



Unique, just like everyone else

Pathologies of individualization in the contemporary era

Eleonora Piromalli

In this essay, after briefly delineating the main features of contemporary individualism, I describe two forms of pseudo-individualization that characterize today's developed societies: the «heterodirected self-invention of personal identity» and the phenomenon of the «entrepreneurs of themselves». Both processes, behind the appearance of promoting the individual's chances of self-determination and self-realization, conceal forms of homologation and heterodirection. Through the analysis of their causes, I draw the conclusion that contemporary individualism will be able to keep its normative promises only if paired with the development of relationships of mutual recognition.

Gabriel Tarde, an individualist sociologist?

Filippo Domenicali

After his death in 1904, the work of Gabriel Tarde has experienced a long oblivion, also determined by the devaluation of his thinking on the part of official sociology of the time (Durkheim, Bouglè) that has summarily classified as a sociologist 'individualist'. However, since the 1960s, Tardean individualism has found new supporters (Boudon) and also new critics (Mucchielli, Latour). What to do today in this 'individualism'? Despite the devaluations, I am convinced that the sociological reflection of Tarde can provide an interesting perspective on the processes of subjectification in place, namely the construction of the personality through imitation.

Epistemic individualism and the 'myth' of Descartes

Marco Damonte

In analytic philosophy the various theories of knowledge are, for the most part, ascribable to the same meta-epistemology: *classical deontological internalism*. It is a form of epistemic individualism whose origin is ascribed to Descartes. Unfortunately, the reference to him has often rhetorical features. The aim of this paper is to determine how Cartesian the thesis of classical deontological internalism really is. To achieve this purpose, Kenny's historiographical reconstruction will be taken into consideration. His contribution underlines that individualistic epistemology has an anthropological connotation on which not only the past, but also the future of epistemology depend.

Zusammenfassungen **S**inteses **A**bstracts

***Ingenious individuals
Crisis of a myth and new possibilities***
Roberta Dreon

Where is genius to be found in the age of its economic and financial reproducibility? *Ingenious individuals. Crisis of a myth and new possibilities* sets out by considering the present uncertainty as to whether one may still speak of artistic geniuses in contemporary society, in order to critically examine some basic aspects of the traditional figure of the genius, as this has been developed in the aesthetic field, and to highlight some of its problematic implications, particularly in relation to the issue of individuality. The author suggests to approach the crisis of the ideology of genius not as a completely negative phenomenon, but as a stimulus for rethinking the individuality of the artist from alternative perspectives. In John Dewey's pragmatism the author finds some useful conceptual tools and critical arguments, as well as different ways of understanding artistic production and its role.

***Public space and private space
Places of transit for individuals seeking recognition***
Maura Franchi

Public space is a common space aimed at social use, separate from the space reserved for private life. Communication technologies have outlined new ways of inhabiting both private and public space. In the private space, the traditional dimension of privacy has been abolished by a common desire for prominence. In public space, several forms of expressions of identity have emerged, producing new ways of communication. The Web shapes a new social space for dialogue where old and new techniques of influence interact, developing issues of common interest. What are the implications on public space, how do conversations affect the formation of public opinion, common feelings and collective will? Can we assume that this will create new forms of citizenship? The analysis requires us to overcome both the hypothesis of a mere solipsistic dispersion, and the idea of a palingenetic explosion of public participation.

***A new anthropology
Subject and liberty in Tocqueville's democracy***
Antonio Martone

As for his analysis of middle class-specific peculiarities, Tocqueville is the most important contemporary social thinker. The essay's thesis is that his incomparable work is disruptive not only because it has developed the features of an *homo aequalis* that is able to drive *homo hierarchicus* among history's ruins, but also because has depicted the democratic man as involved in a dimension with no transcendence and no historical and social substance; in this regard, his work is one that speaks about and inside nihilism. In the same way, with respect to a diagnosis that is far-seeing as it is essential, Tocqueville's theoretical proposal has moved toward an arduous freedom, an awkward and, for some reasons, even enigmatic freedom about which the author provides his own contribution.



Consciousness and time

Franco Crespi

Next to the modality of self-consciousness based on a narrative continuum through determined forms (identity, meanings, memories etc.), it is possible to find a different modality of consciousness as a direct and ecstatic perception of the sense of life which cannot be translated into definite meanings. A good example of it are Marcel Proust's associations between past and present that are not simply a psychological phenomenon related to memory, but also a peak experience, full of joyful feelings, of that ecstatic modality of consciousness.