

Introduction

Flusser Studies is ten years old! I want to thank all the people who contributed in one way or another to the life and growth of the journal over the years. I would also like to thank Gustavo Bernardo, Simone Osthoff and Eva Batličková, who has recently joined the editorial team, for their commitment and their precious help with the often difficult and tedious process of reviewing and editing incoming texts.

To celebrate the anniversary, I have structured this issue in three different but interrelated sections. Part 1 begins with a series of inspiring holograms of Vilém Flusser by the German artist Dieter Jung, one of the pioneers of creative holography, followed by a series of short personal statements by Rainer Guldin, Gustavo Bernardo, Eva Batlickova, Andreas Ströhl, Guido Bröckling and Michael Hanke. These texts focus on the impact Vilém Flusser's work had on the thinking, creativity and even personal life experience of the different authors. Besides a personal statement, Gottfried Jäger, who got to know Flusser personally in 1981, also contributed three black and white photos of some of his early work that was inspired by Flusser. In his double contribution, Dirk Henrich playfully and creatively reinterprets Flusser's notion of fabulatory science. Vera Schwamborn, who got to know Vilém Flusser in 1989 and worked in the first Flusser Archive in Den Haag in 1992/1993, has contributed a series of black and white pictures of a Merou, also known as Dusky Grouper. Flusser wanted to use them for one of his texts in *Artforum* dealing with fractals and self-similarity. Finally, Steffi Winkler's contribution, which carries over into the second part, consists of a series of commented visual representations: Flusser search engine and wiki links, Flusser sources (by Klaus Sander) and Flusser archive stock.

Part 2 is dedicated to the last ten years of *Flusser Studies* and sets out with a user's world map and a list of sessions and users by country taken from Google analytics, which was first implemented on May 30, 2008. It is followed by a complete list of all contributions to *Flusser Studies* from 2005 to 2015 and four more maps: an author's world map, a visual analysis of the growth of the journal over the years, and two more maps visualizing

individual contributions by nation and author. The content list and the second batch of maps are also from Steffi Winkler who comments them in her text at the end of part one.

In the preparatory phase to this issue, Simone Osthoff had proposed to republish some of the best work that has accumulated over the past decade. We decided to publish the five best contributions. I asked the members of the editorial and the advisory board as well as the numerous members of our newsletter distribution list to choose their favourites. The final choice was very difficult, as nearly forty different texts have been picked in the course of the selection process. Andreas Stöhl's "Flusser und der Dialog. Negentropische Klimmzüge über der Bodenlosigkeit" (Flusser Studies 01 - November 2005), Rafael Cardoso's "Devil May Care: Flusser's Journey into Exile and Beyond Reason" (Flusser Studies 04 - May 2007) and Louis Bec's "Vilém Flusser 1920 / 1991" (Flusser Studies 04 - May 2007), however, were the top three papers. To complement these scholarly texts, I added the different versions of Vilém Flusser's seminal paper "My Atlas" (Flusser Studies 14 - May 2012). These specific choices strongly emphasize the multilingual character of the journal. However, *Flusser Studies* is not only a textual site. In this sense, I also added Louis Bec's fascinating pictures of deep sea creatures (Flusser Studies 14 - May 2012), and the thematically linked video "Zoosystematica profundorum – Experimental Studies in Deep Sea Communication" by Alberto de Campo and Hannes Hoelzl (Flusser Studies 17 – May 2014).

Part 3 testifies to the constant expansion and liveliness of the scholarly field of Flusser Studies across the world. It sets out with a programmatic paper by a young Brazilian Flusser scholar. In "For a Flusserian Method", Camila Mozzini follows and explores in Flusser's texts his process of writing-thinking. To this end, she proposes a methodological trinity: affirmative writing and a certain economy of words; paradoxical writing creating and diluting dichotomies; experiential textuality as an aesthetic of existence.

Gustavo Bernardo's "Meta-Švejk" is an extract of a planned bilingual Portuguese and German biography of Vilém and Edith Flusser by Gustavo Bernardo and Rainer Guldin, planned for the end of 2016. It focuses upon Flusser's Czech origins from the point of view of Franz Kafka's *Die Verwandlung* (The Metamorphosis) and Jaroslav Hašek's *The Good Soldier Švejk* written between 1921 and 1923.

Eva Batličková's "Saul according to Flusser: a nearly archeological excursion" focuses on Vilém Flusser's German play *Saul*, written at the age of fifteen or sixteen, in 1935 or

1936, revealing the poetic roots of Flusser's writing. In the play, the elements have unconventional meanings: darkness is connected with the feminine, nature, mythos and reconciliation; light, on the other hand, represents the Universal God and is related to violence and suffering. Saul is an errant character with flaws, weakness, and is deeply human, while David, with his perfection, is perverse.

Rainer Guldin's "I had to fight against pathos [...]. On the origin and significance of Vilém Flusser's *The Twentieth Century. Attempt at a Subjective Synthesis*" is in tune with Batickova's contribution. In fact, the essay deals with Vilém Flusser's first book, *Das Zwanzigste Jahrhundert*, probably written in the mid-1950s, but never published. Flusser's main aim was to try to synthesize the West with the East: modern Western science with the Indian philosophy of the Vedanta, the contemporary Western concept of art with that of Chinese culture and the Judaic-Christian belief with Hinduism and Buddhism. The book also permits a reflection on the origins of Flusser's writing and the development of his style.

In "Flusser Now: Social Media in Brazil, and Philosophy in Detective Mode", Simone Osthoff reflects upon Flusser's legacy in light of Brazil's current social and economic changes. It examines DIY approaches to technology and the role of social media in challenging the racial and economic segregation that exists in that country. It also reflects upon Flusser's methodology through the "pop philosophy" of Patti Smith and Avital Ronell.

Daniel Irrgang's "Letters between Vilém Flusser and Felix Philipp Ingold, 1981–1990" examines the correspondence between Vilém Flusser and Felix Philipp Ingold. In this extensive correspondence (1981–1990), both scholars reflect upon and criticize each other's work, in a very productive manner. The article gives an overview of the last topics discussed by them focussing above all on the concept of technical/synthetic image.

In "From Abstraction to Concretion: A Brief Overview of the Exhibition Project BODENLOS_Vilém Flusser and the Arts", Baruch Gottlieb, curator of the exposition "Bodenlos – Vilém Flusser und die Künste", describes the attempted mise-en-scène of Flusser's thinking in museum settings, applying the techniques of exhibition-making to produce a space to encounter Flusser anew in all his multifarious and passionate contradictions. The exposition was first held at the ZKM in Karlsruhe from August 14 to October 18 2015, and is presently to be viewed at the Akademie der Künste in Berlin until January 10 2016. I have also added a diagram from the exhibition: a graphic representation of

the repertoire of the São Paulo Bienal based on Vilém Flusser's proposal. I thank the Flusser Archive in Berlin for the kind permission to publish this file.

The next work is a multi-media installation by Rodrigo Maltez Novaes. "On Typography" is a dialogue between the work of Vilém Flusser and Augusto de Campos. It was created for the exhibition curated by Tainá Guedes titled "Entretempo, Entre os Tempos", which took place at Entretempo Kitchen Gallery, Berlin, 2015 (<http://entretempo-kitchen-gallery.com>). The central element of the piece is a commented reading on video of Vilém Flusser's essay also titled "On Typography." The video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VyKznUeB5JY>) was presented on a desk together with the essay on paper and a print of all the individual characters of that essay. I have added a short text on two projects, in which Rodrigo Maltez Novaes is currently engaged: *Metaflux Publishing* (<http://metafluxpublishing.com/index.php/contact/>) and the constitution of a new platform of Vilém Flusser's typescripts.

Near the end of his career, Vilém Flusser delivered an address to an informal group in Vienna called the "TV Club Wien". The text of this speech – "Science Fiction" – has been published here with an English translation by William A. Hanff. In this lecture, Flusser contrasted two different epistemologies: one that moves closer and closer to truth by falsification and another that moves closer and closer to absurdity and gnosis, while remaining phenomenologically disciplined. He concluded with the idea that these two epistemological paths come together best in computer codes, and possibly in synthetic images, which result from scientific research.

In "Does Translation Have a Future in the Post-Historical Society?" Cláudia Santana Martins explores some of the connections between different periods of Flusser's thought, and points to some possible ways Flusser's view on language and translation can be applied to his conception of post-historical society.

Francisco Augusto Freitas's "Images of Post-History: a dialogue between Flusser and Benjamin" intends to establish a dialogue between these two thinkers by considering their similarities and their differences on three interconnected areas: philosophy of language, technology and media, and philosophy of history.

Finally, in "Vilém Flusser in Brazil: Media and the New Human" Débora Medeiros focuses on Vilém Flusser's *Fenomenologia do brasileiro: em busca de um novo homem*, which has not been as extensively studied as other important works of the philosopher. Flusser ar-

gued that a new form of sociability (the new human) could result from the peculiarities of Brazilian society, such as a synthesis of diverse influences in the creation of original cultural manifestations, and a unique form of mutual responsibility.

The upcoming May 2016 issue of *Flusser Studies* is being organized by Simone Osthoff and Priscila Arantes. The focus of the issue is upon the relevance of Flusser's ideas to the field of Design as well as Media Histories. The November 2016 issue will focus on translation and translingual writing in the humanities and the natural sciences.

Rainer Guldin, Editor-in-Chief, Lugano, December 2015