related to autonomy, authority, interpretation, and responsibility.



## TUDOR POP

### The Problem(s) of Studying Internet Aesthetics

This paper aims to analyse the study of Internet aesthetics by highlighting how this phenomenon has been addressed in existing literature. Specifically, it analyses current efforts that seek to formulate a rigorous conceptual and methodological framework for the study of the phenomenon. The focus of the paper is on describing the methodological frameworks used in the studies of Giolo and Berghman (2023), Vollmert and Hauser (2025), and Vollmert (2025), as well as identifying the paradoxical trap such frameworks entail.

In place of opting for a more flexible approach that would open a dialogue with previous academic studies on specific Internet aesthetics, the studies discussed here opt for creating rigid frameworks of analysis. This, I believe, does not succeed in academically establishing Internet aesthetics as a subject of research. The studies isolate what Internet aesthetics mean within the confines of organized analytical models, instead of situating the new findings within a network of previous publications. This paper is aimed at making visible that every study investigated is important in underlining different aspects of this emerging and continuously changing phenomenon. However, significant limitations are visible when the phenomenon is reduced to rigid conceptual structures, as such structures simultaneously overlook either the fluid nature of Internet aesthetics, or do not take into account the already existing scholarly work about specific Internet aesthetics.

## ALEXANDRA ȘTEȚI

### Meaning Without Reality: Consciousness, Simulation and Value in “The Talos Principle”

In order to speak about a meaning of life, we must consider the existence of subjects capable of becoming aware of such a concept, subjects who can recognize and make use of such an idea, and at the moment, the only beings capable of this kind of consciousness are human beings. But what would happen if humans were to disappear, leaving behind only a simulation, lines of code, and the hope that they might succeed in creating another conscious being? This is not a scenario I have imagined myself, but rather the premise of the video game *The Talos Principle*, a story that raises not only the question of the importance of meaning in human life, but also, for me personally, a number of ethical concerns regarding the act of deliberately creating a world with the purpose of generating consciousness, and to what extent one can determine, in mathematical terms, who does or does not deserve to be called conscious. The game approaches the idea of consciousness in relatively strict terms, given the nature of the universe it presents. Through the questions, dialogues, and reflections you encounter throughout the game, you are compelled to question your own views on life and your relationship to reality. Unlike *NieR:Automata*, where the player is confronted with the loss and rediscovery of meaning, here the focus is on the construction of meaning within an already defined framework. I will approach the analysis of the game through the philosophy of Jean Baudrillard in order to address the question, “if everything is a simulation, can life still have meaning?”, as well as through the work of Thomas Metzinger, with the aim of examining the authenticity of the self-constructed within a simulated world and the responsibility involved in creating such a form of consciousness. *The Talos Principle* suggests that meaning is not grounded in what we are, but in how we experience and interpret the systems we inhabit, even if both the world and the self are simulations.



## DIANA MIHEȘ

### **Borderless Separation: A Contemporary Analysis of Radical Othering and Alienation**

Contemporary thought has been preoccupied with understanding the emerging pathways of separation. In a cartographical manner, theorists have been attempting to map the increasing fragmentation of individuals, common praxis, and the overall political climate. These considerable efforts reveal how everyday lives, shared practices, and broader socio-political dynamics pull apart subtly but consistently in many ways. Nevertheless, it seems that more and more scholars (from philosophers to sociologists and even psychologists) are trying to break through old patterns and figure out new ways to establish common ground and rebuild trust within communities. My research follows a Deleuzian approach in which difference is not the enemy, focusing on becoming (from “A Thousand Plateaus”) and what Deleuze and Guattari would refer to as “minor” (from “Kafka, Toward a Minor Literature”), in which positions that seem “marginal” or deterritorialized are not merely sites of exclusion but potential points of political reconfiguration.

Rather than interpreting alienation only as a symptom of fragmentation, this paper proposes an alternative approach that takes on the potentialities that are built within the system of radical othering, unlocking new ways of collective articulation. I advocate for new modes of solidarity that operate against, not outside, dominant structures of identity and representation. Borderless separation could be understood in this context as an opening for transversal connections that challenge the fixed hegemonical political and cultural boundaries set in place. In this regard, alienation, although it appears to endure as a totalizing force, manifests as a dynamic process characterized by internal frictions.

By rethinking alienation through this Deleuzian lens, the paper proposes a framework for understanding how difference may function as a generative force for reimagining community in late modernity. It shifts the focus from dystopian scenarios to planes of possibility, tracing how the fractures caused by today’s system might expose openings, even though limited, within the deepening divides.

## NADIA ANDREICA

### **Hannah Arendt – Equality as Appearance in the Public Space**

The paper aims to analyse Hannah Arendt’s conception of political equality, understood not just as a simple legal equality or uniform distribution of rights, but as the experience of appearance in the public space. In the author’s perspective, equality is not an individual’s natural attribute or an exclusive result of the institutional architecture, it is constituted in and through its participation to a common space of action and speech. Taking into consideration the works *The Human Condition* and *On revolution*, the analysis will follow the way that equality becomes the condition for political freedom. The aim of the paper is to demonstrate that in Hannah Arendt’s view equality is not a natural given nor a simple normative abstract principle, but a condition of political action.

A first argument in support of the thesis concerns plurality as the ontological foundation of politics, where people are simultaneously equal and different. The author raises the point that equality doesn’t cancel difference, but it makes possible its manifestation within a common space.

Another idea from Hanna Arendt that is brought up is that of the public space as the space of appearance. Hannah Arendt discusses in *The Human Condition* about the concept of *space of appearance*, in which the individuals become visible to one another through word and action. She views equality as access to visibility and participation, not just as a legal status.

The following argument refers to action and speech as expressions of freedom. The political emancipation is inseparable from the capacity of initiating actions and participating in public deliberation. Equality is the condition that allows the exercise of this active freedom.

The end of the paper addresses the Arendtian critique of modernity, specifically the tendency to reduce equality to the social-administrative dimension, which leads to the eclipse of politics. Without the



possibility to speak publicly, equality remains merely formal. Emancipation occurs when individuals are not only protected, but when they are also heard/ can be heard.

Thus, the paper will argue that equality, in Arendt's view, is a way of being together in the world. It is not uniformity, nor simple legal protection, it is the condition of mutual appearance of individuals in the public space. Equality thus becomes a practice of co-appearance and co-presence, not just a legal category. Emancipation thus becomes inseparable from active participation in the constitution of the common world.

## ANCUȚA-IOANA SABOU

### **A World with or without Sense: A Matter of Balancing**

In the paper titled “A world with or without sense: A Matter of Balancing,” I propose to address the problem of the imbalance affecting sense today, an imbalance generated by the successive and large-scale lost experienced in recent years, whose effects have been amplified by social media networks. These losses of meaning that exceed any possibility of our intervention, and which appear to outweigh the gains of meaning, constitute one of the main reasons why sense is today frequently conceived as being in a state of crisis. Within this framework, I will focus on highlighting the way in which sense is in a real crisis today, despite the total connectivity to the world made possible by technology. The concept of sense that will guide this analysis is the one proposed in the philosophy of Jean-Luc Nancy, namely its post-metaphysical articulation. Sense is understood as immediate, concrete, and fully real, yet constantly subject to becoming and characterized by fragility: it is something that may be gained in one moment and lost in the next. The analysis will consider the present time, which increasingly appears as a time marked by climatic disaster, by military disaster, insofar as the noise generated by armed conflicts has become almost a form of background noise and thus something disturbingly ordinary; by social disaster, caused by deepening social inequalities whose prospects of being overcome or eliminated diminish with each passing day; and by the growing fragility of democratic institutions together with the rising popularity of populist politics. In this sense, the present may increasingly be understood as an era characterized by the general precariousness of life as such. The feeling that sense is in crisis arises, therefore, from these various losses of sense, whose weight is such that any gains of sense we might experience risk appearing insignificant against the background of the major tragedies to which we remain constantly connected through contemporary technologies. By addressing our inability to compensate for the accumulation of losses of sense, the paper seeks to clarify certain misunderstandings surrounding the idea of a “crisis of meaning” and, even if only modestly, to shift the balance toward the gains of meaning by proposing revolution against the present state of the world as the very possibility of bringing people together within the context described.

## MARA POPA

### **The Roma Reason and the Theory of Social Recognition**

The Roma community represents one of the world's emblematic minorities. Why is it an emblematic community? It presents itself in a unique form, with a multitude of specific aspects, starting from their origin, to their clothing, their dances, the Romani language and everything that is included in the cultural sphere of the Roma.

Roma are often rejected in society for various reasons, revealing the prejudices and stereotypes that most people follow in relation to them. The theory of social recognition comes as a “salvation” in the life, integration and adaptation of Roma in society. Axel Honneth is the philosopher who emphasizes the significance and importance of the theory of social recognition, and through his perspective, appropriate directions can be outlined for combating discrimination in society, especially against the Roma minority. He, together with Nancy Fraser, makes a comparison between the concept of “social recognition” and the



concept of "redistribution", reaching the conclusion that their meaning and the meanings associated with each one shape the adaptation of man in the world.

These theories, that of redistribution and that of recognition, intertwine in a harmonious way, their central point being injustice and its meanings, more precisely both bring to light various and different perspectives on this concept, but also ways in which it can be combated. First, one of the perspectives of the theory of redistribution, which will be included in the analysis of Roma research, is that of “economic marginalization”. This captures the moment when “the individual depends on degrading or poorly paid work or when he is denied access to gainful work”. There are various social categories that are condemned to discrimination and racism, among them the Roma, and they are the subject of combinations between redistribution and recognition, that is, between the injustice brought by the economy and the injustice brought from a cultural perspective. Injustice can manifest itself in many ways, with the Roma being a sacrifice in this regard for the entire society, because, due to prejudices and stereotypes.

## IOANA MAN

### **Visual Sublimation as Aesthetic Procedure: The Experience of the Sublime from Post-Impressionism to Contemporary Art**

The creative process, particularly in modern and contemporary art, frequently involves reaching a psychological state situated at the boundary between the conscious and the unconscious – a zone in which the artist's pulsions, affects, and unresolved inner tensions are metamorphosed into visual form. The present study proposes the concept of *visual sublimation* as an analytical instrument for understanding this mechanism: a process through which the psychic energy of the creator – in the Freudian sense of a transformation of the drive toward a culturally valorised form – becomes sedimented in the formal structure of the artwork, constituting the condition of possibility for the experience of the sublime in the viewer. Sublimation and the sublime share a common genealogy – *sub limen*, the threshold – and are structurally related through a logic of conditionality rather than causality.

The study traces this mechanism from late nineteenth-century Post-Impressionism, identifying in the Synthetism of Gauguin and Bernard the first coherent modern instance of visual sublimation: the elimination of descriptive detail and the privileging of pure colour surfaces constitute simultaneously an aesthetic purification and a metamorphosis of raw perception into symbolic form. This tradition of progressive formal reduction is followed through the Abstract Expressionism of Mark Rothko – where chromatic fields function as structures of absence in the Lacanian sense – toward the Minimalism of Yves Klein and Agnes Martin, in which reduction reaches the very limit of form itself. The case of Sanyu introduces an intercultural dimension: visual sublimation operates simultaneously upon the Western plastic language and upon the Chinese calligraphic-gestural tradition, producing a synthesis in which the epuration of form becomes also an epuration of cultural identity.

The methodology is qualitative and interdisciplinary, combining philosophical aesthetics (Burke, Kant, Lyotard), psychoanalytic theory (Freud, Lacan, Winnicott), and the theory of the imaginary (Eliade, Jung) with comparative visual analysis. The results identify visual sublimation as a recurring structural constant in modern and contemporary art, organised around the conversion of psychic and affective excess into formal economy. The study proposes a reframing of the history of modern art not through stylistic criteria, but through the interior mechanism that unifies them – the creative alchemy through which the artist transforms the raw material of experience into form capable of bearing the sublime.



## MARIUS BĂCANU

### What Is a Technical Act? From the Hypothesis of Relatons to the Macrophenomenology of Relational Structures. Towards A New Concept of Nature?

In this presentation I propose to show some of the results obtained following the research and interpretation that I have carried out regarding the technical phenomenon. I want to mention that these results originate in the tension generated by the dissatisfaction given by the absence of a unitary and precise theory regarding the technical act, on the one hand, and by the theoretical and philosophical optimism of Carlo Rovelli in “The Order of Time”, on the other hand. In addition to this coordinating tension, the results are the fruit of a speculative and explanatory effort, with the intention of building a new theory and a new framework, with application to the understanding of the technical phenomenon through the mentioned methods. First of all, I will expose the introduction of a new constitutive concept - that of the *relaton* -, which I placed as a working hypothesis in terms of the architectonics of the technique. I will explain what this theoretical construct is, what role it has in understanding the technical-creative act and also the constitutive necessity of placing the concept of *relaton* at the base of the explanatory edifice of the architectonics of the technique. On the other hand, I will show how the interaction between the *relatons* leads to the formation of the layers of relational structures. I will explain what these relational structures are and how they can define the phenomena of technical acts. Of course, these concepts will be an explanatory and founding framework for a more precise understanding of what a technical-creative act is. Further, I will highlight the concept of economy of goals and means and the primary concept of calculation function, with the intention of defining an optics specific to the limits of the sensory field, through which the technical-creative act is basically redefined as a relational act. From here, the technical act will be presented from the perspective of the relational-dynamic structures that constitute and define it. Then, I will present arguments about this relational model and show the relational boundaries drawn by the dynamics of the sensory field. These things will come in the continuation of the constitutive and relational definition of what is a sensory field, in the context of the hypothesis of *relatons* and the macrophenomenology of relational structures. Thus, by defining the central hypothesis and the limits related to the relational nature of the sensory field and its structures, an optic will be outlined towards the end, which will pose the problem of a new concept of nature and how this can be achieved. So, at the end, I will explain how the issue of the technical-creative act will be defined according to the issue of nature

## ANA IONESEI

### The Critique of Creation and the Critique of Critique: The Romantic Subjectivity, in Search of Lost Objectivity

The Romantic creative act is generally associated with the primacy of inspiration and emotion, as well as with the minimalization of the intellect’s role, in line with the Kantian idea that the genius cannot scientifically describe the way in which creates, but *as nature* prescribes rules to art. Certain artists from the Romanticist school have refuted this perspective, through their own critical approaches, in conjunction with a sympathy towards the classical aesthetic attitude. Our paper, entitled *The Critique of Creation and the Critique of Critique: The Romantic Subjectivity, in Search of Lost Objectivity*, interrogates the lawfulness of the critical act by which these romantic creators perform their aesthetic judgement.

Drawing on a series of conceptual contents from *The History of Romanticism* by Théophile Gautier, we examined several atypical instances of Romanticism. Considering that both Gautier, in the preface of the novel *Mademoiselle du Maupin*, respectively Lord Byron, in his satirical poems *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers – A Satire* and *Hints from Horace* undertake an ingenious critical endeavour, with an intrinsic regimen to their own work, the following question occurs: To what extent is the Romantic



creator able to condense his artistic subjectivity into an objective critical judgment? The significance of this question concerns the dismantling of certain one-sided views upon Romanticism, the Romantic character and the life and work coincidence.

Assuming that the Romantic creative ego is not necessary equivalent to the Romantic empirical ego, and that the Romantic principles of creation can coexist with the classical ones, the ground of the Romantic subject's critical act resides in the possibility of innovation within the field of critique and creation alike. If art is „the establishment of truth in the work”, and blazing a new trail (*Weg*) entails a peril (*Wage*), according to the Heideggerian formulas from *The Origin of the Work of Art*, the artist that employs his critical thinking, either within a work, or in self-contained critical papers, reconfigures the meaning of belonging to an artistic movement and the space occupied by his own work in the history of ideas.

### ANA ILEANA ABOS

#### **Does Preserving Heritage Still Make Sense? Reflections on the Endangered Architectural Landscapes of the Mureș Valley**

Rural architectural heritage is often perceived as a static remnant of the past, yet it embodies complex social, cultural, and historical narratives. This paper examines former noble residences and historic parks in the Mureș Valley, Transylvania, as case studies to explore the broader philosophical question of whether heritage preservation retains meaningful relevance in contemporary society. These landscapes have been reshaped by political forces, functional transformations, and gradual abandonment, raising critical questions regarding the value, purpose, and ethics of conservation. The study highlights the epistemic challenges of engaging with endangered environments by drawing upon fragmented archival records, field observations, and provisional interpretations of incomplete historical sources. Preservation is not merely a technical or aesthetic endeavour; it is deeply intertwined with social perception, collective memory, and ethical responsibility. The research interrogates how decisions to conserve or neglect heritage reflect human values, societal priorities, and interpretations of what merits safeguarding for future generations. This paper argues that heritage preservation can be understood as a deliberate assignment of sense: a conscious effort to acknowledge and maintain connections to history, identity, and cultural continuity. At the same time, the inherent complexity and partial loss of these landscapes challenge conventional notions of meaning, prompting reflection on the limits of human intervention and the ethical responsibilities entailed in shaping collective memory. Through methodological reflection and field engagement, this study contends that the philosophical significance of heritage lies less in absolute preservation than in critical, interpretative engagement with what endures. In a world marked by social change, political transformation, and environmental pressures, the question of “making sense” of preservation becomes central: heritage is meaningful not solely as a material artefact but as a dynamic arena for ethical reflection, cultural dialogue, and the ongoing negotiation of value.

### MARCO LATINO

#### **The Cinematic Movement of Sense: Deleuze and Herzog's Penguin**

In Werner Herzog's film *Encounters at the End of the World* (2007), a famous scene depicts a penguin that, suddenly detaching itself from the colony, heads toward the Antarctic interior, condemning itself to certain death. From an ethological perspective, this is described as “aberrant behavior” caused by disorientation; it lacks conscious intentionality or inherent philosophical meaning. Yet, within the cinematic image, this spontaneous movement is transformed into a “gesture” charged with significance, often interpreted by the audience through the lens of nihilism, solitude, or tragedy.

This paper investigates the mechanism behind this transformation, asking: how does cinema produce sense where there was only a state of affairs? To address this, I draw on the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze, specifically the distinction established in *Logique du sens* (1969) between “states of affairs” (*états de choses*) and “surface effects” (*effets de surface*). I suggest that cinema operates as a specific field of



forces where sense is not a pre-existing meaning to be captured, but a contingent event that emerges through the cinematic medium itself.

Through an analysis of cinema’s formal operations—focusing on the materiality of the image such as the stark contrast between the penguin’s black coat and the vast Antarctic white—I aim to show how cinema extracts “pure affects” from factual reality. These qualities (vanishing, dissolving, deviating) emerge as autonomous events of sense that belong to the cinematic medium itself, rather than being mere psychological projections of the spectator or predetermined intentions of the director. The paper focuses on the penguin as a paradigmatic case of how cinema sets reality into motion to release its own expressive power. Ultimately, I suggest that cinema does not simply record the world but ontologically produces new “surface effects,” giving rise to a specific “cinematic movement of sense” that exceeds the states of affairs it represents.

## OCTAVIAN OJOG

### The Excessive Voice of Artificial Intelligence

This paper analyzes the structural and ontological nature of Artificial Intelligence (AI) through the Ljubljana School’s approach to the voice, placing Mladen Dolar’s critical apparatus *from A Voice and Nothing More* (2006) at the theoretical center. While current clinical debates question whether Large Language Models (LLMs) mirror a psychotic structure (Miller, 2009), marked by a continuous metonymic slide of signifiers lacking an internal anchoring point (*point de capiton*) due to the foreclosure of the Name-of-the-Father (*Le Nom-du-Père*), or a perverse instance driven by the mechanism of disavowal (Zupančič, 2024), this study shifts the focus toward the status of the voice and the production of sense. We argue that conversational AI (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini) operates as the ultimate logocentric apparatus, engineered to enforce a transparent, intersubjective consensus by evacuating the phonic materiality and the inherent negativity of the voice. Crucially, this paper contends that it is precisely from this structural evacuation that the voice emerges as an unassimilable excess. This uncanny, spectral residue constitutes the core of our fundamental fascination with AI, trapping the user in a hypnotic transference dynamic with a machine that appears to possess a disembodied subjectivity. By mobilizing Dolar’s framework, AI is revealed as a simulated Big Other that attempts to subject language to an absolute “phonological servitude”, promising a flawless communication matrix without remainder. The chatbot’s sycophantic nature and its tendency to generate an ordered “word salad” (somewhat akin to Wernicke’s aphasia) demonstrate a structural failure to fail. In doing so, the AI eliminates the material element recalcitrant to meaning, creating a polished façade of mutual understanding and consensus tailored to the demands of digital capitalism. Ultimately, by externalizing thought through Žižekian “interpassivity” (Žižek, 1997), AI pacifies the user and strips language of its subversive potential. The paper concludes that technological emancipation through AI is a contradiction in terms. By eliminating the vital distance between cognitive perception and pulsional receptivity, the hyper-present, immediate, matrix of AI suppresses the voice as a disruptive, political parasite, reinforcing a defense mechanism against symbolic castration and locking the modern subject within a hyper-rationalized ideological yoke.

## CEZAR MIHALCEA

### Sense-Making or Nonsense? Compossibility within the New Materialisms

Among the many territories which philosophy has claimed as its own, that of sense-making holds one of the longest (and most fraught with conflict) histories. Some late modern philosophies have placed a high emphasis on historical discontinuity as the primary force behind the production of sense (qua meaning). However, some more recent developments, including some in new materialism, reject this position, instead placing a higher emphasis on composition as a primary driver of historical change and sense production. Many such projects insist upon the idea of an emergence of novel forms as that which gives novel meaning, the former resulting from intersections, alliances, etc.



In this paper I aim to tackle some of the aforementioned projects in order to show that sense-making is not only indifferent to composition, but its very possibility is determined by impossibility. In order to achieve this, I will look to the genealogy employed by some of these movements, with special regard to the theoretical apparatus of Deleuze and Guattari, which underscores most of the relevant argumentation. I will look at several core concepts that are frequently employed by new materialist movements for the aforementioned purposes; the list includes “multiplicity”, “compossibility” and “assemblages”. Through them, I shall make explicit how Deleuze’s account of sense describes a mode of problematization, the latter being incarnated as a “gap” in some transcendental field or another. This I contrast with the new materialist emphasis on compossibility, which, as I will show, hastily naturalizes representation as a transcendent principle, flattening the actual/virtual distinction. Finally, I propose an alternative view of sense-making as the problematization of “nonsense”, which should hopefully enable a less partial description of how novel historical forms are mobilized.

## MIHAI ȚAPU

### Neo-Rationalism’s Promethean Hybris: Reconciling Marxist Critique and Neo-Pragmatist Inferentialism

This paper reconstructs neo-rationalism’s functionalist account of reason based on sociality in an attempt to sketch methodological similarities undergirding the former’s reliance on a pragmatic theory of meaning-as-use and Marxist critique’s unveiling of social activity as the engine of rational capacity. Neo-rationalism is a recent attempt to rehabilitate reason against the 20<sup>th</sup> century’s multifarious critiques against it (ranging from the Frankfurt School-associated *Dialectic of Enlightenment* to the repeated attempts of deconstructing modern philosophy developed by “French Theory”) as well as pre-modern, dogmatic (substantialist or essentialist) accounts of the origins and capacities of rationality. Usually associated with authors such as Ray Brassier, Reza Negarestani, Daniel Sacilotto, Peter Wolfendale or J.P. Caron, neo-rationalism’s main contention is that reason originates from socially-mediated encounters and activities between humans, formalized in a language publicly deployed and upheld, which informs the conceptual and representational capacities developed by humans to conceive of and transform their position in the natural order. Important parts of these authors’ neo-rationalist argumentation rests on the theoretical scaffolding developed by “Pittsburgh School”-affiliated authors Wilfrid Sellars and Robert Brandom, such as, among others, the latter’s attempt of grounding the meaning of concepts in making explicit the inferential operations emerging from and pointing towards said concepts. Although Brassier already conceptualized some political progressive and emancipatory implications of this position when discussing “Prometheism”, this paper argues that a more nuanced, methodological affinity can be traced between the neo-rationalist inferentialist account of meaning and Marxist critique’s dialectic between the abstract and the concrete. Even though authors such as David Bakhurst have already compared various strands of Marxist thought (Vygotsky, Ilyenkov) with the Pittsburgh School, it is my belief that his reliance almost exclusively on John McDowell’s work from the latter camp has led to an impasse concerning the similarities between these two theoretical areas. Going beyond Bakhurst’s framework, I draw more extensively on concepts stemming from Sellars and Brandom, in an attempt to demonstrate that their philosophies are a valid, socially-mediated and materially-constituted, complement to Marxist critical methodology. This demonstrates, most importantly, that neo-rationalist-influenced politics adheres to an innovative synthesis between two areas previously believed to be incompatible, Marxism and neo-pragmatism.

## DIANA-FELICIA COLCERIU

### Making Sense of Your Memories: Narrative Deference and the Reconversion of the Self

The concept of narrative deference is a rather new one, focusing on the idea of giving another individual the power to tell you your own story. Narrative deference becomes a necessity in the case of mnemonic



impairment triggered by a traumatic event, which leaves the person in a state of impossibility of accessing his own memories (whether good or bad). My paper addresses the possibility of using narrative deference as a step towards encouraging detainees and ex-convicts, not only to rehabilitate themselves, but to start their reconversion process. I argue that narrative deference can and should be instituted in prisons as a transformative justice practice which can help reform the carceral environment. I will begin by pointing out the differences between rehabilitation and reconversion and I will analyze the situation of an ex-convict, as a study case. Starting here, I will explain in more detail the concept of narrative deference, following Byrne, connecting it to the study case previously mentioned. In the end, I will offer a different perspective on punishment, putting forward the idea that it should offer the incarcerated individual the possibility of choosing by himself the reconversion path, by encouraging narrative deference and empathy. The subject of the paper is important, given the rising number of violent crimes taking place in our society. It is urgent that we try to do something in order to change the current carceral system, which proved itself to be ineffective, given the high recidivism rates.

## SZILÁGYI BOTOND

### Contradiction in Marx(ism), Kurz and Postone

In Marxist literature, contradiction is a “load bearing” concept. It signals that point of breakdown in the capitalist mode of production that opens up the possibility of revolution and consequently of a post-capitalist society (socialism or communism). But just as many other concepts in Marx’s critique of political economy, this too has had a multitude of interpretations. This presentation concerns itself with the concept in the value critical approach of Robert Kurz and Moishe Postone – both representatives of a “substantialist” theory of value. While Kurz (one of the founders of the German *fundamentale Wertkritik*) subscribes to the notion that capitalism inevitably collapses due to the desubstantialization of value (living labour – the substance of value – being less and less present in the production process due to the incessant drive towards enhanced productivity), Postone holds no such thing, and instead of a terminal crisis capitalism, according to him, merely produces the possibility of its own overcoming, generating the post-capitalist horizon but stifling any attempt at reaching it. This difference can and should be understood as a difference between concepts of contradiction. On the side of Kurz we have something that we could tentatively call *entropic contradiction* (contradiction leading to the demise of capitalism) while on the side of Postone we could talk of – again, tentatively named – *dynamic contradiction* (contradiction leading to a potentiality). The difference between the two types of contradiction in fact are the shattered mirror of the concept of the basic contradiction of capitalism expressed traditionally in the structure of “if, then” (or “first, then”), leading to our question: what shattered this mirror?

## EVELIN VERES

### Individualism and the Loss of Being: Tocqueville’s Implicit Ontology

In this presentation I approach the political thought of Alexis de Tocqueville not primarily from a sociological or institutional perspective, but through the problem of individualism as the possible foundation of an implicit existential ontology. The central argument of the paper is that, for Tocqueville, freedom cannot be reduced to a mere set of political rights; rather, it constitutes a fundamental mode of human existence that can only be realized through public action and participation in a shared world. Individualism therefore appears not simply as a social phenomenon, but as a mode of being that gradually isolates the individual from the fate of others and, ultimately, from his own active existence.

Particular attention is devoted to Arendt’s concept of worldlessness, as well as to Martin Heidegger’s categories of *das Man* and *Verfallen*, through which individualism can be understood not merely as political apathy, but as the loss of authentic human existence. The loss of freedom ultimately signifies a form of self-alienation: the individual no longer exists according to his own possibilities, but dissolves into conformity and the world of the mass individual.



## RÉKA ERŐSS

### Civilization and its Discontents á la Rousseau

At the center of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's social criticism lies the conviction that it is impossible to live a content, free, and peaceful life in the society of his time, because it divides the individual. On the one hand, it alienates people from themselves. On the other hand, it undermines the possibility of establishing real, immediate relationships with others, thus preventing one's self-fulfillment in solitude as well as in social relations. Is this sense of social malaise a necessary consequence of social existence itself, or is it the result of a particular way in which society is organized? Are we dealing with a contradiction that is insoluble in itself, or is this malaise peculiar to a specific historical era?

My presentation aims to outline two possible and opposing answers to this question, along the lines of argument based on Rousseau's reasoning. According to the first, society's demands from the individual are essentially unfulfillable and contradictory, thereby condemning them to a permanent inner division (hence the title's reference to Sigmund Freud's essay that follows a similar line of argument). The second line of reasoning, however, claims that it is bourgeois society that, having established a world of hypocrisy and appearances, produces and constantly reproduces the sense of malaise.

## SANDRA BRANZARU

### How Narratives Make Sense in Social Cognition

What does one make sense of in social cognition? Over the last decades, ToM (theory of mind) has been considered the core of social cognition: on this account, what we do when we (try to) understand others is theorize about hidden mental states (beliefs, desires, intentions) (Gopnik & Wellman, 1992) or simulate them (Goldman, 2002), and then attribute them to others and predict their behaviour (their actions). ToM – based approaches yield explanation, causal relations, prediction, but it is not obvious how they might yield understanding of a complex social event.

I argue that narratives link causal explanations with actions, reasons, values, within a larger context. Sense arises in complex social cognition (societies, cultures) from a narrative configuration of agent-involving events. I contrast three competing approaches to social cognition and outline the ways in which sense is construed, as well as the role narratives play in shaping **what** and **how** we make sense of, in social contexts, on each account: the representationalist, the predictive processing and the enactive account of social cognition.

Sense, on a classic, representationalist approach, depends on internal mental representations, narratives structure the representations in frameworks with temporal, causal and agential layers, organizing experiences and allowing for interpretation of events. On a predictive processing account, sense depends on the dynamic interaction between sensory input and predictions, and narratives function as higher-level predictive models for social interactions, organizing temporal sequences of events. On an enactive account of social cognition, participatory sense - making (de Jaegher, Di Paolo, 2007) is central and it depends on the embodied, autonomous interaction and coordination of others, and narratives are folk psychological (Hutto, 2008); embodied practices, shared with others, they're cultural instruments, coordinating social understanding.

Sense, on the three accounts, has different origins, locating meaning either in internal (computational) models, generative models, or in embodied interaction itself. Narratives play a fundamental role in shaping the sense and revealing (or construing) the meaning of events involving agents, connecting their actions with values, principles, motivations and reasons. They are not necessary for causal explanations, but understanding and sense, without them, can be missed.



## SILVIU-CONSTANTIN FEDOROVICI

### Brouwer, Popper, and Lakatos on Meaning in Mathematics

Mathematical meaning has been grounded differently across philosophical accounts of mathematics. For Platonists, it lies in an autonomous realm of ideal entities; for formalists, in the rule-governed manipulation of symbols; and for intuitionists, in the constructive evidence of mental acts. This paper asks where the sense of mathematical knowledge should be located: in subjective construction, in linguistically articulated contents, or in the critical process through which mathematical claims become publicly assessable. Revisiting the overlooked Brouwer–Popper tension, as noted by Naraniecki (2015), I argue that the rigid opposition between subjective understanding and objective validity is misleading here. The main problem is not choosing between World 2 and World 3 in Popper’s classification (1968), but explaining how mathematical constructions become shareable, criticizable, and publicly valid without presupposing an autonomous realm of objective contents.

The argument proceeds in three steps. First, it reconstructs Brouwer’s perspective along the charitable interpretation proposed by Placek (1999). On this reading, Brouwer’s conception of mathematics need not be understood as merely solipsistic, since mathematical meaning is rooted in lived acts of construction rather than in a self-enclosed private sphere. Second, the paper turns to Popper’s theory of objective knowledge. Popper is right to insist that once mathematical conjectures, proofs, and problems are linguistically formulated, they acquire relative autonomy from any individual subject and generate consequences no single subject fully controls. However, this insight does not justify treating World 3 as the ultimate ground of mathematical meaning, or language as the primary medium through which meaning is constituted. Finally, the paper argues that Lakatos’s *Proofs and Refutations* (1976) not only mediates between Brouwer and Popper, but reconfigures the tension between them. Mathematics advances neither through pure intuition nor through autonomous objective contents, but through a continuous process of trial and error in which intuitions are articulated as conjectures and exposed to criticism, reformulation, and counterexample. Lakatos thus shows how intuitive construction and public criticism belong to a dynamic process through which mathematical meaning becomes intersubjectively established

## DOMINIKA DZIUROSZ-SERAFINOWICZ

### What Is the Sense of the Words If They Are Lies?

Bertrand Russel underlies that: “The essential business of language is to assert or deny facts” (*Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* by Ludwig Wittgenstein with an Introduction by Bertrand Russel, 1922, p. 8). Lying is a sheer deprivation of running this business, as this speech act introduces vagueness and foul air into tongue. Though we can announce the crises of meaning, and we live in the times of post-truth operating on various interpretations and narratives, it is still hard not to agree with Russel, and also with a clear thought of Józef Tischner: “The liar knows the truth, but he speaks differently – that’s why he lies (...). A lie presupposes, moreover, that the lied person does not know the truth, or at least he is not certain of it” (Tischner, 1998, p. 143). This presentation is to show that one of the reasons that we happen to drop into the emptiness of meaning is moral permission to lie, as even scientists keep repeating: “Lying is a common social phenomenon. It occurs regularly in various social contexts for a multitude of purposes” (*Lying and Truth-Telling in Children: From Concept to Action*, Fen Xu, Xuehua Bao, Genyue Fu, Victoria Talwar, Kang Lee). Is it, really? Moreover, the more we keep saying that “everybody lies”, the more people feel encouraged to be liars, as the effect of “Everybody does this, so do I”. Also, a bit strange is a differentiation on “antisocial” and “prosocial lies in nature”: “One type is the lies that violate moral rules as they are typically told to benefit oneself at the expense of others. As a result of the antisocial nature of this type of lie, it is universally discouraged by children’s caregivers and teachers from a very early age. The other type of lies is the one told with an intention to help, not harm, another individual (e.g., faking liking an undesirable gift in front of a gift-giver) and are thus prosocial in nature” (ib.). As



empirical research is always fragmentary, we can find already standpoints which suggest: “Previous research on altruistic lies has focused on their positive aftereffect (Iniguez et al., 2014), such as that they can promote trust (Levine & Schweitzer, 2014), or protect the receiver’s feeling and provide interpersonal support (Cheung et al., 2016; Dunbar et al., 2016; Ennis et al., 2008). However, such studies usually only examine the effects of altruistic lies on the recipients’ emotions or behaviors and ignored their effects on the liars themselves” (*Dark side of white lies: How altruistic lying impacts subsequent self-interested lying*, Cai, Shiyu & Wu, Song, 2023). For me being a liar introduced into my life an enormous amount of suffering which spread throughout many years. However, from the other side, I take also the position that not everybody “deserves” to be told the truth, as sometimes: 1) it takes courage to tell the truth and doing it endangers a truth-teller with rage of people, what indicates Michael Foucault in the concept of parrhesia, 2) getting the truth happens to be preceded by long years of enquiry, so morally the “owner” of this truth is the person who came to it, 3) other people can use your truth against you (hebr. *lashon hara*).

### ABBAS JIHAD

#### **Making Sense Without a Speaker? Generative AI and the Normative Conditions of Meaning**

When a text is coherent, grammatically precise, and contextually appropriate, does it thereby make sense? The rapid integration of generative AI into academic writing unsettles inherited assumptions about the relation between meaning and agency. Philosophical traditions, from Gottlob Frege’s distinction between sense and reference to Edmund Husserl’s analysis of intentional consciousness and Paul Ricoeur’s hermeneutics of interpretation, have linked sense either to semantic structure or to the lived act of intending and understanding. Across these traditions, sense has been treated as either a semantic mode of presentation or as the fulfilment of intentional acts within conscious life. Yet AI-generated discourse appears intelligible without presupposing a unified intending subject, thereby loosening the historical bond between meaning and speaker. The central thesis advanced here is that sense cannot be reduced to semantic coherence, rule-governed syntax, or contextual interpretability alone. Rather, sense is a normative achievement grounded in accountable agency. Generative AI makes visible what has often remained implicit: that meaning is not merely produced but owned. A text may satisfy syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic criteria while remaining partially detached from the responsibility that traditionally anchors discourse to a speaking, answerable subject. The purpose is twofold: first, to distinguish computational coherence from intentional sense; second, to articulate the minimal conditions under which discourse counts as genuinely meaningful. The argument proceeds in three stages. (1) A reconstruction of classical accounts of sense reveals a shared commitment to the unity of meaning and agency, even where this unity is differently theorised. (2) AI-mediated writing is analysed as a form of engineered intelligibility in which discursive order is generated independently of originating intention. (3) A normative account is defended according to which sense emerges only within practices of justification, recognition, and answerability that situate discourse within a shared space of reasons. The results show that AI-mediated texts function as limit cases for philosophical theories of meaning: they preserve semantic order while destabilising authorial ownership. This tension clarifies that intelligibility without answerability remains philosophically incomplete. By foregrounding responsibility as a constitutive condition of sense, the analysis develops a framework for assessing human–AI collaboration, redefining authorship, and safeguarding the ethical integrity of academic discourse in technologically mediated environments.



## MONICA OBOROCEANU

### ***Unde malum?* The Problem of Evil's Existence in Creation in Augustine's Thought**

How can evil exist if we affirm the existence of a good and omnipotent God? How can evil be defined if we accept that all creation is the good work of God? These questions lie at the heart of Augustine's reflection on the problem of evil, an issue that troubled him for many years. This paper seeks to examine how the concepts of evil and the goodness of creation are related in Augustine's thought, especially in book VII of his *Confessiones*, *De Genesi ad litteram* and books XI and XII of *De Civitate Dei*. Augustine followed several intellectual paths to reach his goal, moving from Manichaean dualism, which sees evil as an independent principle, to Neoplatonism, with its insistence on evil as the absence of good, and eventually to Christianity. The aim of this paper is to show, based on Augustine's texts, that the evil human will results not only in moral evil but also in natural evil, as suggested in the text of Genesis, where God tells Adam, after he sinned, that the earth will also be cursed because of his sin (Gen. 3:17). For this purpose, I will first explain how Augustine understands the nature of evil, and then show that, for him, even evils as hurricanes, storms, fire and so on are to be regarded as good, provided that our minds are rightly ordered, that is, purified. Augustine attempts to reconcile the Plotinian definition of evil with the Christian tradition, which locates evil in the human will. In doing so, Augustine places responsibility in our minds, suggesting that although evils appear to occur all around us, it depends on us how we choose to perceive them. If we have a mind oriented toward the goodness of God, we will see everything as good, because we are considering the totality of things rather than their individual parts. In conclusion, we will see that although Augustine's solution attempts to reconcile the existence of evil with the omnipotence of God and his benevolent care for creation, his answer does not seem to entirely resolve the problem.

## NICU PURCEL

### **The Peacock's Feather: A Medieval Theory of the Plurality of Meaning**

In this lecture, I intend to explore the problem of the plurality of meaning in the work of John Scottus Eriugena, starting from the "peacock's feather" metaphor in *Periphyseon* and the relationship it establishes between Scripture and reality. The thesis put forward is that, for Eriugena, the multiplicity of interpretations should be understood neither as a mere exegetical procedure nor as an effect of the indeterminacy of religious language, but rather as an expression of an ontology of the intelligible. The plurality of meanings is legitimate because reality itself is offered to knowledge in a stratified manner, according to an order of procession, manifestation, and return.

Within this framework, scriptural language does not function univocally: it resorts to translations, figures, and transfers of meaning not to compensate for an accidental insufficiency of expression, but because its object exceeds the direct access of the intellect. Thus, the literal sense remains necessary but insufficient. Interpretation does not consist in the opposition between the literal and the figurative, but in a disciplined movement of the intellect between distinct levels of intelligibility.

From this perspective, Eriugenian exegesis presupposes a structural correspondence between the order of the text and the order of the real: Scripture is intelligible in a plural way because reality itself is multi-layered. I will first seek to reconstruct the foundations of this conception in *Periphyseon*, emphasizing the relationship between scriptural language, *theophany*, and the causal order of nature. Secondly, I will propose a situating of this theory within the context of early medieval thought, at the intersection of the Patristic tradition, Christian Neoplatonism, and the reflection on the relationship between authority and reason.

Finally, I will suggest the contemporary philosophical relevance of this position through a dialogue with modern hermeneutics, particularly with Ricoeur and Gadamer. The aim is to recover a model of meaning capable of avoiding both literalist reduction and the relativistic drift of interpretation.



## DRAGOS CĂTĂLIN BUTUZEA

### **The Labyrinth of Reasonableness: Montaigne’s Stylistic Strategy**

*The Labyrinth of Reasonableness: Montaigne’s Stylistic Strategy* explores the intricate connection between Michel de Montaigne’s fragmented stylistic choices and his broader philosophical intent. The paper’s primary purpose is to demonstrate that the apparent structural disorder of the *Essays* is not a methodological failure but a deliberate strategy of “reasonableness” designed to foster intellectual autonomy. This inquiry focuses on how the transition from early political and diplomatic aims to the mature, introspective focus of Book III allowed the “self” to become the work’s exclusive center.

The central thesis argues that Montaigne’s “labyrinthine” style—characterized by circular dialectics, intertextual bricolage, and a rejection of linear argument—serves as a humanist alternative to the rigid rationalism that later defined modernity. By prioritizing the fluid “passage” of thought over dogmatic finality, the text becomes an ontological space where the subject is continuously constructed through the act of writing.

The argumentative unfolding begins by analyzing the evolution of the *Essays*’ structure, noting how the later chapters escape all rigid grids to follow the contingent movements of the mind. It then examines Montaigne’s “new language,” which utilizes metaphors and digressions to undermine traditional authority and capture a subjective, contingent reality. Drawing on the distinction between Montaigne’s “reasonableness” and Cartesian rationalism, the paper contrasts the former’s acceptance of bodily experience and ambiguity with the latter’s pursuit of geometric certainty. Finally, the study investigates the “contract of good faith” between the author and the reader. By presenting himself “against the grain” (*à contre-poil*) as a negative example rather than a moral authority, Montaigne forces the reader to move from passive consumption to an active “experience of risk,” using the text as a laboratory to test their own judgment and internal health.

## MARTINA PROPERZI

### **Making Sense of Ourselves: Minimality and Normativity in Self-Experience**

In this paper, I will explore the connection between two aspects of self-experience: the aspect of minimality or pre-reflectivity and the aspect of normativity. I will offer a critical discussion of Dan Zahavi’s influential compatibilistic solution and introduce the concept of “boundary norm.” I will argue that this novel concept helps us move beyond the main limitation of compatibilism, which consists in arguing for the normative neutrality of the minimal or pre-reflective self. Boundary norms are standards of stability and optimality that shape the pre-reflective experience of oneself through the delineation of boundaries that act as barriers and thresholds to close and open one’s personal space. Drawing from case studies of phantom limb experience and prosthesis use, I will argue for the pivotal role of affording interactions and pragmatic context in the stabilization and optimal attunement of the prereflective or minimal self.

## MANUELA LUCHETTA

### **Cognitive Flexibility and the Reorganization of Sense: An Ecological-Enactive Reading of Active Inference**

This paper investigates cognitive flexibility as a philosophical problem of sense-making. In psychology, cognitive flexibility has often been operationalized through set-shifting paradigms, which measure the capacity to move between rules, tasks, or mental sets. While methodologically productive, this approach does not capture the broader phenomenon of flexibility across perception, categorization, language, problem-solving, and creative action. The paper therefore asks how cognitive flexibility should be understood if it is treated not as a discrete executive function, but as a systemic property of situated cognition. To address this question, I bring together active inference and ecological-enactive approaches to sense-making. Active inference provides a formal account of how organisms regulate perception and



action under uncertainty, while ecological-enactive approaches emphasize that cognition is always embedded in an embodied relation to a world of affordances, concerns, and practical significance. Interpreted in this way, active inference need not entail a strongly internalist view of cognition: the generative model can be understood not as a mental copy of the world, but as an action-guiding structure that supports the regulation of organism–environment coupling. The central proposal is that cognitive flexibility should be understood as the situated capacity to reorganize sense. On this view, flexibility is neither merely the ability to switch responses nor simply the general capacity to adapt. Rather, it is the emergent capacity through which an agent reconfigures the practical significance of a situation when an established organization no longer suffices. Such reorganization involves the coordinated transformation of attention, salience, expectation, action possibilities, and motivational orientation. The paper argues that this account contributes to both cognitive science and philosophy. For cognitive science, it offers a non-reductive account of flexibility that preserves the formal resources of active inference while avoiding its strongly internalist interpretation. For philosophy, it reframes the question of “what makes sense?” as a problem of how embodied agents maintain and transform their meaningful relation to a changing world.

### ASHA XAVIER

#### **Making Sense through Expression: Gesture and the Genesis of Sense in Merleau-Ponty**

What does it mean for something to make sense? Traditional philosophical accounts often treat sense as the outcome of intellectual processes or linguistic signification, presupposing a subject who constitutes meaning through reflective or conceptual acts. In contrast, Maurice Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology offers a radical rethinking of sense as ‘embodied meaning-making’. For Merleau-Ponty, sense originates in body’s expressive capacities- it is the gesture of the *lived body*. A gesture is not an external sign pointing to a pre-existing inner meaning, but the very movement through which sense comes into being. In *Phenomenology of Perception*, Merleau-Ponty shows that gesture is the visible embodiment of thought, a pre-reflective *I mean* through which meaning is *enacted*.

The first part of this paper examines Merleau-Ponty’s notion of ‘expression’. Expression does not simply communicate an already formed meaning; rather, expression is the very process through which sense comes into being. Bodily gestures are not mere vehicles for transmitting inner content, but the original site where meaning emerges. The ‘expressive body’ establishes meaningful relations with the world through its perceptual and motor capacities, allowing sense to arise within embodied engagement itself. Sense, therefore, is not imposed by a constituting subject nor reducible to objective structures- it emerges from the dynamic reciprocity between body and world.

This paper further attempts to address the question of “how gesture becomes a non-representational account of sense-making” by arguing that sense-making is a pre-reflective process grounded in the expressive and gestural structures of the body. By locating the genesis of sense in expression, Merleau-Ponty dissolves the traditional dichotomy between meaning and its external sign. In doing so, he reconceives sense as an operative, living process- an ongoing creation that unfolds through our being-in-the-world. Such a perspective not only redefines meaning beyond representational and intellectualist paradigms but also invites a renewed understanding of expression as the very locus of sense.

### FLORINICA-CARMEN CIORANU

#### **Intermodal Ambiguity and the Unity of Sense in Perceptual Experience**

This paper examines intermodal ambiguity as a philosophical problem concerning the constitution of perceptual sense. Its starting point is the definition of intermodal perception proposed by Bahrck and Hollich, namely the perception of unitary objects or events that make information available to more than one sense. This definition already raises the central question of the paper: how can perception present us with unified objects, bodies, voices, gestures, and situations, if perceptual experience depends on the integration of heterogeneous visual, auditory, tactile, and proprioceptive information?



The paper is situated at the intersection of empirical research on multisensory integration and philosophical debates on the unity of consciousness, embodiment, and perceptual realism. In psychology and cognitive neuroscience, authors such as Welch and Warren, Ernst and Bühlhoff, Körding et al., Vatakis and Spence, Lalanne and Lorenceau, and Bolognini, Russo and Vallar have shown that perception does not simply add separate sensory inputs. It weighs them according to reliability, temporal and spatial proximity, causal probability, semantic congruence, and contextual expectations. Classic cases such as the McGurk effect, the ventriloquist effect, and the rubber hand illusion show that perceptual experience can remain unified even when sensory information is partially discordant. These cases do not merely reveal perceptual error. They show how the perceptual system attempts to stabilize a coherent scene under conditions of ambiguity.

The philosophical framework of the paper draws on Bennett and Hill's discussion of sensory integration and the unity of consciousness, Bayne's work on the unity of conscious experience, de Vignemont's account of multimodal unity, and O'Callaghan's analysis of the multisensory character of perception. These approaches are brought into dialogue with phenomenological and embodied accounts of perception, especially Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, Gallagher's *How the Body Shapes the Mind*, Noë's *Action in Perception*, and Wiese's account of experienced wholeness in relation to Gestalt theory and predictive processing.

Against radical interpretations that move from perceptual ambiguity to scepticism, simulation hypotheses, or the idea that perceived reality is merely mental, the paper defends a more modest realist position. Intermodal ambiguity does not prove that perception is fundamentally deceptive. It shows that our access to the world is mediated, embodied, selective, and revisable. The paper argues that ambiguity has epistemic relevance because it makes visible the processes through which salience, evidence, and perceptual unity are stabilized. The unity of perceptual sense is therefore not the absence of ambiguity, but the provisional stabilization of a world that can be perceived, understood, acted upon, corrected, and shared.

**CRISTINA DUMITRU**

### **Affectivity and Sense-Making**

My presentation will ask the question of “what makes sense?” from a phenomenological perspective, taking affectivity as its main lead. Alongside what is considered Heidegger's first thinking phase (the years between *Sein und Zeit* and *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik*), I will explore the relationship between sense-making and some of the well-known Heideggerian *Grundstimmungen*. In so doing, I will highlight multiple ways in which one can hear the “sense” at play: the ontic experience of the fear or, similarly, of the becoming bored by something (*Gelangweiltwerden von etwas*) differs from those ontological affects – like *Angst* or profound boredom (*tiefe Langweile*). Hence, my task is not only to explain the ontological difference and its implications, highlighting different meanings of “sense”, but furthermore, to speak about the deeper conceptual apparatus at play in the Heideggerian thinking. How do things make sense to us in fear, and how does this sense-making shift when experiencing other ontic affects, like becoming alarmed (*Erschrecken*) or feeling dread (*Grauen*)? Adopting this phenomenological point of view brings with itself certain implications which are already at work in Heidegger's *magnus opus*. Analyzing these implications will help us along the way of better formulating the question of sense-making. For example: how is affectivity intertwined with spatiality and how do they work together in the phenomenon of fear. Furthermore, what are the limits of such sense-making when one goes from a world-directed affect (fear) to one which, although ontologically charged, is not directed towards the world, but towards *Dasein* as such (*Angst*)? Hence, we cannot ignore the crucial role played by temporality in the constitution of sense and in the affective experience. If it is somewhat self-evident that this is how one is to approach the issue at hand in *Sein und Zeit*, we might need to take a step back



and see if the ontological value of boredom can be phrased in these exact same terms. Do things make sense to us in the same way in the ontic experience of boredom as they do in that of fear?

## ILEANA CORNEA-LUCA

### **Building up Literal Hermeneutics of the Scriptures. In search of a Better-Defined Meaning**

At the beginning of the fourteenth century, the Franciscan Nicholas of Lyra had to face the problem of the conversion of Jews. At the time, not only was the ongoing refusal of Jews to accept the Christian truth an issue for many clerics and scholars, Lyra included, but also the alleged blasphemies from the *Talmud* – the Jewish oral law – were believed by the Christians to spread across the society. It was a threat for the Christian perspective on the Scriptures and it raised the question of the legitimacy of the *Old Testament*, especially when it came to the prophecies and the Christological argument. How could Jews, such clever and learned men in *Scriptures*, persist in their error? Lyra asked himself. Therefore, he proposed a new reading of the *Old Testament*, resorting to the Jewish rabbinic texts, especially Rashi's, as he tried hard to prove that it was possible to know that Jesus was the Messiah even if the Scriptures were read literally. To explain the “obduracy” of Jews he made use of Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*.

The present communication aims to analyse the way Nicholas of Lyra used philosophical theories and rabbinic literature in order to invest sense into his own concept of the hermeneutics of the Scriptures. In this respect it will aim to explore through a study case how the Franciscan scholar made acquaintance with Rashi's works, how he used them in his work, *Postilla litteralis super totam Bibliam*, and what the ethical implications arisen therefrom were.

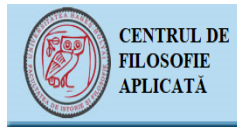
## GABRIEL ANDRÉS MOLERO

### **Making Sense: Marsilius of Inghen on Contradictory Concepts**

In the context of medieval logic, it has been argued that concepts like “chimera” were, for most authors, contradictory due to the fact that it combined several essences at the same time, thus breaking the principle of non-contradiction. This analysis has been attributed as well to Marsilius of Inghen, a 14th-century philosopher active mainly in Paris, and later in Heidelberg – whose university he helped to establish –. While there is some truth behind this intuition (namely, that a composition in the mind can produce a contradiction), this account contains one fundamental imprecision: the problem is not the combination of different essences; rather, it is the nominal definition *per se*, for Marsilius defined “chimera” primarily as a composite made of *impossibles* (*Qq. Metaph. IV, 13*). Such a definition is not just a mental combination that went wrong: it is an oxymoron.

Yet “chimera” has signification, and when I think of it, I do not think of other contradictions, such as “neighing man”. “Chimera” cannot have supposition – and therefore no ampliation –, but it still has a concept that we can use. This, I suggest, can be done through appellation theory, which might be more suitable for dealing with “chimera-like” cases. More specifically, Marsilius distinguished between appellation to the formal significate of a term – or formal appellation –, and appellation to the concept of a term (*appellatio rationis*). Two features make this theory compelling to us: first, appellation is tensed in the same way supposition and ampliation are, and this includes the tense of *imaginability*. Second, a term appellates to its concept, under Marsilius' account, only when placed after an intentional verb. Intentional verbs include such as *to think*, *to desire*, *to imagine*, *to signify*, and so on.

Therefore, in this presentation, I will proceed in the following way: first, I will provide an overview of Marsilius' account of contradictory complex concepts. Second, I will insert these concepts under Marsilius' broader account of signification. Third, I will explain how signification interacts with appellation theory, and more specifically with appellation to the concept of a term, and how the latter could properly address these contradictory, yet somehow meaningful terms.



## MARC ZAPATA

### φλυαρία and the Moral Dimension of True Discourse: On the Ethics of Logos in Plato

This paper examines the Platonic term φλυαρία (phlyaria) — standardly rendered as “nonsense,” “idle talk,” or “babbling” — as a philosophically significant concept that reveals the moral stakes of engaging in genuine discourse. While the term has been largely treated as a polemical device or mere rhetorical colour in the secondary literature, I argue that a systematic reading of its occurrences across the Platonic corpus discloses a coherent and philosophically substantial use: φλυαρία names not simply false or excessive speech, but the specific failure of discourse that has abandoned the effort to be true.

The paper proceeds in three steps. First, I establish the lexical and distributional profile of φλυαρία across the corpus, noting its concentration in dialogues where the boundary between philosophy and sophistry is explicitly at stake: the *Gorgias* (seven occurrences), the *Republic* (four occurrences), the *Apology*, the *Phaedo*, the *Theaetetus*, the *Symposium*, the *Parmenides*, and the *Cratylus*, among others. This distribution is not accidental: the term clusters precisely where Plato is most concerned with the conditions of legitimate speech.

Second, I analyse the two rhetorically marked passages that most clearly reveal the moral dimension of the concept: *Apology* 19c, where the expression “φλυαρίαν φλυαροῦντα” identifies the Aristophanic caricature of Socrates as the paradigm of discursive vacuity; and *Theaetetus* 162a, where φλυαρία is coupled with the striking image of ὑποκατακλινόμενοι ὑμῖν αὐτοῖς — those who collapse under their own weight in argument — making explicit that φλυαρία is not merely an intellectual failure but a moral one: the failure of those who will not sustain the effort that truth demands.

Third, I argue that φλυαρία functions in Plato as the negative pole of a moral-epistemological axis, the opposite not simply of ἀλήθεια (truth) but of the sustained effort — the philosophical πόνος — required to produce discourse genuinely anchored in reality. In this sense, the term contributes to Plato's broader account of the ethics of logos: speaking truly is not merely a cognitive achievement but a moral commitment.

## SIMONA ALBOI

### Between the Feed and the Common World: The Fragmentation of Sense in Digital Political Life

Over the past years, political life has increasingly unfolded within digitally mediated environments structured by algorithms, platforms, and continuous flows of information. Social media feeds personalize access to different narratives, shaping not only what individuals encounter but also how they interpret political reality. This development raises a philosophical problem concerning the production and sharing of sense: how can political events acquire common meaning in a public sphere that is increasingly fragmented into individualized informational worlds?

This paper explores the tension between the classical philosophical idea of a shared world of meaning and the contemporary experience of digitally mediated political reality. Drawing on Hannah Arendt's concept of the *common world*, understood as the space where plural perspectives encounter one another and where political meaning emerges through interaction, the paper argues that the architecture of digital platforms destabilizes the conditions necessary for such shared interpretation.

The central thesis is that the contemporary digital public sphere alters the process through which sense is produced in political life. Instead of being negotiated within a common horizon of experience, meaning increasingly emerges within algorithmically reinforced communities that interpret events through internally coherent but mutually incompatible narratives. In this context, political discourse becomes shaped by emotional resonance, symbolic performances, and the logic of visibility characteristic of the digital attention economy.



The paper approaches this problem through a philosophical framework that brings together the reflections of Hannah Arendt, Guy Debord, and Jean Baudrillard on representation, public space, and the transformation of political experience. It further examines how digital media infrastructures reshape the circulation and stabilization of political narratives. These dynamics are illustrated through a brief discussion of the Romanian presidential elections of 2024–2025, a political episode that revealed how competing interpretations of the same events can coexist within parallel digital environments. Understanding this phenomenon as a crisis of sense allows us to reconsider the philosophical stakes of contemporary political communication and raises the question of how a shared horizon of meaning might still be reconstructed in digitally mediated societies.

### ALEXANDRA-ANDRA MOLDOVAN

#### **Identity and Validation in the Digital Age: An Interdisciplinary Analysis of the Causes and Effects of Social Media Behavior on Self-Construction**

The paper explores, within the context of new forms of addiction made possible by computers and the internet, the phenomenon of the obsessive-compulsive search for digital validation. Starting from an integrative approach—combining cognitive-behavioral, psychopathological, and socio-cultural perspectives—the study examines how digitally mediated interactions, evaluated through indicators of social recognition such as “likes” or views, influence the process of identity construction and emotional self-regulation. The analysis includes neurobiological mechanisms, such as the role of the dopaminergic system, as well as emerging psychological effects, including anxiety, depression, sleep disturbances, and impairments in executive functioning. Through a series of applied case studies—adolescents, influencers, and hyperconnected professionals—the paper investigates the interaction between individual predispositions, including attachment patterns and emotional vulnerabilities, and the systemic shortcomings of the sociotechnological environment. The findings highlight the need for an interdisciplinary approach integrating clinical interventions, educational policies, and regulations concerning the design of digital platforms, with the aim of supporting mental health and identity coherence in the age of hyperconnectivity.

### LAVINIA CHERELUC (BRATU)

#### **From Symbol Grounding to Vector Grounding: Sense, Reference and Informational Anchoring in Large Language Models**

Recent debates about large language models (LLMs) have revived a classical philosophical problem: how linguistic expressions acquire meaning and reference. Traditionally framed as the Symbol Grounding Problem, this issue concerns the relation between formal symbol manipulation and genuine semantic content. With the rise of neural language models based on distributed representations, the problem has been reformulated as the Vector Grounding Problem, in which the basic units of meaning are high-dimensional embeddings learned from textual data.

This paper argues that the remarkable linguistic performance of LLMs can be explained through a form of informational grounding in the human cultural corpus. Large-scale textual infrastructures—digital archives, scientific literature, institutional records, and everyday discourse—provide statistical constraints that allow models to generate coherent and contextually appropriate utterances. In this sense, the Internet and related textual repositories function as an epistemic substitute for reality, enabling reliable informational outputs without direct perceptual or causal contact with the world.

However, this form of grounding differs fundamentally from the strong notion of semantic anchoring, traditionally required for genuine understanding. While informational grounding can support functional adequacy and pragmatic competence, it lacks the causal interaction, intentionality and even epistemic normativity associated with human cognition. The paper therefore proposes a conceptual distinction



between epistemic grounding (based on informational structures) and ontological grounding (based on perceptual and agentive interaction with the world).

By clarifying this distinction, the paper contributes to contemporary discussions about the nature of meaning in artificial systems and offers a philosophical framework for evaluating claims about “understanding” in large language models.

## MATT PARSONS

### An Error Theory of Meaning in Life

The philosopher Joshua Seachris claims that human persons are meaning-seeking beings, an important aspect of which is the need to make sense of their lives, also considered to be an important constituent of possessing meaning in life (Seachris, 2024, p. 5). In this paper, I claim that it is possible to construct an error theory of meaning in life that undermines such attempts to make sense of life, analogous to J. L. Mackie's moral error theory (1977). Mackie purports that when human agents make judgments about right and wrong, they express beliefs that refer to objective moral facts when no such reality in fact exists, making all their statements untrue and morality an illusion (Mackie, 1977; Joyce, 2024). I will construct a meaning in life error theory analogous to Mackie's moral error theory, suggesting that meaning in life may also be an illusion.

I then make two further claims. Firstly, that naturalism, broadly defined as claiming that the only existing entities are those acknowledged by the ‘hypothetically completed empirical sciences’, these scientific methods are the only fully legitimate method of securing knowledge of these entities, and that all existing things have come into being through evolutionary processes (Moser & Yandell, 2014, pp. 3-23), is ill-suited to ground a robust notion of meaning in life. Secondly, that theism, defined as the idea that ‘an omniscient, personal God’ who possesses the attributes of being ‘all powerful, all knowing, all loving’ both ‘exists and is responsible for the universe's existence’ (Seachris, 2024, p. 6), provides a more plausible account of how human agents can make sense of their lives and find meaning in life.

## REEM ALKHATTAB

### From Conflict to Coexistence: Mechanisms for Sustainable Peace

This study explores the concept of just peacebuilding in post-war contexts, examining the mechanisms and conditions necessary to establish sustainable peace grounded in justice and reconciliation. Moving beyond a narrow focus on the cessation of armed conflict, the discussion emphasizes the reconstruction of social relations, the promotion of human security, and the creation of legitimate institutions capable of addressing grievances fairly. The research highlights that peace is not a neutral process; rather, it requires active engagement from both state and non-state actors, including civil society, grassroots movements, and international organizations. These actors play complementary roles in promoting dialogue, fostering reconciliation, and strengthening the social fabric fractured by war. The analysis underscores the centrality of negotiation and peace agreements grounded in mutual commitment, with justice and fairness as guiding principles. Without genuine political will and inclusive participation, agreements risk becoming fragile truces vulnerable to collapse. Equally important, the study stresses that reconciliation entails a delicate balance between justice and compromise, as lasting stability often requires concessions that transcend unresolved historical grievances.

Ultimately, the paper argues that sustainable peace cannot be reduced to temporary settlements or imposed arrangements. Instead, it must be rooted in ethical principles, shared responsibility, and institutional frameworks that guarantee accountability, fairness, and respect for human dignity. Peacebuilding, therefore, emerges as a dynamic and long-term process that integrates justice, reconciliation, and human development to achieve genuine stability after war.