

The Prospects of Community BETWEEN FACTS AND VALUES

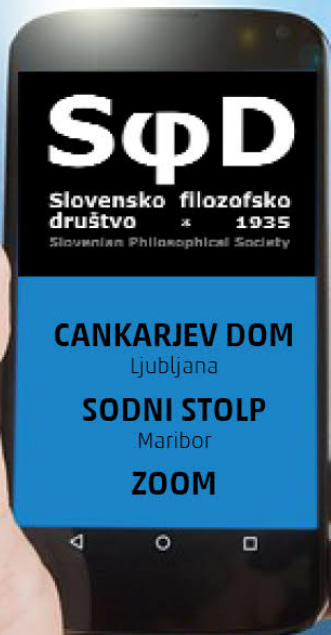
2. MEDNARODNA KONFERENCA SFD

15. - 17. december 2022

Ljubljana, Maribor



ALMA MATER
EUROPAEA
— FAKULTETA ZA HUMANISTIČNI ŠTUDIJ —
INSTITUTUM STUDIORUM HUMANITATIS, LUBLJANA



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15.-17. december

PERSPEKTIVE SKUPNOSTI: O dejstvih in vrednotah

Mednarodna konferenca »Perspektive skupnosti: O dejstvih in vrednotah« se tematsko nanaša na problem vrednot skupnosti in prihodnosti sodobne družbe, ki se vse bolj kažeta kot ključni problemski žarišči v obdobju, ki ga zaznamujejo številne krize.

Na konferenci se predstavljajo številni ugledni filozofi, sociologi in politični teoretiki. Zadnji dan bo namenjen študentskim predavateljem iz različnih slovenskih institucij.

Konferenca poteka v Sodnem stolpu (Maribor), Kosovelovi dvorani Cankarjevega doma (Ljubljana) in v prostorih Založbe ISH v Ljubljani.

Konferenco soorganizirajo Slovensko filozofsko društvo, Alma Mater Europaea – Institutum Studiorum Humanitatis in Inštitut za filozofske študije ZRS Koper ob sodelovanju Mariborske knjižnice in Cankarjevega doma.



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Gašper Pirc
Luka Trebežnik
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ORGANIZACIJSKI ODBOR
Gaja Lukacs Čufer
Igor Černe
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December 15-17

THE PERSPECTIVES OF COMMUNITY: Between Facts and Values

The international conference "The Prospects of Community: Between Facts and Values" is thematically focused on the questions about the state of values in community and the future of modern society which are ever more considered as some of the critical issues in the time, marked by several crises.

The conference features prominent philosophers, sociologists, and political scientists. The final day of the conference is dedicated to student presenters from various Slovenian institutions.

The conference takes place in Sodni stolp (Maribor), Cankarjev dom - Kosovelova dvorana, and in the premises of the AMEU-ISH publishing house.

The conference is organized by the Slovensko filozofsko društvo, Alma Mater Europaea – Institutum Studiorum Humanitatis and Inštitut za filozofske študije ZRS Koper with the support from Mariborska knjižnica and Cankarjev dom.

PROGRAM COMMITTEE

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CONFERENCE PROGRAM/KONFEREČNI PROGRAM

Thursday, December 15, 2022 (Sodni stolp, Maribor) / Četrtek, 15. december 2022 (Sodni stolp, Maribor)

15.30 Opening speeches/Uvodni nagovori
16.15 Gašper Pirc (AMEU-ISH, ZRS Koper)
16.45 Anja Hellmuth Kramberger (Univerza v Ljubljani, AMEU-ISH)
17.15 Luka Trebežnik (ZRS Koper, AMEU-ISH)
17.45 Friderik Klampfer (Univerza v Mariboru)
18.30 Dragan Prole (Univerzitet u Novom Sadu)

Friday, December 16, 2022 (Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana) / Petek, 16. december 2022 (Cankarjev dom, Ljubljana)

10.00 Opening of the conference/Otvoritev konference
10.15 Bojan Žalec (Univerza v Ljubljani)
10.45 Aljoša Kravanja (Univerza v Ljubljani)
11.15 Sergej Seitz (Universität Wien)
11.45 Vojko Strahovnik (Univerza v Ljubljani)
12.30 Nadja Furlan Štante (ZRS Koper)

13.15 Lunch break/Odmor za kosilo

15.00 Ciprian Bogdan (Babeş-Bolyai University)
15.30 Boshko Karadjov (Center for Contemporary Politics)
16.00 Jeffrey Robbins (Lebanon Valley College)
16.30 Reingard Spanning (Universität Innsbruck)

17.15 Rastko Močnik (Fakultet za medije i komunikacije)
18.00 Alenka Zupančič (ZRC SAZU, European Graduate School)
19.00 Ignaas Devisch (Ghent University, Itinera Institute)



POVZETKI/ABSTRACTS

Gašper Pirc: Thematic Address – The Fate of the Individual and the Normative Background of Society in the 21st Century

At present, we live in a society crucially characterized by a two-year crisis over COVID-19 and the current Russian invasion of Ukraine, which also points to the consequences of an unfinished transition in the post-binary world of the 20th century and a possible economic crisis in under the aegis of contemporary social pathologies. Such social pathologies establish independent normative focus with their ideological force and at the same time affect the standards of knowledge in society. It is worth asking whether it is the individual's helplessness in times of crisis the result of discourses that establish tendencies of knowledge in society and processes that have more to do with non-transparency of values and lack of responsibility, community sense and recognition of expertise than related to the component of why? Maybe there is an answer that connects both sides of inquiry. Certainly, understanding the connection between the individual and social dimensions of cognitive pathology and social suffering require extremely complex and at the same time relevant research that calls for empirical confirmation of references. It however seems that in the times of a changing, increasingly digitized society, we may very well need a new understanding of its inherent normative framework.

Anja Hellmuth Kramberger: Collective Memory, Culture of Remembrance and Early Societies

The concept of collective memory, going back on Maurice Halbwachs, can be understood in a broad sense as a collection of memories and knowledge of a specific social group whereby the memory itself is set up by individual social frameworks. Among these frameworks space, places and landscapes, time, communicative practices as rituals and festivities as well as objects play a significant role. As part of the collective memory is regarded, following the approach of Aleida and Jan Assmann, the cultural memory, which includes inter alia material legacies and written records that can reach far back into the human past. Furthermore, in early societies burial places in particular represent a part of the culture of remembrance. In our presentation, we want to focus on some manifestations that are connected with the formation of traditions, references to the past and the formation of identity and represent a part of our collective memory.

Luka Trebežnik: Reflections on the absent ground of community

The presentation will be devoted to reflections on absence and community, it will argue that contemporary community must be constituted as an articulation of absence. Therefore, community will be regarded primarily in a post-metaphysical contexts, as an overcoming of traditional formulations that perceive community as a full presence that poseses fully present and determined foundation (common race, blood, soil, etc.). The paper will highlight the possibilities of a different ways of thinking of community as sharing, exposure, and sense. In this context, it will focus on the constitutive character of lack, trace, void, wound, writing... and point to the possibilities of the coming community.



POVZETKI/ABSTRACTS

Jernej Kaluža: Hume's Empiricism versus Kant's Critical Philosophy (in the Times of Artificial Intelligence and Attention Economy)

The presentation exposes how is one of the most fundamental oppositions in the history of modern philosophy – the opposition between Hume's empiricism and Kant's critical philosophy – embedded in today's debates on the impact of artificial intelligence (in particular algorithmic selection of content) on human society. In simplified terms, Hume's empiricism - with its deduction of subjectivity to the process of habituation - corresponds to the functioning of recommending algorithms. In contrast, Kant's ideal of autonomous subjectivity corresponds to the ideals underlying today's ethical attempts at the regulation of artificial intelligence. According to such ethics, the use of empirical data endangers human: our attention is caught by sensationalist content and our autonomy is replaced by the agency of machinic intelligence. However, as argued in the article, such ethical positioning also reproduces the gap between empirical reality and normative principles, which is why transcendental (Kantian) ethics should be supplemented with immanent and practical Humean reasoning.

Friderik Klampfer: Political ignorance is endemic, but should we really care?

The paper takes issue with the so-called thesis of Rational Irrationality, the view that it is often practically rational, i.e., in our individual self-interest, to be epistemically irrational. A popular example is ignorance about political issues – since the costs of mistaken political beliefs that any single individual (citizen, voter) personally bears are relatively small compared to the costs for him or her of acquiring true, or justified, political beliefs, it's not worth trying to correct them. Contrary to RI, it is argued that (i) political ignorance is rarely, if ever, rationally justified all things considered; (ii) insofar as being ignorant of political issues is prudentially rational at all, its rationality is conditional on the existent, truth-indifferent structure of incentives; and (iii) the improvement of our currently deficient epistemic practices requires both fostering epistemic vigilance and redesigning the way we do, and communicate about, politics.

In conclusion, the normative implications of widespread political ignorance are briefly discussed. Doesn't the persistence of irrational voting behavior show democracy, the rule of the (ignorant) many, flawed beyond repair and clearly inferior to a Platonian type of epistocracy, the rule of the (knowledgeable) few? The solution to the problem of epistemic deficiency of (the agents of) democracy is, once again, not less democracy, but more epistemic and civic empowerment.



POVZETKI/ABSTRACTS

Dragan Prole: Three Negations of Violence

In accordance with the three different concepts of negation, according to Etienne Balibar, we also have three versions of confronting violence. In this contribution, we will examine Kafka's work with regard to the possibilities of concretizing the idea of different ways of confronting violence. Kafka's nonviolence is prepared by strategies of deconstruction, demystification. Above all, what is clarified is the opening of space for mediation. Namely, violence always works "by abbreviated procedure". As a rule, some of the instances on the complex path of law enforcement - violation of the law - investigative procedure - verdict - appeal - execution of the sentence were missing. Nonviolence, by its very concept, is a call for the restoration of institutions, for the re-establishment of rules, for the re-imagining of human rights. Their role is precisely to remove the non-existent aura of eternity and untouchability from the phenomenon of violence, and thus enable possible resistance to violence through non-violence.

Bojan Žalec: The Malaise of Democracy, Alienation, and Capitalism: Resonance, Community and the Common Good in the Technological Age

The author presents the understanding of politics and democracy in terms of Rosa's theory of resonance. A key moment of this understanding is the common good as a regulative idea of politics. True democracy is not the mere pursuit of interests, but the creation and realization of the common good. This can only be achieved through resonance between citizens, which creates a community. Therefore, true democracy presupposes the existence of a community formed by citizens. The essence of the current crisis of democracy lies precisely in the lack of resonance or in alienation between citizens and between citizens and politics. Among the negative factors of resonance, the author points out capitalism and some changes in the public and the lifeworld, which are the result of modern technology. To revive democracy, it will be necessary to create a society of resonance. Only those social agents who will act in the direction of cultivating resonance and reducing its negative factors will be able to truly contribute to solving the crisis of democracy.

Aljoša Kravanja: Enacting Virtue

Suppose an agent does something virtuous because she wants to appear virtuous. Molly helps an elderly person cross the street because she wants to impress her friend Jane. Is there something wrong about Molly's reasons for the action? Is it bad she helps because she wants to appear helpful? Consider another example. In Tolstoy's Anna Karenina, a young nobleman Vronsky wants to impress Anna by giving money to a recently widowed woman. Are his reasons for help morally objectionable? The paper will consider some answers as to why doing virtuous things for the sake of appearing virtuous may be considered morally suspect.



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Vojko Strahovnik: The Ethics of Belief and Disagreement

The English mathematician and philosopher William K. Clifford with his famous essay bearing the very title "The Ethics of Belief" is usually regarded as one of the originators of the discussion on the ethics of belief. In the paper, Clifford asks when we are justified in accepting (or continue holding) a particular belief given the evidence we have for it. As epistemic agents, we should refrain from forming beliefs so on the basis of insufficient evidence. Evidence can, in part, be insufficient when we choose not to entertain certain pieces of evidence relevant to our beliefs, including the fact that many others do not agree with the beliefs in question. An interesting problem arises concerning this. Why is it that in some cases of disagreement, the mere awareness that rational people like us disagree with us diminishes our confidence in our beliefs or even makes us abandon them altogether? And why, in some other cases, including philosophical, moral, and political disagreements, do we tend to cling to our beliefs in the face of such disagreement? In the paper, I propose a view that bases our beliefs on the so-called experiential rationality and demonstrate how it addresses the disagreement problem.

Nadja Furlan Štante: New Humanology: Between Digitalisation and Ecological Devastation

We live in an age of uncertainty, between ecological devastation and on the threshold of a new world of digital culture that demands new responses to our increasingly uncertain way of being in the world. The combined challenge of unprecedented environmental changes and a more intensive involvement with digital technologies in our cultures and everyday lives calls for a common and technologically well-informed care for creation and "new humanology" (Epstein) for a better future for us and other inhabitants of our planet.

The ecological crisis is a complex challenge that encompasses economics, sociology, ethics, values, religion, (geo)politics, digital technologies, and, finally, the lifestyle choices of individuals. All this requires a thorough consideration on the individual personal level as well as on religious and societal levels. The ecological crisis, like the health crisis we are experiencing in the face of the COVID -19 pandemic, is, consequently, a crisis of values. The COVID -19 pandemic has revealed deep social inequalities, conceptual inadequacies, and structural shortcomings in the way our civilization is organized. However, the pandemic and the reality of the deep crises in which we live, also present an opportunity to address the deep structural, environmental, and social challenges that we have brought with us into the third decade of the new millennium. In this context, we might understand the pandemic crisis in which we live as an opportunity to reflect on our broken relationship (towards ourselves, our families, neighbours, with the natural world) and a call for a fundamental transformation of our consciousness and attitude toward cultural, national, religious, gender and natural other.



POVZETKI/ABSTRACTS

Ciprian Bogdan: Deliberating Distance: Toward an Incomplete Normative Approach

In his famous debate with Rawls on deliberative democracy, Habermas emphasizes the reflexivity of his own approach in which openness or incompleteness plays a central role considering that only the acknowledgement of human and historical limitations can justify the revisability of democratic principles or the renewed effort of each generation to deliberate on the community's political foundations. This, however, does not sit entirely well with the robust normative approach developed by Habermas which is based on the need to overcome such incompleteness in the name of an ideal consensus. In other words, Habermas' reconstruction creates an ambivalence between accepting that incompleteness should take the center stage and downplaying it to an inherent gap or distance (between interests and norms) that should be overcome in principle by participants engaged in deliberation. Having this mind, our presentation will concentrate mainly on two points: (1) to emphasize that although Habermas has been criticized for his rationalist and consensualist position, there is a larger tendency in the field of deliberative democracy to reproduce in somewhat different arrangements the same ambivalence; (2) to propose an alternative approach in which incompleteness should acquire a central role in deliberative processes within a more dialectical framework.

Boshko Karadjov: Utopia and Uchronia: the Values of Chiliastic Thinking in Contemporary Society

Utopian political dreams, social-economic programs and strategies for new political worlds have symptomatically disappeared in the last decades. Political philosophers are slowly giving up from political revelations and chiliastic visions. Today the old political passion for them has been diapered. We live in such a post-history time in which there is no progressive dimension at all. More precisely, political philosophers have stopped dreaming impossible dreams and have ceased to be realistic and seek the impossible. Exactly because of these conditions, in this philosophical contribution we will focus not only on the search for the reasons for this consternation of political romanticism, but we will also reaffirm the value and urgency of the utopian and uchronian thinking as the purest form of chiliastic ideological consciousness.

We think that today's political philosophy has a new imperative or creating ideological platforms for new political romanticism. And that basically means rethinking about the impossible and intensifying radical discursive practices or utopian and uchronian thinking as a τέλος of political consciousness. Guided by these incentives, in this philosophical contribution we will try to reaffirm the importance of utopian and uchronian thinking through the analysis of different types of utopias (collectivistic versus individualistic) and through the analysis of uchronia in its two discursive iterations: a) as a literary genre (alternative history) and 2) as an epistemological-methodological model (counter-factual history).



POVZETKI/ABSTRACTS

Sergej Seitz: Aporias of Political Imagination: Ideology, Utopia, and Beyond

Abstract: It is a truism that democracy is in crisis. However, this crisis not only concerns the political system, but more fundamentally the very faculty of political imagination. In times of neoliberal hegemony and the TINA principle, it has become increasingly difficult to imagine political relations otherwise. Thus, it is high time to rethink the possibilities as well as the limits of political imagination. Drawing on the classical distinction of ideology and utopia, and referring to Mannheim, Bachelard, Ricoeur, and Castoriadis, I scrutinize political imagination as a phenomenon characterized by several oppositional tendencies and aporetic fault lines.

Reingard Spannring: Learning to Be: a philosophy of education for a multispecies community?

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of UNESCO's Faure Report, also known as Learning to Be (Faure et al 1972), I will scrutinize its notion of emancipation in the context of postmodern society and, in particular, the ecological and animal ethical crisis. How can we understand learning for or as emancipation that counters the hyper-functionalisation of humans and nonhumans and fosters the wellbeing of all in an ethical and sustainable society?

Jeffrey Robbins: A Good Strong Lie

This paper offers up an alternative conception of sovereignty for our current post-truth age—namely, the sovereign is that which determines the regime of truth. It draws on the insight from Lee McIntyre's book Post-Truth wherein he identifies the power of propaganda in asserting the "authority over the truth itself." But rather than bemoaning this condition, this paper will explore through the 1960 film Elmer Gantry and in reference to Slavoj Žižek how a more nuanced understanding of the relation between truth and lies provides a more honest accounting not only of the wish fulfilment at the heart of religious belief, but of identity formation and human consciousness as such.

Ignaas Devisch: With or without you? Nancy's being-with reinvestigated

Jean-Luc Nancy has spent numerous books and lectures on his reinterpretation of Heidegger's Mitsein. During my lecture, I will make a close reading of some keyquotes that demonstrate in detail Nancy's passionate plea for a new understanding of our being together and pose the question if and how his elaboration of being-with can still face today's challenges.



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Rastko Močnik: Dependent Capitalism

Countries that abandoned the socialist project and restored capitalism are now dependent capitalist social formations. The value produced by the working classes in the dependent countries is largely appropriated by the imperialist centers of the capitalist world system. The mechanisms of appropriation were analyzed with the concepts of unequal exchange (Arghiri Emmanuel), surplus exploitation (Ruy Mauro Marini), imperialist rent (Samir Amin), the difference between "normal" (transnational) capital and local (non-competitive) capital (Juan Iñigo Carrera). In the post-socialist countries, the political, economic and ideological bureaucracy transformed the "socialist" (post-capitalist) state into a capitalist state. By expropriating its population and handing over social wealth to transnational capital and a new local capitalist class, the capitalist state has established a dependent capitalist society. Transnational capital with its institutions (the EU, International Monetary Fund, World Bank) and the domestic comprador bourgeoisie consisting of the local capitalist class and the comprador bureaucracy maintain and reproduce the dependent capitalist society.

Alenka Zupančič: Perverse Disavowal and Rhetoric of the End

The classical formula of fetishist disavowal formulated by French psychoanalyst Octave Mannoni, "I know well, but all the same... (I continue to believe to opposite)", undergoes interesting and far-reaching permutations in contemporary social context. When it comes to our dealing with and (non)responding to various crises, we usually point the finger at the deniers, conspiracy theorists and their "irrational" attitudes. Yet far more generalized and socially problematic is the attitude which combines full acknowledgement and ignoring in one and the same movement. Moreover, not only does knowledge about some problem smoothly combine with our ignoring it, it also seems that it makes the ignoring possible: to be able to say that "we know well" often seems to actually make it possible for us to ignore the real of this knowledge. Here we can detect a further twist of fetishist disavowal, which will be the main object of analysis in this lecture.



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Konferenčni zbornik je izdalo Slovensko filozofsko društvo.
Za podporo pri izdaji in pomoč pri organizaciji konference se zahvaljujemo Almi Mater Europaea in ZRS Koper.

Za izdajatelja: dr. Gašper Pirc

Ljubljana, 2022

