

THE BODY/LE CORPS/DER KÖRPER

This special issue of FILOZOFSKI VESTNIK/ACTA PHILOSOPHICA entitled THE BODY/LE CORPS/DER KÖRPER leads the reader through a philosophical and interdisciplinary (art, cultural and political) re-consideration of the paradigm of the body. The development of various forms of observation in space in connection with very special forms of human perception has effaced the duality of body and mind, science and technology. With the aid of the new media technologies (from electronic to multimedia), the viewer may enter his/her own body. Technology allows the turning of the body into various spectacles and views by means of prosthetic extensions. In the past, microscopes and telescopes extended human perception away from the body, towards the infinite and infinitesimal, while in the 21st century, one's own body has become the object of research, a place for bio-genetic manipulations, the base for prosthetic connections and a field of intensive research on subjectivity, agency and consciousness.

The perspective from which the writers were asked for their generous contributions to this special issue of FILOZOFSKI VESTNIK is not that of a range of opinions, but a radicalisation of the notion of the body, a political reading of it, a political perspective of the body in relation to processes of globalisation, subjectivity and agency, in the fields of philosophy, theory, art, culture, science and history. Processes of the technologization of the world and of the human that are transforming the co-ordinates of political reality today are brought into tight focus. This process involves a tension between the international nature of the electronic and digital gaze and corporeal realities, memory, history, genetics, machine intelligence and the bio-technical recombination of human and non-human DNA.

This is also a call for a radical re-articulation of the technological, mediated and digitised within political philosophy and theory. In an ecstatic exaggeration of Merleau Ponty's phenomenological model, world and body comprise a continual feedback loop, producing a terminal identity without the

terminal. On the other hand, contemporaneity is fostering the disembodiment of the subject within new media technologies, opening crucial questions regarding the politics of representation and the semiotics of the articulation of different bodies in different spaces. Last but not least, we have to further push the implication concerning specific representational strategies that focus on the human body, which means that we have to develop and analyses systems and paradigms, structures and matrices of representations of historically, gender and class-determined bodies.

The relationship between the body and the machine opens an array of epistemological questions from cyborg identity to cyberfeminist agency, through a body seen as nothingness, or an angel or a piece of shit. Different embodiments are a contested territory for post-colonial research on the body and the visual within and against the Capitalist machine, (post)feminist contestation of agency/imaginary and a psychoanalytic re-articulation of parts of the body (gaze, breast, voice) as a threshold between reality/virtuality/the real.

I would like to thank all the contributors for their excellent papers and collaboration.

Marina Gržinić Mauhler, Issue Editor

Ljubljana, April 2002