

Contemporary Challenges confronted by Critical Hermeneutics:  
Ricœurian perspectives

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## Contemporary Challenges confronted by Critical Hermeneutics: Ricœurian perspectives

The title of this special issue invites us to reflect on the resources of Ricœur's ethical and political thought, aiming to address the multiple challenges that the world has faced since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Our wager is far from straightforward. While one can indeed discern a Ricœurian political philosophy shaped by the intrinsic sensibilities of his broader thought, Ricœur does not articulate a systematic political doctrine. None of his works is exclusively devoted to political philosophy: *Lectures I: Autour du politique* (1999), *History and Truth* (1955), and *From Text to Action* (1986) are collections of essays originally published in intellectual journals such as *Esprit* or *Christianisme social*, later collected and republished. Beyond these compilations, Ricœur's ethical and political reflection is also developed in the "little ethics" of *Oneself as Another* (1990), in *Memory, History, Forgetting* (2000), and in *Critique and Conviction* (1995). Moreover, a significant portion of his socio-political thought unfolds in stand-alone essays scattered throughout his corpus. Yet this apparent fragmentation is ultimately misleading: Ricœur's ethical and political philosophy finds its profound coherence within the horizon of his critical hermeneutic project. But how is it possible to define Ricœur's ethical and political thought within his project of critical hermeneutics?

Ricœur asserts, in his *Philosophy of the Will*, that "philosophy must understand everything,"<sup>1</sup> because the philosophical task is measured by the scope of action, of human action in all its dimensions. It aims at the intelligibility of acting and questions the capable subject, the acting subject, that is, the one who recognizes himself as the author of his actions. And it is in this sense that, for Ricœur, doing philosophy can only consist in revisiting, reconnecting, reinterpreting, and above all bringing into conflict the theses of others in order to take up with a fresh perspective the anthropological, epistemological, ethical, and political question that structure human experience and that the philosophical tradition has continually formulated. This precise framework defines one of Ricœur's methods of reflection, which is based on an approach structured by paradox and consists of holding together opposing demands without dissolving them. One could perhaps go so far as to say that he is, par excellence, the thinker of antinomic tensions.

As for hermeneutics, it enables philosophy to fulfill this multifaceted requirement. Hermeneutics constitutes the path to "a creative interpretation of meaning, faithful both to the impulse, to the gift of meaning of the symbol, and faithful to the philosopher's oath to understand".<sup>2</sup> As Daryush Shayegan so aptly points out,

it is up to hermeneutics to identify a set of criteria whose task would be to establish the constitution of related forms [...]. It would thus delimit the theoretical boundaries of each hermeneutic field. It would be the arbiter between the exclusive claims of the respective interpretations, showing how each of them operates within a constellation of

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Ricœur, *Philosophie de la volonté, II. Finitude et culpabilité* (Paris: éd. Aubier, [1960], 1988), 479.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Ricœur, *Philosophie de la volonté, II. Finitude et culpabilité* (Paris: Éditions Points, 2009), 567.

presuppositions. In other words, each hermeneutic field produces a surplus of meaning in relation to its frame of reference.<sup>3</sup>

But Ricœur does not want to get bogged down in a sterile opposition between antithetical poles. On the contrary, he seeks to develop a tension-filled line of thought that allows competing demands to be held together without confusing them. By obeying a triple dialectic<sup>4</sup>, hermeneutics can precisely equip itself with such criteria.

The first dialectic articulates belonging and distancing. It is a world that structures the text through the reader-interpreter. The second dialectic links explanation to understanding. Far from being mutually exclusive, they are interdependent. In other words, explanatory procedures serve as a propaedeutic to understanding. We must explain in order to understand better, to make understanding more rigorous and controlled. Finally, the third dialectic is that of archaeology and teleology. Archaeology refers to a critical reading that reveals the determinations and sedimentations of the past. But this critical gesture only becomes fully effective when supported by teleology, that is, by the opening up of a horizon of meaning and purpose in which criticism is not reduced to suspicion and its hermeneutics of “demystification.” The “hermeneutics of suspicion” then poses the problem of false consciousness for modern man. In this way, critical reading regains its meaning and moves toward possibilities of being, acting, and judging. Admittedly, choosing between hermeneutic reason and critical reason remains an apparent alternative, rejected by Ricœur as inadequate.

We can now speak of critical hermeneutics, which, in this case, is the approach that allows us to move between the different levels of ethics and politics in Ricœur’s work and to grasp their configurations with clarity and rationality.

Given that the self is perpetually engaged, throughout the course of its existence, in the effort to express its desire to be, to construct and appropriate its identity, to accept itself and be recognized, and to locate itself within communities and within the world, hermeneutics intimately linked to our language and to our capacities for reflection, cannot be conceived as a static concept. From this perspective, the critical gesture enables hermeneutics to ascend to ever more reflexive levels of understanding, particularly in relation to ideological presuppositions, and assumes as one of its central tasks the interrogation of power structures. Accordingly, critical hermeneutics renders it possible, on one hand, to understand the meaning as generated by texts, discourses or actions. On the other hand, it enables the critique of social structures and mechanisms that sustain relations of power.<sup>5</sup>

Ricœur’s critical hermeneutics establishes the conflict of interpretations as a structural feature of its philosophical trajectory. It explicitly rejects the “short route” of an ontology of understanding, advocating instead for a dialectical movement between explanation and understanding, both situated along a unified hermeneutic arc. The explanatory phase intrinsic to

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<sup>3</sup> Shayegan, Daryush, *La Lumière vient de l’occident : le réenchantement du monde* (La Tour-d’Aigues: Éditions de l’Aube, 2001), 304-305.

<sup>4</sup> See Jean-Paul Resweber, « Ricœur: philosophe du milieu (*Ricœur, philosopher of the middle, in the middle ; Ricœur: ein Philosoph des Milieus und Milieus*) », *Le Portique. Revue de philosophie et de sciences humaines*, n° 26 (2011).

<sup>5</sup> Ricœur, Paul, « Herméneutique et critique des idéologies », *Du texte à l’action. Essais d’herméneutique II*, (Paris : Seuil, 1986), 333.

this hermeneutics draws upon the analytical and critical resources of the human and social sciences (whether in linguistics, semantics, literary criticism, historiography, or related fields) and is constitutively anchored in a critique of ideologies. Three articles in this special issue by Roger Savage, Olivier Abel, and Azadeh Thiriez-Arjangi demonstrate this. Given that the self is perpetually engaged throughout the course of its existence in the effort to express its desire to be, to construct and appropriate its identity, to accept itself and be recognized, and to locate itself within communities and within the world, hermeneutics intimately links language to our capacities for reflection and cannot be conceived as a static concept.

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The contributions in this special issue focus on two overlapping axes of reflection. The first axis addresses the topics of paradox, tragedy, events, and war with three texts: “Le paradoxe politique aujourd’hui” based on a dialogue between Myriam Revault d’Allonnes and Michael Fœssel; Olivier Abel’s contribution entitled “Les traditions de l’imaginaire. Réflexions sur les conditions de l’imagination politique”; and finally, “Iran, entre le règne de l’idéologie et l’éclipse de l’utopie. Une lecture critique à partir de Paul Ricœur” by Azadeh Thiriez-Arjangi.

This first axis of reflection is organized around the common observation that, despite all the efforts throughout the twentieth century to regulate the use of military force on a global scale, initiated by the Hague Conventions and later institutionalized through the establishment of the League of Nations, wars have continued to leave a trail of devastation across the globe. The narratives of colonial violence, along with the critical retrospections on the colonial past, reveal that the violence of war has never been an isolated occurrence. The war in Ukraine, and with it, the return of the tragic to the European continent, has once again confronted Europeans face to face with the forgotten violence of war.

In evoking this violence in history, we are reminded of Ricœur’s essay “The Political Paradox” (1957), arguably the founding text of his political philosophy. There, Ricœur demonstrates the ambivalence between form and force in the establishment of political power. He conceives of the state as both a manifestation of power and a goal of the good, and reveals the residual violence inherent in the state as the shadow side of politics. In doing so, Ricœur interrogates the paradoxes that exist between the vertical, hierarchical dimension of domination and the horizontal, consensual dimension of living together. This text is a perfect illustration of Ricœur’s thinking on the event and is combined with a reflection on the tragic as a challenge to human freedom.

Thinking in terms of paradox likewise guided Ricœur’s perception of war, which he approached with a gaze marked by the tragic. Although he consistently acknowledged the profound injustice inherent in war, he confessed to being torn between a pacifist disposition, rooted in emotion, and a more rational – if not explicitly Hegelian – conception of state responsibility and the necessary recourse to force. This tragic sensibility concerning the reality of war pervades his writings, notably in *History and Truth*. It is noteworthy that Ricœur’s reflection on the tragedy of war opens onto other tragic terrains, those of refugees, displaced persons and all who, excluded

from their homeland, endure the lived experience of expulsion. This line of thought finds resonance in Ricœur's 1996 essay "The Condition of the Foreigner," in which he discusses the various figures of 'otherness,' whether the traveler, the immigrant or the refugee. It also reverberates in his address at the 2000 Congress of the International Federation of Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture in Prague, entitled "Fragile Identity: Respect for the Other and Cultural Identity." These concerns are, of course, already prefigured in his 1954 essay, "The Socius and the Neighbor," and they traverse his entire ethical philosophy – most notably in his sustained meditations on the notion of solicitude.

The scope of this first axis of reflection, as shown by the first three contributions, is very broad and can also encompass other key issues in political philosophy, such as democracy, institutions, totalitarianism and populism. However, from Ricœur's writings most marked by the tragedy of history to his more speculative and later reflections, particularly on social justice and ethics in the democratic debate, the idea of paradox accompanies Ricœur's political thought. This idea proposes to understand the democratic project through the prism of paradox, as the set of dispositions oriented toward securing the primacy of the rational over the irrational.

Following a twentieth century marked by totalitarianism, during which democracies often demonstrated limited resistance to totalitarian regimes, the democracies of the twenty-first century now face new threats in the form of resurgent waves of identitarian and populist movements, as clearly shown in the text resulting from the dialogue between Myriam Revault d'Allonnes and Michael Føessel. Furthermore, as Azadeh Thiriez-Arjangi's article shows, the regime of the Islamic Republic is a perfect example of authoritarian or totalitarian regimes that persist in the 21st century. This phenomenon, which demands rigorous critical analysis, recalls Ricœur's enduring suspicion toward any attempt at totalization –whether political or otherwise – that, under the guise of a particular conception of happiness, would seek to suppress the irreducible plurality of positions and interpretations.

These issues invite renewed interrogation through Ricœurian philosophy. Within this thematic axis, several key texts may be brought into dialogue: "The Crisis of Democracy and the Christian Conscience" (1947), "Politics and Totalitarianism" in *Critique and Conviction* (1995), "Justice: Virtue and Institution" (1997), and "Who is the Subject of Rights?" in *The Just, Vol. 1* (1995).

The second axis of reflection of the dossier offers a broader reflection linking politics, ethics, economics, culture, technology, and digital issues. It is supported by three other articles, by Roger Savage, Feriel Kandil, and Pierre-Olivier Monteil, which complement and enrich these Ricœurian perspectives on contemporary challenges. This second axis offers the opportunity to develop a broad field of critical reading of Ricœur's ethical, economic, and political writings. A foundational reference here is the essay "Ethics and Politics,"<sup>6</sup> published in *From Text to Action*, in which Ricœur elucidates both the distinctions and the points of intersection among the ethical, political and economic spheres. While each of these domains retains its own autonomy, they inevitably intersect one another. To these three, however, a fourth dimension must be added: that of technology and its democratic organization, particularly in relation to labor, technological progress, and environmental challenges and to examine the interrelations among ethics, politics and economics in our technological society.

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<sup>6</sup> Paul Ricœur, *Éthique et politique*. In: *Autres Temps. Les cahiers du christianisme social*, N°5 (1985), 58-70.

This raises a number of important issues. For example, digital technologies and in particular generative artificial intelligences, while democratizing access to discourse production, simultaneously tend to erode the very structures of language. New forms of speaking subjectivity are arising, characterized by immediacy, the standardization of expression, and a diminishing capacity for critical distance. Moreover, technological progress generates deleterious effects on democracies, as evidenced by the proliferation of manipulative practices such as disinformation and fake news. The instantaneous mediation proper to digital environments has collapsed distances between different phenomena, thus narrowing critical space. In this same context, as political discourse has gradually been emptied of substance, the imagination of modern democracies has been affected by the standardization and erosion of political language. Ricœur's 1990 essay, "Political Language and Rhetoric," reprinted in *Lectures I: Autour du politique / Lectures I: Around the Political* could be mobilized in this context.

We also mentioned environmental challenges above: although Ricœur is not conventionally situated within the canon of ecological thought, certain dimensions of his hermeneutical philosophy nevertheless provide resources for engaging with the contemporary ecological crisis<sup>7</sup> and his critical comments on Hans Jonas illuminates the stakes of an ethics grounded in responsibility. Furthermore, Ricœur's practical philosophy, constantly confronted with reality, allows us to address many major ethical and political issues. In *Oneself as Another*, Ricœur elaborates a framework that bears directly on contemporary bioethical debates, including those concerning end-of-life decisions and the juridical regulation of assisted dying.

We also note that various ethics committees, particularly those concerned with public health, frequently draw upon Ricœur's thought to regulate biological, medical and life science technologies, or to assess the dangers entailed by industrial modes of production. Although this angle has not been addressed in this special issue, it is worth mentioning here.

Finally, it seems to us that one key issue runs through both of the lines of thinking we have proposed: the explosion of inequality, whether in terms of access to market and non-market goods, services or employment. This situation compels us to question social media technologies in their relation to the problem of domination. In this regard, one could mobilize an article by Ricœur from 1965, "Tasks of the Political Educator," published in *Esprit*, in which the author examines techniques within the organization of labor and the use of tools in an "economic democracy" where technology is reduced to an economic issue. This problem also extends to social interactions and the question of political power, insofar as the state appears as the agent of all arbitrations, the outcome of competitive rivalries between claims on heterogeneous goods. The question might thus arise within liberal democracies, where the decisive boundaries between market and non-market goods remain blurred. We will see, moreover, that the last book published by Ricœur during his lifetime, *The Course of Recognition*, provides remarkable insights that shed light on this second axis.

For this special issue, we have brought together six contributions based on a careful reading of Ricœur's ethical and political thought. The texts are critically structured around two axes of reflection, which have already been presented as follows:

The first text offers a fresh take on the "Political Paradox" (*Esprit*, 1957). It is the result of a dialogue between Myriam Revault d'Allonnes and Michaël Fœssel, moderated by Jonathan Chalier, on the occasion of the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of Paul Ricœur's

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<sup>7</sup> David Utsler, *Paul Ricœur and Environmental Philosophy* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2024).

death, organized at the Fonds Ricœur in June 2025. Myriam Revault d'Allonnes and Michaël Føessel revisit the central idea of the political paradox, which is expanded upon in Ricœur's reflections on ideology and utopia. The discussion then updates the interpretation and content of this paradox in the neoliberal era. According to Myriam Revault d'Allonnes, neoliberal rationality tends to exhaust politics by "informing" behavior; it confuses freedom and independence while seeking to neutralize the indeterminacy and "tears" inherent in the democratic experience. As for Michaël Føessel, he defends the idea that authoritarian planning and the neoliberal market share the same illusion, which consists of depoliticizing through total consensus. Throughout this dialogue, the themes of war, situated in a dimension that cannot be reduced to instrumental rationality, contemporary democracy, Ricœurian anthropology (*thumos/ irascible*), and "illiberal" and identity-based democracies are discussed. Myriam Revault d'Allonnes and Michaël Føessel do not hesitate to return to the possibilities of democratic rehabilitation of politics, citing movements such as #MeToo, which show how experiences of injustice can become a public language, albeit with the difficulty of uniting people without closing oneself off behind identity barriers, and of rediscovering a way of thinking about paradoxes that challenges simplistic binary schemas.

In his article, "Les traditions de l'imaginaire. Réflexions sur les conditions de l'imagination politique," Olivier Abel shifts the classic entry point from the pairing of ideology and utopia to the "traditions of the imaginary" and proposes a Ricœurian approach to the political problem of imagination. Imagination is thought of first and foremost as a capacity to open up possibilities, but also as an ambivalent power, capable of metaphorical truth as well as falsification and illusion. In other words, the question of the "power of falsehood" and its captures, which is becoming increasingly important in the age of cultural industries, digital technology and AI.

Contrary to the myth of a "pure" or simply creative imagination, Olivier Abel shows that Ricœur grafts imagination onto language, which is "the institution of institutions," and onto established mediations. Innovation thus arises within an already-there sedimented in a constant dialectic between sedimentation and invention. It is in this context, but also in that of May 1968 in Nanterre and the dialogue with Castoriadis, that Ricœur's articulation between instituting imagination and instituted imagination takes shape against a backdrop of generational conflict and the dialectic between sedimentation and innovation.

From there, the article outlines a political hermeneutics of the conditions of imagination. The traditions of the imaginary, embedded in culture, establish symbolic forms of recognition and enable the critique of ideologies from utopian perspectives. Therefore, this critique cannot be formulated from a neutral outside perspective but must be expressed from utopian perspectives, because the imaginary remains structurally dual and conflictual.

The text finally narrows its focus to a compelling political discussion, in which Ricœur parts ways with Claude Lefort on the question of the foundation of democracy. Unlike Lefort, for whom democracy is a regime based on nothing or self-founded "on emptiness," Ricœur argues that it is always founded on its own anteriority in relation to itself. It is a foundation in the sense of founding events, caught in the dialectic between immemorial origin and dated beginning. For Ricœur, democracy is thus held together by the co-founding plurality of traditions and their critical reopening. In short, democracy is a common action that resists both totalitarianism and the drift of an unlimited market that claims to "produce a new man."

The text by Azadeh Thiriez-Arjangi, "Iran, entre le règne de l'idéologie et l'éclipse de l'utopie. Une lecture critique à partir de Paul Ricœur," extends Ricœur's dialectic of ideology and

utopia, addressed earlier by Olivier Abel, to a field that might be described as surprising, namely a philosophical reading of the political situation in contemporary Iran. The text thus aims at a critical interpretation that tests Ricœur's explanatory power in the face of a history experienced as tragic and threatened by a "diverted future." The first section analyzes political evil. The Islamic Republic is described as a regime where violence replaces power. The text emphasizes that power, as "acting in concert," is confiscated for the benefit of an apparatus of domination that renders individuals superfluous through moral surveillance and religious coercion. The regime's hostility to pre-Islamic heritage also sheds light on a struggle over memory and the nostalgic emotions of Iranians, which are viewed with suspicion by those in power and have become a source of resistance. The second section focuses on tragic within a religious order and secularization. Far from restoring moral autonomy, religion becomes an instrument of domination where religious "duty" turns into violence. Marx's critique of ideology, reinterpreted by Ricœur, allows us to think of religious alienation as a reversal of consciousness and a legitimization of a closed political order. In this configuration, utopia is not an escape: it judges ideology, supports social imagination and fuels a growing demand for disenchantment and de-divinization. Finally, drawing on the writings of Daryush Shayegan, the author situates the transformations underway within a deeper crisis of traditional civilizations. The conclusion highlights a decisive Ricœurian requirement: without assuming a certain collective responsibility, beyond the mere status of victim, society risks remaining trapped in the repetition of evil. The possibility of lasting liberation thus depends on a critical appropriation of the past, articulating guilt and responsibility, which would allow for the reopening of space for a peaceful political renewal.

The fourth contribution (the first text that explicitly addresses the second axis of reflection) is by Roger Savage. In his text, "Does Good Gather Together? Reflections on Primary Affirmation, Justification, and Phronesis," Roger Savage draws on Ricœurian philosophy to examine the link between moral and political exemplarity and practical reason in the context of aesthetic experience, and proposes to examine the moral and political dimensions of certain works of art in an attempt to understand whether "only good brings people together." He shows that certain works, certain words and certain lives reshape the way we think, feel and act, and that in doing so, they can counterbalance the contagion of lies and violence that undermines the body politic and leads to an apocryphal rewriting of history. Perverse narratives and testimonies as falsified rewritings of history effectively capture the future and freedom – understood with Arendt as the capacity for initiative and intervention in human affairs – alters our ability to respond to crises. For Savage, we must therefore rediscover a forward-looking, even prophetic dimension, based on the singular "adequacy" of a response to the dilemmas and crises we face.

In reflexive judgment, the concrete case "calls" for its rule and leads the analysis back to phronesis as a form of practical discernment. Thus, in order for humanity to be safeguarded, we must reject abstractions and move toward effective testimonies. The hermeneutic discussion of the "idea of good," a discussion situated in a historically constituted world where universality can no longer proceed from a disembodied value system, allows us to deepen this position. From this perspective, aesthetic experience offers an analogical model of practical configurations that culminates in phronesis, broadens the field of possibility and reactivates freedom. In his text, Roger Savage finally raises the question of justification and hope. Just as imagination can serve perverse utopias, even totalitarian dystopias, it can also open up a non-totalizing horizon of liberation. Such a difference obviously depends on the demand for justification and testimony.

Feriel Kandil continues the discussion on *phronesis* by situating it in the context of commercial exchange in order to examine the question of gift. Kandil's article, entitled "Ricœur et Derrida sur le don et l'échange marchand" offers a comparative reading of Ricœur and Derrida on the subject of gift and criticizes its commercial reduction – whether gift is conceived by Ricœur as a paradigm of "states of peace" (as in the last chapter of *The Course of Recognition*) or approached from Derrida's deconstruction of the "impossible" gift. The central issue is to show that the two approaches respond to each other in an articulated game of deconstruction and reconstruction of the gift, understood against the backdrop of a comparison with commercial exchange. The article establishes that, despite the impossibility revealed by Derrida, Ricœur reconstructs the practical powers of the gift. In other words, Ricœur's phenomenology of the gift resonates with Derrida's thinking on the gift as "impossible," whose impossibility can be read through three aporias: a logical aporia, an ethical aporia and an ontological aporia.

The fragility of giving therefore requires *phronesis*, a practical wisdom capable of permeating the "heart" of transactions marked by struggle as an art of adjustment capable of maintaining an ever-unstable compromise between love and justice. It thus manifests itself as a force for the humanization of exchanges, including in mixed forms, between gift and market, that is, in everything that keeps the economic embedded in the social. This means that, in contact with the market, gift calls for critical vigilance with regard to its perverted forms and its institutionalization. The normative consequence of this analysis is that gift appears to be a critical task. It is not a question of dissolving justice in love, nor of absorbing love into law, but of maintaining, through discernment and vigilance, the "dividing line" between good and bad reciprocity, protecting the exceptional nature of gift without denying its practical significance. Feriel Kandil concludes that the intersection of Ricœur's and Derrida's thoughts reveals the same core: the impossibility of giving does not condemn ethics, but forces us to think of recognition as fragile, exposed, and yet capable of reconfiguring, through small glimmers of mutuality, a social order dominated by market equivalence.

Following on from Feriel Kandil's contribution, the special issue concludes with Pierre-Olivier Monteil's article, "The social anthropology of *Parcours de la reconnaissance*, a vehicle for Ricœur's critique of market society." This text examines the scope of Ricœur's critique of market society through a decisive shift from practical philosophy to social anthropology. Monteil emphasizes that Ricœur draws on Hobbes to reveal a world where structural conflict, namely the "war of all against all," tends to reduce agreements and rights to mere strategic transactions, under the rule of fear, without any real recognition of the other. However, a reinterpretation of Hegel, relayed by Honneth, allows Ricœur to replace survival with an original moral motivation based on the desire to be recognized. This desire establishes self-esteem "in the other" and humanizes politics. Monteil also highlights Ricœur's approach, which draws on the achievements of Honneth's theory of recognition and points to the risk of a "bad infinity" of recognition, which he limits by evoking "states of peace" and an economy of giving conceived as mutuality, gratuitousness and gratitude—which thus balances commercial reciprocity and reopens spaces for mutuality. For Monteil, *Parcours de la reconnaissance* links socialization to a temporality of the self based on memory and promise. Ricœur thus reinterprets recognition through sublimation and interprets it as the reinvestment of old forces in new meanings. It is within this framework that the author analyzes the resentment of the "losers," the headlong rush of the "winners," and recognition that has become ideology, for example in the workplace or in the digital world, to the detriment of common mediations. The solution outlined here involves the rehabilitation of mediation, non-

identity-based affiliations, and a reconfiguration of the “we” through “creative fidelity” to the plural resources of European heritage.

We would like to add, in conclusion, that not all of the texts referred to in this introduction are necessarily drawn upon in the individual contributions to this dossier. It nonetheless seemed useful to us to mention them, both for the interest they hold in their own right and for the avenues of reading and research they may help to open up.

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