

Summaries

Magdalena Żardecka-Nowak

Irony – Cultural Identity – Compassion

Following his own claim concerning the necessity to abandon the Platonic-Kantian philosophical canon, Richard Rorty postulates the replacement of the traditional essentialist language of metaphysics by the language of irony. This position forces him to establish new foundations of human solidarity and morality as it is no longer possible to refer to a universal concept of human nature. Critics stress the fact that questioning the ontic foundations inevitably destroys all the things that rest upon them such as morality, community and culture. Thus, Rorty's proposal to distinguish between private and public languages does not seem a satisfactory solution to the problem. For A. Bielik-Robson the very concept of irony contains "foundations" of human solidarity. In her view, irony exposes one to the experience of de-differentiation and creates a new sense of human affiliation based on the observation that however different from one another we might be, we nevertheless remain equally vulnerable. Such a claim coincides with Rorty's views much closer than his own opinions. It is through the language of irony that we are able to save our identity, the identity of our culture as well as of our moral sensitivity.

Joel Jensen

Aesthetic Identity and the Discourse of Cultural Greyout

Taking as a departure point the case of illegal mass-reproduction of an image painted by an Australian Aboriginal artist, Joel Jensen explores the relationship between culture, art and identity. He points to the threat referred to as "cultural greyout," i.e. the inability to reproduce the identities of the past due to the contemporary mass-production of artefacts in which those identities are reflected. Jensen follows Arthur Danto's view that mass reproduction changes the conveyed meaning of an artwork and, by being distributed as a commodity within the dominating society, poses a threat to the identity of the community in which the artefact was created since the history of an artwork, i.e. the circumstances that determine the artwork's creation and distribution, contribute to its aesthetic characteristics. These, in turn, remain formative for the construction of the community's identity.

Ewa Łukaszyk

Hybrid Identity as Anachronism, Object of Therapy and New Entity (the Portuguese Case)

Even though Portugal appears as a relatively unified country without ethnic minorities, shifting borders or disruptions in national continuity, the contemporary condition of Portugal's collective identity might be described as "unstable." This instability is caused by a peculiar suspension between the recollection of a past project on the one hand and the awareness of irreducible locality and a marginalized position on the other. The dilemmas of Portuguese identity are explored on the basis of the works of four authors (Fernand Pessoa, Álvaro Campus, Eduardo Lourenço and José Saramago) who, at various moments in Portuguese history, tried to define new constituents of national identity. Those attempts, ranging from the myth of the Fifth Empire to the idea of Portugal's spiritual journey, point to the hybrid character of Portuguese identity, born at the intersection of national community and anachronic forms of self-projection which mixture may nevertheless lead to the emergence of a new form of national identity.

Wojciech Chyła

„Mind-body problem” – Media and biotechnology

The essay explores the problem of the relationship between mind and body in the two-fold context of Hegel's philosophy of the Spirit and the post-metaphysical notion of the body determined by a media-related biotechnology. Postulating the liberation of the Spirit from the constraints of the body and its affiliation with virtuality the Spirit becomes inevitably engaged with the dynamics of commodity relations. As a result it becomes a part of the "play of affects" which has replaced the notions of good and evil. Though released from restrictions imposed by nature the Spirit nevertheless remains imprisoned in virtuality which gradually constitutes its new reality. The Spirit, set free from the constraints of the biological, becomes a perfect interactive consumer, a peculiar "slave to

fun" responding to unlimited identity proposals and life-forms offered by the mercantile techno-system represented by invasive media.

Marek Pacukiewicz

A Diary in the Strict Sense of the Term. Bronisław Malinowski's Fortunate Defeat

Inspired by two images of Bronisław Malinowski made by Witkacy and the idea of repetition which they inevitably evoke, the author points to the essential duality characterising Malinowski's *Diary*. The duality in question is the one between the sublime metaphysics of the mind/spirit and the dogging corporeality of the body. This particular opposition is also reflected in Malinowski's language which remains unintentionally transgressive, always on the verge of succumbing to its internal centrifugal force questioning its internal metaphysical element in favour of the discourse of emptiness and melancholy. Thus, following Joseph Conrad, Malinowski's *Diary* inscribes itself into the context of 19th "crisis of metaphysics" which eventually opens up a path to *ontological identity* located between repetition and mask and susceptible to the dynamics of ontological mobility.

Wojciech Kędzierzawski

Commonplaceness as an Object of Study. Malinowski and Geertz

As a departure point the author of the essay treats Bronisław's Malinowski's claim that the successful ethnographic activity can only take place "in the field" i.e. while living together with the natives in their natural environment. Such perspective inevitably redefines the relation between theory and practice in anthropological studies and, by extension, points to the general methodology of cultural studies as such. The key prescription behind the latter is now the idea of participation which necessarily reduces the safe critical perspective not only between theory and practice but also between the researcher and the object of study. The analysis of commonplaceness, which can only take place through direct contact, becomes thus a vital stage in constructing the image of a culture in which particular instances constitute a network of functional relations.

