

Editor's Preface

Pierpaolo Marrone
Università di Trieste
Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici
marrone@units.it

It is very difficult to say what are the limits of application of the categories of subject, identity, otherness. Their persistent presence in philosophical research and tradition testifies of the immense importance of these concepts. For example, the subject is so much the substance as the focal point that we persist in calling individual. Clearly, at the same time, the very idea of a substantial subject is not immune from that critical inquiry that philosophy has the ambition to practice. Identity is the work of identification, but also at the same time the making of the distinction. But identity also means a relation of the subject with time: how much identical to himself/herself/itself can be a subject who plays his/her/its story within biological and historical time? Besides, identity is a concept that is often defined *per viam negationis* in comparison to what is not identical, that is diversity and otherness. And otherness is an identity that is opposed to us, a *different* identity that helps to define us within a humanity different from ours, within an animality that we often forget to belong to.

The contributions that are collected in this section are the result of several seminars that were held during two years at the University of Trieste, funded by FRA 2012. Of course, our ambition could not be to say even a few final words on the mighty categorical apparatus that the subject, the identical and the other mean in our cultural tradition. More modestly and realistically, we have tried to explore some dimensions and some problems. In these problems, we felt that there was a significant presence of these concepts, even if such presence is not always obvious.

Marco Cossutta (*L'essere umano fra soggettività giuridica ed oggettività economica. Note sulla non-cittadinanza fra diritti fondamentali ed incapacità giuridica speciale*) investigates the constitution of the subjects and their identity starting from the rights of citizenship,

highlighting how the very idea of citizenship – that is, a socio-political identity - build an exclusion towards some fundamental rights of other subjects. This denial seems to have no solid conceptual justification. To support his thesis Cossutta mainly focuses on a specific category of non-citizens, i.e. foreign workers resident in a host country. While these individuals contribute powerfully to the social reproduction of the host country, they are held back by preventing them to fully participate in social life.

Renato Cristin (*Il complesso d'Europa. Comprensione di sé e interpretazione dell'altro nell'identità europea*) addresses the issue of identity from the point of view of philosophy of culture and of a broad historical reflection. The thesis of Cristin is that the research and the construction of an European identity have been put aside in favor of a conception of Europe built around a simply functional bureaucracy, without using the tools of historical and cultural reflection,. An integration of this kind can only be inherently fragile and destined to decay, because does neither allow recognition of any European subjectivity nor pursue a coherent federalist political project.

Pierpaolo Marrone (*Subjects to Dialogue*) investigates the relationship between subject, dialogue, neutrality and liberal thought in the political philosophy of Bruce Ackermann. Ackermann's theory of dialogue is of particular significance because it has the ambition to describe the operating conditions of a liberal society, in which the conflict is always actually present, as a regulated competition for the acquisition of scarce resources, which can be both material and immaterial. Marrone's thesis is that one of the structural conditions of the dialogue described by Ackermann, neutrality, is much less neutral than it might appear, and that this could be shown through his solution to the problem of distributive justice.

Fabio Polidori (*L'altro che forse sono. Tra uomo e animale*) deals with one of the radical dimensions of otherness, that is the problem of the animal. The animal is the dark bottom of the foundation of modern philosophy, a philosophy that is built on the subject. However, this subject is not the result of a unique theoretical foundation, but is mainly a web of mobile strategies that draw him/her/its as ontological subject and as the subject of ethics. In this sense, the animal is involved both in our identity and in our relationship with otherness. The paper analyzes some moments of this story, which cannot be closed down and

that, indeed, in some ways is still in its beginnings, especially through the philosophies of Nietzsche, Heidegger and Derrida, in an attempt to revive the question of meanings and implications of the claim of human subject to understand subject, identity, otherness through self-foundation.