Introduction

Thus far, two collections of essays by Vilém Flusser comprising four volumes have been published in Italy, all organized by Bruno Mondadori. The first collection includes *Filosofia del design* (2001) and *La cultura dei media* (2004). The first volume being a combination of texts from two German editions: *Dinge und Undinge,* published by Hanser (1993), and *Vom Stand der Dinge. Eine kleine Philosophie des Design*, published by Steidl (1993). The second volume, *La cultura dei media*, on the other hand, is based on a choice made by Stefan Bollmann for the German editor Fischer Verlag (*Medienkultur* 1997). The second collection was published in 2006 and in 2009 respectfully, and comprised an Italian translations of *Towards a Philosophy of Photography—Per una filosofia della fotografia— and Into the Universe of technical Images—Immagini. Come la tecnologia ha cambiato la nostra percezione del mondo* (Fazi, Rome). These four volumes are dedicated to the work Flusser produced in the 1980s and focused on the following issues: media theory, photography, telematics, design and the phenomenology of objects. These are the classical themes canonized in the 1990s, the first period of the reception of Vilém Flusser's work, which defined him as a digital thinker. To put it more succinctly using Internet jargon, this was the Flusser 1.0 decade. Over the last ten years, however, this rather narrow and narrowing vision has been greatly expanded by a series of publications exploring different aspects of his thought, which were previously neglected. These create a more complex and contradictory picture, a Flusser 2.0, if you will.

This new enlarged interpretation of Flusser's work is also the basis of the present issue of *Flusser Studies*. Our goal is to expand the reach and richness of his theoretical, philosophical, and methodological thought. The different contributions in this issue range from Flusser' post-humanist approach to his philosophical fiction, *Vampyroteuthis Infernalis*, and the sketches on natural phenomena, in addition to his relationship to the work of São Paulo-based artist Mira Schendel and the ideas of the German philosopher and linguist Jean Gebser, as well as his development of a theory of gestures, to mention only a few. The issue also documents Flusser's presence in Italy in the 1980s, when he participated in symposia dedicated to photography, and examines his relationship to other Italian theorists of photography.

By tightening the focus on Italy, the aim of the present issue was to sketch a map of the main research lines (within and outside the academy) focused on the thought of Flusser. The resulting photograph tells of a growing interest in the Bohemian thinker and of the willingness to go

beyond the surface of the best-known Flusser: Flusser 1.0 according to the proposed definition. In the selection of contributions – letting ourselves be guided by the Flusserian spirit – we tried to overcome the boundaries of disciplines, genres, methodologies and "schools of thought".

In *From Subjects to Projects: Vilém Flusser's Criticism of the Notion of Humanismus*, Vito Campanelli focuses on two of Flusser's last writings, which address the issue of humanism. Moving towards a form of inter-subjectivity based on dialogue and mutual responsibility, Flusser succeeds in cutting the wires that bind the contemporary subject to modernity. The trajectory drawn by Flusser is not different from the actual vulgate of post-humanism and could thus open to more responsible ways to deal with technological development and post-humanist technologies.

In *Naturally artificial. Nature and culture from a bird's eye perspective,* Paola Bozzi discusses the meanings of the notions of authenticity and artificiality and their relationship to nature in Flusser's *Vogelflüge.* In these texts, he proposes a cultural form of nature as a model for a natural form of culture.

Rainer Guldin's essay *Ménage à trois: reflections on the notion of the diaphanous and the transparent in Mira Schendel's, Jean Gebser's, and Vilém Flusser's work* deals with the difficult friendship between Mira Schendel and Vilém Flusser and the role that the life and work of the German philosopher, writer and translator Jean Gebser played in their dialogue. Here, the central connecting notions are the diaphanous and transparency.

In *Flusser's Fluxus: a ubiquitous perspective transcending the present*, Giorgio Cipolletta describes Flusser's notion of *Kulturrevolution*, which is produced by computers and the universe of technical images, leading to a re-conceptualization of society and identity. By changing the structure of media, information changes and at the same time the reality that we live in. The screen becomes the place, the skin where a philosophy of feeling is developing. Through this new mirror-device, we have an aesthetic touch-screen that redefines our approach to gestures.

In *Dancing Data. How to reintroduce space and time into the universe*, Marina Turco discusses Flusser's philosophy of photography in connection with the work of Evgeny Morozov's and his criticism of an idolization of the Internet. The paper focuses on forms of control and emancipation in the behavior of club culture groups and social media.

In *Vampyroteuthis Infernalis. Alterity upside down,* Cristina Trivellin discusses Flusser's use of the point of view of the vampire squid to question an anthropocentric perspective. The *Vampyroteuthis* is the dark side, the sleep of reason, the unconscious, the fear of the unknown, the repression of drives, that which is submerged by science and religions but at the same time the utopia of the new man.

In his interview with Valentina Bonizzi in the essay *Angelo Schwarz and Valentina Bonizzi, Vilém Flusser in Italy*, Schwarz re-traces the context in which Flusser operated in Italy, with a

detailed historical perspective weaved together with the memory of his personal relationship with Flusser. In *What legitimizes photography? A meeting between Flusser and Vaccari*, Bonizzi describes the meeting between Flusser and the Italian artist Franco Vaccari in 1985 and 1987. In *Peripatetic documents: Vilém Flusser, Angelo Schwarz, Franco Vaccari*, Valentina Bonizzi has assembled images from two symposia on photography held in Torino in 1985 and in Erice in 1987 along with a series of pictures from Franco Vaccari (1972-2014).

Daniela Marcantonio analyzes in *Towards a Theory of Gestures* the theoretical perspective of Flusser's *Gesten. Versuch einer Phänomenologie* the function and properties of gestures from a semiotic point of view and providing a definition of gesture, which reflects its cultural and symbolic dimensions.

In *A completely different story? Social networks, storytelling and digital identities*, Antonio Sofia makes use of Vilém Flusser's thinking to discuss the identity of individuals in dispersed forms of community such as social networks. Digital identities can be analyzed to identify models and generalizations created from statistical calculation of occurrences, such as words or colors. The digital man is a deluge of forms and social-network-designs aimed to in-form and control the actual and possible human experience. The paper is a reflection created by means of a fictional conversation between Vilém Flusser and a few contemporary artists, sociologists, and philosophers.

The issue also contains a translation of Vilém Flusser's *On the Banality of Evil* done by Francesco Emilio Restuccia. In this article, published in 1969, Flusser rethinks the concept of the banality of evil, which Hannah Arendt developed in her book *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, in the chapter "A Report on the Banality of Evil" (1963). Portuguese and French versions of Flusser's text have already been published in *Flusser Studies* 09 (November 2009).

The last section of this issue contains a short text by Marco Cadioli titled *Snap Shooters. The evolution of the photographic gesture*, which is accompanied by a series of pictures.

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