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WEBINAR

is it possible to talk about evil in the time of the pandemic ?

... online from Paris : 14h – 17h (CET)

29 June `20

Osamu NISHITANI
Angel DELREZ
Ivana PERICA
Daniel James SMITH
María Lucía RIVERA
Sergio BENVENUTO

<https://tinyurl.com/evil-covid-1>

<https://tinyurl.com/zoom-link-1>
Password: 261137

30 June `20

Pierre NAKOULIMA
Romi MUKHERJEE
Benedetta TODARO
Federico FERRARI
Marcia śa CAVALCANTE
Shaj MOHAN

<https://tinyurl.com/evil-covid-2>

<https://tinyurl.com/zoom-link-2>
Password: 782134

1 July `20

Divya DWIVEDI
Juan Manuel GARRIDO
Parham SHAHRJERDI
Sanogo AĪDAS
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<https://tinyurl.com/evil-covid-3>

<https://tinyurl.com/zoom-link-3>
Password: 299170

The world is in the grip of Covid-19, and there is a deeper concern about pandemics in general and other global diseases, including climate change. Today, it is necessary to open a conversation about the diseases of the world through the concept of “evil.” Covid-19 forces humanity to focus on death and fear, and reintroduces existential questioning into our individual and collective lives. Since it accelerates our growing concern for the future of the planet while at the same time triggering other social, economic and political crises, this special webinar will reflect on the importance of advancing philosophy and the human sciences in general to deepen the understanding of this pandemic and the global transformations taking place.



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Osamu Nishitani

Lutter contre quoi, sous l'état d'urgence?

Le monde se trouve en païque par la pandémie. La machinerie de la civilisation, techno-science-économie en sortira mieux armée: réduire la dimension de vie humaine, la virtualiser davantage. Ce serait la sortie de l'humanité obsolète ?

The world is on the edge of the pandemic. The machinery of civilization, techno-science-economy will come out better armed: reduce the size of human life, virtualize it more. It would be the exit of obsolete humanity?

Osamu Nishitani is philosopher and professor emeritus of Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. Born in 1950, author of « Wonderland » of Immortality, Critical phase of the Universal History, What is the War on Terror?, America, Systeme of Liberty, etc.

Angel Delrez

Penser – par temps de catastrophe / To think – in time of catastrophe

La pensée semble n'avoir plus pour seule alternative, aujourd'hui (i.e. par temps de catastrophe sanitaire), que celle de prendre part ou bien à la récapitulation prophylactique des ravages de l'idéologie bourgeoise, ou bien à l'anticipation stratégique de ce qu'il lui faudrait œuvrer à faire advenir. Ainsi tournée ou bien vers le passé, ou bien vers le futur, la pensée paraît ainsi comme vouée à se dé-tourner de la catastrophe, et ce, au risque de ne plus pouvoir (au mieux) l'aborder que depuis son avant ou son après. Mais l'avant et l'après (de la catastrophe) sont-ils les seuls lieux de la pensée ? En sont-ce seulement les lieux ? Ne sont-ce pas là, bien plutôt, les « non-lieux » de la pensée, soit les « lieux » à l'aune desquels celle-ci, s'exceptant de la catastrophe, se distrait de cette responsabilité originaire qui, la rappelant à son étymologie, l'enjoint à se porter garante de la suspension du monde ?

Thought seems to have no other alternative today (i.e. in times of health catastrophe) than to take part either in the prophylactic recapitulation of the ravages of bourgeois ideology, or in the strategic anticipation of what thought itself should dictate to be coming. Thus turned either towards the past or towards the future, thought thus seems as if it were doomed to turn away from the catastrophe, at the risk (at best) of being able to approach it only from its before or its after. But are the before and the after (of the catastrophe) the only places of thought? And moreover, are they the places of thought? Are they not, rather, the "non-places" of thought, the "places" by the yardstick of which thought, excepting itself from the catastrophe, distracts itself from this original

responsibility which, recalling it to its etymology, enjoins it to stand as guarantor of the suspension of the world ?

Angel Delrez est doctorant en philosophie auprès de l'Université Paris Nanterre (laboratoire Sophiapol) et de l'Università degli studi di Torino (consortium FINO). Sa thèse, intitulée « Marx, Derrida et le temps du capital », porte sur les enjeux de ce qu'il y qualifie d'« héritage de-Derrida-de-Marx ». Entre autres publications et/ou communications récentes, on mentionnera : « Un spectre hante l'Europe : le spectre de la clandestinité » (2018), « Avec Derrida, répondre de Marx » (2019) ; « "Everything burns", ou la société de consommation » (2019) ; et « Dell'eredità di-Derrida-di-Marx » (2020).

Ivana Perica

The proximity of death and the remoteness of totality

I will reflect on the experience of not only numerous coronavirus deaths but also of the imagined proximity of death: our collective, global, final death. By way of a detour over Georg Lukacs' Tailism and the Dialectic and his reflections on social mediations of totality, and reviewing the contemporary crisis as a historical process that takes place inside society but involves nature to an unprecedented extent, I wish to understand the what, the how, the how far, etc., of our consciousness of nature and of our reflected relationship to it is altered by the current crisis.

Ivana Perica is the author of Die privat-öffentliche Achse des Politischen: Das Unvernehmen zwischen Hannah Arendt und Jacques Rancière (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2016). After the completion of her PhD at the University of Vienna, she taught in the Department of Political Science at the University of Vienna and the University of Applied Arts Vienna. Since March 2019, she has been a Postdoctoral Researcher at the LMU Munich (DFG Research Training Group 'Globalization and Literature: Representations, Transformations, Interventions'), where she is pursuing a habilitation project on political literature around the fracture points of 1928 and 1968.

Daniel James Smith

Nature's Revenge? On "Natural Evil" and the Coronavirus

Is the virus evil? Historically, philosophy has used the paradigm of "natural evil" to explain such things as disease, plague, and pestilence. However, this concept was made obsolete by developments in late modern philosophy that retain a powerful hold on our thinking – it is only the most reactionary apologists for human suffering who speak of "natural evil" in the present crisis. This

presentation asks the question: where do we stand with nature today? Is it possible for contemporary philosophy to reach back to the question of nature, or must our reflections on the coronavirus be confined to the horizon of the state?

Daniel J. Smith is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at the University of Memphis. He received his Ph.D. from Penn State in 2018, and has published numerous articles on a variety of figures including Deleuze, Foucault, Derrida and Hegel. He is currently writing a book on the concept of "evil" in German Idealism.

María Lucía Rivera Sanín

Evil and Urgency in a Conflictual pandemic

In the Latin American context, and particularly in Colombia, the pandemic has shown that inequality has deepened and that the ever more unburdened action of violence and conflict (our somehow failed peace agreement, the systematic killings of social leaders, and the interest of erasing history by some political factions) constitute urgent threats alongside an impoverished population and debilitated institutions. The threat of increasing an already present state of mutual suspicion and vigilance, and a tendency for justifying actions and decisions that are harmful to vulnerable individuals and groups, seems to be a disguised way of perpetuating evil in our society. Moreover, it seems that we are taking steps towards becoming a society of distrust, in which fear of contagion is mixed with diverse ways of exclusion such as xenophobia, racism, gender-based violence and aporophobia (to use Adela Cortina's concept).

María Lucía Rivera Sanín, PhD from the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, post-doctoral researcher in Bioethics with Universidad El Bosque, Associate Professor of Bioethics in Universidad El Bosque, Bogotá Colombia. Founding member of the Red Colombiana de Mujeres Filósofas, member of the Consultive Committee of the Red de Mujeres Filósofas de América Latina UNESCO, member of Redbioética UNESCO.

Sergio Benvenuto

Is Evil an Illusion?

The talk briefly traces the history of the notion of Evil in Western metaphysics, noting a solid and continuous thread (from Plato to Marx and beyond) which initially considers Evil as an illusion (in opposition to Good as Ultimate Being) and later as a human product, a sort of artifact, in opposition to a deified Nature. This idea that Evil was introduced into the world by humans leads to a

belief that humans hold some anti-divine (Satanic) power to create negation and evil in the world. The author thinks that this denunciation of humans as the source of evil tends to hark back to the idea that Evil is a masterpiece of humanity and—in a very ambivalent way—the manifestation of its power and freedom.

Sergio Benvenuto is a psychoanalyst and philosopher, researcher at the National Council for Scientific Research (CNR) in Rome, Italy. Since 1995 he is the editor of EJP. European Journal of Psychoanalysis. He has worked on Freud and Lacan, Wittgenstein and ethics, Plato's philosophy of Eros, Theory of Fashion, Theory of populism, Monotheisms (with J.-L. Nancy). His publications, in many different languages, include: « Perversion and charity : an ethical approach », in D. Nobus & L. Downing eds., Perversion. Psychoanalytic Perspectives / Perspectives on Psychoanalysis (London: Karnac, 2006, pp. 59-78); with A. Molino, In Freud's Tracks (New York: Aronson, 2008); What Are Perversions? (London: Karnac, 2016); Conversations with Lacan (London: Routledge, 2020). Personal site and Bibliography:

<http://www.sergiobenvenuto.it/>

Pierre Gomdago Nakoulima

Tristes Tropiques

Le coronavirus vient rappeler la fragilité constitutive de l'humain. En Afrique où on voit Dieu partout il est courant d'entendre dire que c'est un châtement divin. Espérons que l'après virus nous fera entrer dans un monde nouveau où l'humain sera placé au coeur des préoccupations.

The coronavirus is a reminder of the constitutive fragility of humans. In Africa where we see God everywhere it is common to hear that it is a divine punishment. Hopefully, after the virus will bring us into a new world where humans will be placed at the heart of concerns.

Gomdago Pierre Nakoulima est professeur titulaire à l'université Joseph Ki Zerbo de Ouagadougou et président du centre universitaire de Manga. Il a de nombreuses publications sur le développement, les questions environnementales. Il dirige le laboratoire crises, mutations et gestion des conflits.

Romi Mukherjee

Vampires and Viruses

This paper examines how COVID-19 interacts with the viral nature of neo-liberalism and the pandemics that it engenders including *inter alia* racism, militarism, and poverty. We explore how these various viruses mutate in

synchrony and interact with each other. We argue that these new contagions are endemic to the “vampiric system,” a hyper-object of contemporary decadence.

A historian of religion, S. Romi Mukherjee is Professor of Global Liberal Studies at New York University in Paris and Visiting Lecturer in the Political Humanities at Sciences Po – Paris.

Benedetta Todaro

« ... mais délivre-nous du Mal » / “... but deliver us from Evil”

Dans un monde où la pathologie est, désormais, pa(n)thologie, pouvons-nous encore espérer dans l’action bien-veillante d’un Dieu – le Bien – dont le rôle serait de nous délivrer de son inséparable ennemi, le Mal ? Autrement dit, si aujourd’hui le Mal est Pan, pouvons-nous encore nous tourner vers un quelque Bien providentiel ? Face au panikos, à la panique, c’est-à-dire à la peur collective du « sans objet » – à savoir : le virus, il semblerait que nous ne puissions plus nous appuyer sur d’anciennes oppositions salvatrices, dont l’une des polarités serait toujours déjà préservée et comme vaccinée contre le Mal, mais qu’il nous faille plutôt penser un autre type de salvation, anti-panique, susceptible ainsi d’exorciser ce Mal – le Mal total.

In a world where pathology is, from now on, pa(n)thology, can we still hope in the benevolent action of the Go(o)d ready to deliver us from his inseparable enemy, the Evil? In other words, if today Evil is Pan, can we still turn towards some providential Go(o)d? Confronting panikos, that is the collective fear of the "without object" – namely : the virus, it would seem that we can no longer rely on ancient saving oppositions, one polarity of which would still be already preserved as if vaccinated against Evil, but that we must instead think of another kind of salvation, anti-panic, able to exorcise this Evil – the total Evil.

Psychologue de formation, **Benedetta Todaro** est actuellement doctorante en Philosophie auprès de l’Université Paris-Est Créteil et Attaché Temporaire d’Enseignement et de Recherche auprès de l’Université de Picardie Jules Verne. Ses recherches actuelles, à la croisée de la psychologie et de la philosophie, s’agencent autour de la question du corps dans la société occidentale. / Trained as a psychologist, Benedetta Todaro is currently a PHD student in Philosophy at the Université Paris-Est Créteil and a Temporary Teacher and Researcher at the Université de Picardie Jules Verne. Her current research, at the crossroads of psychology and philosophy, focuses on the question of the body in Western society.

Federico Ferrari

A exception de moi

Nous sommes tous très fatigués et tous très préoccupés d’être en train de perdre nos vies, notre vie. Le grand état d’exception est foncé au-dessus de nous. Toute liberté a été suspendue afin de préserver la vie de tout un chacun. Il y a maintenant devant nous une pluralité de scénarios plus ou moins apocalyptiques. Parmi ceux, d’un part, la réduction à des processus automatisés de la totalité de certaines populations ou certains milieux de la société et, d’autre part, l’apparition d’une sorte d’anarchisme super-individualiste dont on n’arrive pas encore à cerner les contours.

We are all very tired and very concerned that we are losing our lives, our life. The great state of emergency is dark above us. All liberty has been suspended in order to preserve everyone's life. There is now before us a variety of more or less apocalyptic scenarios. Among those, on the one hand, the reduction to automated processes of the totality of certain populations or certain circles of society and, on the other hand, the appearance of a kind of super-individualist anarchism which we do not yet manage to define the contours.

Federico Ferrari teaches Philosophy of Art at Brera Academy of Fine Arts in Milan. He was correspondent for the Collège International de Philosophie, based in Paris. He is the founder, with Andrea Cortellessa and Riccardo Venturi, of the web journal www.antinomie.it. Among this publication: *La comunità errante. Battaglia e l’esperienza comunitaria*, Lanfranchi, Milano 1997; *Nudità. Per una critica silenziosa*, Lanfranchi, Milano 1999; *Nous sommes*, (with Jean-Luc Nancy), Gevaert Editeur, Bruxelles 2002; 2a ed. Klincksieck, Paris 2006; *Iconographie de l’auteur*, (with Jean-Luc Nancy), Galilée, Paris 2005; *Being Nude*, (with Jean-Luc Nancy), Fordham University Press, New York 2014; *Sub specie aeternitatis. Arte ed etica*, Diabasis, Reggio Emilia 2008; *L’insieme vuoto. Per una pragmatica dell’immagine*, Johan & Levi, Milano 2013; *L’anarca*, Mimesis, Milano 2014; *La fin des fins*, (with Jean-Luc Nancy), Editions Cécile Defaut, Nantes 2015 (2eme ed. augmentée, Kimé, Paris 2018); *Oscillazioni. Frammenti di un'autobiografia*, SE, Milano 2016.

Marcia Cavalcante

Le mal à peine arrivé / And Evil barely arrived

Une réflexion sur comment le mal nous arrive, depuis peu, depuis un moment, à peine, et ce qui nous reste.

A reflection about how evil arrives to us, barely, only just, “à peine” and the rest left to us.

Marcia Sá Cavalcante Schuback, Brazilian, Professor of Philosophy at Södertörn University in Sweden. Her most recent book is *Time in Exile: In Conversation with Heidegger, Blanchot, and Clarice Lispector* (2020).

Shaj Mohan

The Vortex of Evil

There have been several conceptions of evil—steresis, stasis, the constitutive suffering of the world, a bad heart, banality, the absence of knowledge. Each of these conceptions are grounded in their distinct systems of thought, and yet each one of them do not cancel one another in these dark hours of our world. However, we are already caught up in something conceptually, and therefore really, unprecedented for our time—a vortex of evil which gathers and reinforces the several conceptions of evil to reveal something about evil itself. Shaj Mohan is a philosopher based in the Subcontinent. His academic training is in philosophy, economics and mathematics. His research publications are in the areas of philosophy of technology, metaphysics, reason, politics and truthness. **Shaj Mohan** is the co-author with Divya Dwivedi of *Gandhi and Philosophy: On Theological Anti-Politics* (Bloomsbury Academic, UK, 2018; foreword by Jean-Luc Nancy). His interviews and political writings have appeared in *Le Monde*, *Indian Express*, *Libération*, *La Croix*, and *Mediapart*.

Divya Dwivedi

The Modals of Lost Responsibilities

Through this pandemic and the great isolation of a world-wide lockdown, we are experiencing a recession in our ability to comprehend a truly world-wide situation of evil. Evil concerns human action, and it is that which should not have happened, that should have been prevented. How can we witness millions of people in distress, thousands dead, and still say that we could not or should not have foreseen the paths and consequences of the viral infection? This predictability is and should have been the touchstone for thinking and transforming the world-wide arrangement. This “should have been” is a modal verb in the past tense, and it describes our relation to our will and ability in hindsight. Let us call it “the modal of lost responsibilities” and the “modal of lost possibilities.” Modals of lost responsibilities point to nothing other than politics, the fight for freedom.

Divya Dwivedi is a philosopher based in the subcontinent. She is Associate Professor of Philosophy and Literature in the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Delhi. She is the co-author with

Shaj Mohan of *Gandhi and Philosophy: On Theological Anti-Politics*. She coedited *Narratology and Ideology* (Ohio State University Press, 2018) and *Public Sphere from outside the West* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2015). She has recently edited “L’Inde: Colossale et Capitale,” a special issue of the revue *Critique* (Éditions Minuit 872-873, January 2020), a special issue of *Revue des femmes philosophes* no. 4-5 (titled *Intellectuels, Philosophes, Femmes en Inde: des espèces en danger*, CNRS-Unesco, 2017).

Juan Manuel Garrido

Fear and evil in the context of Covid-19

The Covid-19 experience invites to rethink the role of fear and evil in the organization of collective life, specifically in the current techno-economic context for the production or self-production of human beings.

Juan Manuel Garrido is professor of philosophy in the Department of Philosophy at Alberto Hurtado University, Santiago de Chile. His research interests include the philosophical concept of life and the philosophy of knowledge production and scientific practice. Among his publications are *La formation des formes* (Galilée 2008), *On time, being and hunger: challenging the traditional way of thinking life* (Fordham University Press 2012) and *Producción de conocimiento* (Metales Pesados 2018).

Parham Shahrjerdi

Il serait beau de témoigner que nous avons conscience de notre nuit

Nom de code: COVID-19. Le risque de mourir nous arrête, nous égare. Confinés, nous sommes un peu plus enfermés sur nous-mêmes: coupés du monde. De là où nous sommes, partons ailleurs, allons en Iran, rendons présent un peuple invisible. Le mal est fait depuis trop longtemps. Parlons-en.

Code name: COVID-19. The risk of dying stops us, leads us astray. Confined, we are a little more locked in on ourselves: cut off from the world. From where we are, we go elsewhere, we go to Iran, we make an invisible people present. The damage has been done for too long. Let's talk about it.

Parham Shahrjerdi (né en 1980 à Téhéran, Iran) vit à Paris. Écrivain, critique, éditeur et traducteur, il est fondateur du site Espace Maurice Blanchot (blanchot.fr) et cofondateur la revue Hors-Sol (hors-sol.net). Éditeur d'œuvres importantes de la nouvelle littérature iranienne (interdites par la censure) et, en persan, d'œuvres de J. Baudrillard, J. Butler, G. Deleuze et G. Bataille.

Sanogo Aidas

“Suffering and smiling”: life, disease and death in Burkina Faso

The Covid-19 pandemic has reminded humanity of its vulnerability despite the various technological progress witnessed in the last centuries. The realness of death and our powerlessness towards it as human beings has been brought back to our attention in a striking way. The alarming death toll in countries that are perceived as powerful has raised several questions about the links between resilience, disease, life and death. This paper reflects on the perceptions and reactions of Ouagadougou dwellers towards the corona virus. As a so called third world country, Burkina Faso has been fighting its own battles against diseases like malaria long before the current pandemic. Drawing on ethnographic data, the paper analyses how several decades of “suffering and smiling” have shaped Ouagadougou dwellers perceptions of disease, life and death during a six week lockdown due to Covid-19.

Aïdas Sanogo is a social anthropologist who specializes in urban land governance. She lectures at the Centre Universitaire de Manga, Burkina Faso. Her current research compares land tenure systems in urban West Africa, with a specific focus on three secondary cities: Kumasi in Ghana, Bouaké in Côte d’Ivoire and Bobo Dioulasso in Burkina Faso. Rooted in the field of urban and political anthropology, drawing on multi-sited ethnographic fieldwork, this research project looks into the intertwined links between urban dwellers’ discourses and practices related to land tenure. Using a diversity of land conflicts as an entry point, she analyzes how heterogeneous groups of social actors involved in urban land governance constantly (re)shape their understanding of urbanity.

Jan Völker

Mirages of the act

For Kant, the subjective basis of evil is „an act of freedom“. Thus freedom and evil are not simply opposed, but related, at a specific point they intersect. The current pandemic situation intensifies this point of an impossible choice: And the utmost evil outcome of it might be the transformation of this choice, of the act, into a mirage.

Jan Völker is a research associate at the Institute of Fine Arts and Aesthetics at the Berlin University of the Arts, associate professor at the Institute of Philosophy of the Slovenian Academy of Arts and Sciences in Ljubljana, and teaches at Bard College Berlin. His current work focuses on the division of modern thought between Marx, Freud, Kant, and Hegel. Recent Publications include (as editor and translator) “German Philosophy”, a debate between Alain Badiou and Jean-Luc Nancy (MIT, 2018); “Badiou and the German Tradition of Philosophy” (ed., Bloomsbury, 2019).

Jean-Luc Nancy

Maladie, malheur, maléfice.

Il semble que l'humanité du XXI^e siècle s'inflige systématiquement à elle-même le mal sous ces trois formes mêlées. C'est-à-dire qu'elle s'empêche de vivre et d'exister. Qu'elle est en train de s'auto-immuniser sans limites. D'autant plus qu'elle se croyait auto-suffisante.

It seems that the humanity of the 21st century is systematically inflicting evil on itself in these three mixed forms. That is to say, it prevents itself from living and existing. That it is in the process of self-immunizing without limits. Especially since it believed itself to be self-sufficient.

Jean-Luc Nancy is Distinguished Professor of Philosophy at the University of Strasbourg and one of France’s foremost intellectuals. His work spans over dozens of books, hundreds of articles, addressing a diverse set of topics, including community, religion, and the body, as well as the major figures of the modern intellectual tradition. Some of his major works include: *La Communauté désœuvrée* (Paris, Christian Bourgois, 1986), *L’Expérience de la liberté* (Paris, Galilée, 1988), *Une pensée finie* (Paris, Galilée, 1990), *Corpus* (Paris, Métailié, 1992), *Être singulier pluriel* (Paris, Galilée, 1996), *L’“il y a” du rapport sexuel* (Paris, Galilée, 2001), *Déconstruction du christianisme* (Paris, Galilée, 2005-10), *L’Intrus* (Paris, Galilée, 2010), *La Possibilité d’un monde* (Paris, Les petits Platon, 2013), *La Communauté désavouée* (Paris, Galilée, 2014), and *Que faire ?* (Paris, Galilée, 2016).