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LOOKING FOR *AURA* IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The biannual journal *Global Humanities* (ISSN: 2199-3939) issued by Edizioni Museo Pasqualino, the publishing house of the Museo Internazionale delle Marionette Antonio Pasqualino, Italy, in print and open access, looks for proposals for its forthcoming issue (Fall 2022).

The journal continues its attempt to strengthen interdisciplinary research in Humanities in relation to its topical issues. For the fall 2022, volume 10 is planned to deal with the topic "Looking for *aura* in the 21st Century".

86 years have passed since the publication of the Benjamin's pivotal work ([1936] 1968) entitled *Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit* (*The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*) where he introduces the concept of *aura*, referring to a quality allegedly missed by the mechanically reproduced work of art, that of its *uniqueness*, defined by its presence in time and space, at the place where it happens to be located. Such a definition involves a number of philosophical and æsthetical problems related at least to the dichotomies of truth/false, authentic/inauthentic, unique/serial, beautiful/ugly, artistic/kitsch, which emerge as of central importance in the contemporary debate. Borrowed from a religious lexicon commonly used in Religious studies (see the concept of Holy as defined by Otto [1917] 1923), all along the last century, this idea has been widely investigated and discussed by the Æsthetic theory (see, as an initial glance on the current debate, Di Giacomo, M., Marchetti, eds., 2013) and Sociological and Media Theory (from Weber [1922] 1947– see the parallel notion of charisma – to Bourdieu ([1979] 1984, up to the debate over mass and more recently digital media). In particular, the Semiotic discipline within a wider philosophical debate concerning a Structural Theory of Culture, has developed an original reflection on these themes, from the founding contributions of Baudrillard (1972), Eco ([1985] 1990), Lotman (1987), Greimas (1980, 1987), Prieto ([1988] 1989), Fabbri (2010) and to the latest interventions of Dondero (2007), Latour ([2008] 2011), Fontanille (2015) and many others, insisting on the semiotic procedures able to create an effect of *aura* as their outcome.

But the present time enlightens new emerging nuances in this concept which are well worth being investigated. The forthcoming issue of GH seeks to assess these in more detail. *Aura* has, nowadays, largely flooded the traditional theoretical fence of concept in the theory of Art in which has been usually confined, to show up as a general and eminently political issue. Following the ongoing process of *artification* (Heinich and Shapiro 2012) of daily life, the problem of the construction/translation/migration/dissipation of the *aura* shows up in management terms. Long-standing queries as the ones concerning the role played by technologies in its designation find new challengers in the increasingly invasive state of the mediatization process (e.g. Immersive and Locative Media, Virtual Reality, Instagram, new platforms like the Metaverse etc.). However, authenticity becomes an issue in political communication (how do current populist politicians construct their *aura*/charisma, becoming credible for large audiences? How do specific rhetorical assets like, for instance, political correctness may enforce/undermine *aura*?), Space (what is a square, a village, a city, a retail space, a place called authentic?), in Cultural Heritage (to what extent an object, a custom, an identity-related practice earn the quality of being considered as authentic?), Tourism (what does it make a travel authentic?), Gastronomy (how does specific dishes or ingredients become authentic expression of a territory or community?). At least, what does a life authentic?

We therefore ask scholars at any step of their academic career to submit paper proposals for analyses focused on specific texts and practices which happen to determine *aura*.

Suggested areas of investigation are:

- *Aura* and Benjamin in the 21st Century (referring to the letter of the Benjamin's text in light of evidencing any problematic aspect in explicating the present time);

- *Aura* in Religious daily life;

- *Aura* in the Digital Sphere;

- *Aura* of Artifacts and Cultural Heritage;

- *Aura* in the New Forms of Politics;

- *Aura* in Tourism;

- *Aura* and the Pandemic;

- *Aura* in Experience and Daily Life.

With regard to time period and theoretical approach, this call for papers is totally open.

Please send your paper proposals (max. 300 words and a short biographical note) to Francesco Mangiapane (francesco.mangiapane@unipa.it) and Frank Jacob (frank.jacob@nord.no) by May 15, 2022.

Full papers are due by June 30, 2020 and should have a length of 6,000-8,000 words.

A style sheet will be provided together with a decision about the proposals by May 25.

Minimal reference list

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