



## SIMMEL ABSTRACTS Jahrgang 2011

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[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

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# SIMMEL ABSTRACTS

## Jahrgang 2011

(hrsg. v. Cécile Rol und Claudia Portioli)

BEISER, Frederick C., 2011, *The German historicist tradition*, Oxford u.a., Oxford University Press, XII-600 p.

Frederick C. Beiser surveys the major German thinkers on history from the middle of the eighteenth century until the early twentieth century, providing an introduction to each thinker and the main issues in interpreting and appraising their thought from J. A. Chladenius up to Max Weber. A chapter is dealing with "Simmel's early historicism".

BEN AMARA, Radhouan, 2011, *Frontiers and Thresholds in Rushdie's Writings*, in «Between», vol. 1, N. 1 (Frontiere, Confini, Limiti), <http://www.between-journal.it>

After a brief discussion of the main facets surrounding the theme of the border, this paper examines how the works of Salman Rushdie have offered new perspectives on the interpretation of the role and the sense of the border. With the aid of some studies, such as those by Simmel and Derrida which highlight the complex phenomena of inclusion/exclusion/encounter that the boundary creates on a sociological, political, cultural and aesthetic level, it has been possible to re-read some of the most meaningful works of one of the authors who has devoted more attention than most to the theme of exile and migration. Works such as *Shame*, *The Satanic Verses*, *Step Across This Line*, and *The Enchantress of Florence*, in particular, become carriers of the reflection on the roots and influence through the use of a dialogic form at a linguistic and intertextual level, as well as through a constant theming of the frontier-crossing.

BOURQUIN, Gilles, 2011, *Théologie de la spiritualité : une approche protestante de la culture religieuse en postmodernité*, Genève, Labor et Fides, 430 S. Zugl. Diss., Univ. Lausanne.

The book addresses the religious culture of the postmodern time through a protestant perspective. The main theoretical reference of the author is Georg Simmel's, specially his last philosophical work "Lebensphilosophie". In the

first chapter, Burquin takes into account the relationship between Protestantism and the postmodern culture; whereas in the second chapter he analyses the concepts of spirituality and religion. After having considered the foundations of the theology, he illustrates the conditions of a protestant theology of spirituality. The last chapter is dedicated to grace and to its temporal development.

CIPOLLINI, R., 2011, *Straniero e modernità: riflessioni su Tönnies e Simmel*, in «Sociologia e ricerca sociale», vol. 32, N. 95, pp. 81-103.

This article sheds light on the differences and common aspects between Simmel's and Tönnies' analysis of the foreigner in relationship to modernity. The foreigners appears as one of the new figures of the metropolis who is connected with the transformations of the urban spaces occurred between the last part of the 18<sup>th</sup> and the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. One of the most relevant characteristics they highlight is the foreigner's ambivalence which is expressed, among other elements, by their mobility, their lack of stable social bonds and by their freedom. Nevertheless, if Tönnies focusses his attention on the foreigner as an isolated individual, Simmel tends to see the stranger as a social "type" who can be further investigated from a social psychological perspective.

COLLETT, Jessica L., 2001, *(Re)Integrating Simmel in Contemporary Social Exchange: The Effect of Nonpartisans on Relational Outcomes*, in «Social Forces», vol. 90, N. 2, pp. 617-637.

Despite the increased prevalence of neutral third parties in both formal and informal exchange processes, social exchange theory has yet to consider the effect of nonpartisans on important cognitive and affective outcomes of exchange. This research integrates Simmel's conceptualization of small groups and nonpartisans with contemporary theory and research in social exchange to explore how different levels of neutral third party intervention in an exchange process affect the "relational outcomes" of exchange (perceptions of fairness of, general positive regard toward, the exchange partner and optimism about the tone of future interactions). Experimental results indicate that increased third party intervention is positively related to favorable relational outcomes. The increased likelihood of external attributions and decreased salience of conflict associated with high levels of third-party intervention partially explain this result.

CÔTÉ, Jean-François; DENEULT, Alain, (Hrsg.) 2011, *Georg Simmel et les sciences de la culture*, Montréal, Presses de l'Université de Laval, 226 p. The book aims at confronting Simmel's work with contemporary debates and diverse authors such as Hegel, Tarde, Husserl Merleau-Ponty and Lacan. With texts from Marie-Laurence Bordeleau-Payer, Jean-François Côté, Alain Deneault, Louis Jacob, Jean-François Morissette, Maude Pugliese, Michel Ratté, Magali Uhl et Patrick Watier.

D'ALESSANDRO, Davide, 2011, *Tra Simmel e Bauman: le ambivalenti metamorfosi del moderno*, Perugia, Morlacchi, 165 p.

This study aims at comparing the way Simmel and Bauman tackled the ambivalent metamorphosis of modernity. According to the author these sociologists share an analysis of the real changing world and of its effects on the transformations of individuals. Simmel provides a deep knowledge of life forms as well as of its ambivalences, whereas Bauman investigates the dynamics, the contrasts of modern life and their implications on human conditions. In his analysis, D'Alessandro couples up concepts such as reciprocity and money, time and life, modernity and post-modernity, love and death. D'Alessandro argues that a further comparison between the work of these two sociologists could reveal something still unexpressed.

DARMON, Isabelle, 2011, *Max Weber's science of reality. Types of human being and the possibility of life conduct in contemporary culture*, Diss., Univ. of Manchester.

Drawing critically on a line of interpretation opened by Wilhelm Hennis more than 20 years ago, this thesis is concerned with Max Weber's notion of "human type" (Typus Mensch, Menschentum) and the way in which it enables to pose a philosophical question – what can leading a truly human life in the modern age mean? – from the perspective of social and cultural sciences. To that end, it brings out Weber's framework for the analysis of the inner and external shaping of the human type as well as for the consideration of the possibility of life conduct, examining the inner momentum of the life orders in which human beings deploy their actions, and not merely their 'external' arrangements. Weber's theoretical construct of the life orders and value spheres (especially in the 'Intermediate Reflection') and his analysis of the workings of the rationality of particular spheres of human action (as first and most completely exposed in the "music study") are at the core of this framework. By suggesting that Weber was critical of – and went far beyond – analyses of the constraining of personality by "external conditions", the author

seeks to provide an account of his analysis of the manufacturing of adaptation. The adapted human being is not only a carrier of needs or interests, but also of affects and even values: adaptation mobilizes “life”. This thesis has an important comparative strand, at three different levels. First, it sets out Weber’s notion of science of reality against the background of the epistemological debates at the turn of the 20th century. This highlights the divide between Weber’s conception of the role of science in a disenchanted world and other conceptions, which tended to be captured by philosophies of life. Secondly, specific comparisons are carried out, e.g. between Weber’s and Troeltsch’s analysis of the coining of a new *Menschentum* at the time of the Reformation. Finally the author provides a more systematic comparison between Weber’s and Simmel’s analysis of the fate of the modern human being, highlighting the contrast between Weber’s affirmation of the possibility of a life conduct that confronts and transforms the world and Simmel’s self-referential notion of personality. The thesis is divided into three parts. Part I contextualizes the notion of “science of reality” and exposes the main features of Weber’s notion of human type. Part II addresses the deployment of Weber’s approach in the modern life orders; whilst part III explores its prolongations on the plane of life conduct and vocation, which it compares with Simmel’s notions of objectivation of “lived experience” and personality.

DIRLIKYAPAN, Jale Özata, (Ed.) 2011, *Georg Simmel: Sosyolog, Sanatçı, Düşünür*, Ankara, Doğu Batı Yayınları, 391 p.

Jale Özata’s book presents to the Turkish readers some of the classical and most recent and influential interpretations of key aspects of Simmel’s thought. In particular, he collects contributions of scholars, including those who were protagonists of the early reception of Georg Simmel’s work and some of the most recent analysis of his work. Along with translations of classical writings of Émile Durkheim, Max Weber and Georg Lukács, we find essays of Scott Lash, S. P. Altmann, Lewis A. Coser, Lawrence A. Scaff, Kurt H. Wolff, Klaus Lichtblau, Kaspar D. Naegele, Felicitas Dörr-Backes, David Frisby, Donald N. Levine, Ellwood B. Carter Eleanor, Miller Gorman, Deena Weinstein and Michael A. Weinstein. Some of the main topics addressed by these authors are the following: the dimension of conflict in modern life, Simmel’s influence on American sociology, Simmel’s investigation of culture in his writings on art, sociology as a science, the concept of spatiality in Simmel’s work and in his analysis of the city; loyalty and alienation in Durkheim and Simmel, the notions of interaction and causality in Simmel and Weber, Simmel’s sociology of culture, Simmel’s sociological method,

Simmel's sociology of life in the information age and women's cultural dilemma in Simmel's thought.

EDGAR, Andrew Robert, 2011, *The Uncanny, alienation and strangeness: The entwining of political and medical metaphor*, in «Medicine, Health Care and Philosophy», vol. 14, N. 3, pp. 313-322.

This paper offers a critical response to Fredrik Svenaeus' use of the Heideggerian uncanny to analyse the experience of illness. It is argued that the uncanny is part of a culture of concepts through which the condition of modernity has been analysed by philosophers, social theorists, writers and artists. All centre upon the idea of alienation, and thus not being at home in the society that should be one's home. This association will be exploited to offer a reinterpretation of Svenaeus' thesis as a sociological and political, rather than an ontological, one. By reviewing the work of Hegelian philosophers, Georg Simmel, and novelists, represented by Mann, Camus and McCullers, it will be argued that illness is bound up with social alienation, both as something that is caused by conditions of alienation and as an interpretative response to alienation. Seeing illness as a metaphor of the human condition in modernity allows the medical humanities to inform therapy, that would allow the patient to understand their illness, not as the ontological condition of *Dasein*, but rather as something mediated by modern social, economic and political conditions.

FEATHERSTONE, Mike, 2011, *Societal value formation and the value of life*, in «Current Sociology», vol. 59, N. 2, pp. 119-134.

This article explores the formation of values on individual, cultural, societal, civilizational and epochal levels and discusses the carriers of values, symbolic hierarchies and future prospects. It demonstrates the continued conceptual and time-diagnostic usefulness of Georg Simmel's sociological approach to values and argues that his *Lebensphilosophie* ("philosophy of life") offers a platform for dealing with modernity's contingencies and ambiguities by treating life as such as the ultimate but indeterminate value that must be worked out by individuals. Values are needed as a preliminary means of orientation, even if these need not be considered to be of lasting duration.

GARCÍA MARTÍNEZ, Alejandro Néstor, 2011, *¿Distinción social o sociabilidad pura?: el impulso civilizador en los salones aristocráticos y burgueses, según Elias y Simmel*, in «Papers: revista de sociologia», vol. 96, N. 2, pp. 389-408.

Elitist and hierarchical social gatherings, wherein rules of civility were disseminated and specific affective control encouraged, have been central to the analyses of the process of civilization carried out by scholars such as Norbert Elias. However, historiographical research and sociological observation by other thinkers, including Simmel, discloses the existence of alternative social gatherings in which purely eudemonistic goals override the significance attributed to rank or hierarchy. This article presents the objections to Elias's approach arising from such research. The conclusion drawn here is that although the objections may broaden his perspective and contribute as a heuristic complement to a greater understanding of the processes of civilization, criticism of this kind does not have a significant bearing on Elias's central line of argument.

GÖTZE, Karl Heinz, 2011, *Schillerkragen und Pelzmütze: warum die Mode es schwer hat in Deutschland. Zu Christian Garves "Über die Moden", Georg Simmels "Philosophie der Mode" und Baudelaires "Über die Schminke"*, in «Cahiers d'Études Germaniques», vol. 61, pp. 67-83.

This article offers a specific contribution to the theme addressed by the monographic number of the review "Cahiers d'Études Germaniques" dedicated to "Role plays, plays of mask". In particular, Götze takes into account three essays which considers, from different points of view, the phenomena of fashion, ornament and jewel. Through the observations of the German philosopher Christian Garves, of the French poet Charles Baudelaire and of the German sociologist Georg Simmel, the author reflects upon the (difficult) reception of fashion in Germany.

GRABBE, Lars Christian, 2011, *Georg Simmels Objektwelt: Verstehensmodelle zwischen Geschichtsphilosophie und Ästhetik*. Stuttgart, ibidem, 306 S. Zugl. Chemnitz, Techn. Univ., Diss.

Lars Christian Grabbe shows Simmel's contribution to the philosophical theory of knowledge in the context of a philosophy of society through models of understanding between philosophy of history and aesthetics. In this perspective he is an early forerunner of the cultural analysis of the interweaving between self and the (object-)world. Simmel elaborates the intertwining between self and world and between life world and form in an explicit symbol-theoretical dimension which integrates the following aspects: sensuality and imagination, delimitation of being and widening of being and virtualization and reality. Grabbe analyses in a sophisticated way the principle of comprehension (*Verstehen*) which is taken as basis by Simmel. This

principle is quasi the a priori condition of the symbolic faculty of knowledge of human beings: imagination (*Phantasie*) is a strain of knowledge which is anchored to the point of intersection of sense (*Sinnlichkeit*) and intellect (*Verstand*). Grabbe presents here Simmel's big achievement: the integration of the sensory knowledge and the imaginary knowledge in a specific aesthetic model of perception and comprehension. This mode of comprehension plays a key position in Simmel's theoretic analysis of knowledge. In fact, the elements of the process of imagination allow to classify in an adequate way the following aspects: the historic awareness, the experience of social reality, the aesthetic rationality as "aesthetic awareness", the comprehension of social non-self (*Nicht-Ich*), the material and symbolic world of objects, constructs such as value, exchange, money and property, and the sublimated power-feeling of the possession of money. Thereby the process-elements of the imaginary knowledge constitute an evident referential context for the following theoretic approaches: transcendental philosophy, hermeneutic, cognitive psychology, aesthetics and aesthetics, sociology, phenomenology and semiotics. The process-elements of the imaginary knowledge also deliver the basis for a post-modern reactualisation of Simmel's theory of knowledge.

HAIG, Joan, 2011, *Situating strangers: understanding Hindu community life in Lusaka*, Diss., Univ. of Edimburgh.

This thesis explores the complex identities of the Hindu community of Lusaka, Zambia. It argues that current theories in migration and diaspora studies are not sufficient for understanding such groups in post-colonial Africa. The thesis proposes that we should revisit "forgotten" literature, on immigrants as "stranger" communities, that originates from Georg Simmel's 1908 essay, "The Stranger". Such work, which this thesis terms "stranger theory", usefully contributes to more contemporary approaches by enabling a comprehensive assessment of a community's position and how that position changes over time. Stranger theory is used in this thesis to situate Lusaka's Hindus (and Zambian Hindus more generally) as "organic" members of the nation, whose relationships with wider society are characterised by both "nearness" and "remoteness". The thesis first describes the emergence of a Zambian Hindu ethnic identity during colonial and immediate postcolonial (post-1964) periods. A theme running throughout the thesis is that the "plural society" of the colonial era (a society consisting of separate, racially-categorised groups with limited interaction) has persisted in Zambia in a postcolonial form, and that this is a useful way of understanding the position of the Hindu community in Zambia today. Lusaka's Hindu community is presented as both cohesive



and fragmented; the thesis goes on to analyse the ways in which community identity itself is frequently broken down and reconfigured by its members. Zambia's Hindus comprise diverse sets and subgroups of immigrants with uneven and "flexible" approaches to, and experiences of, migration, citizenship and belonging, rather than embodying a single, quantifiable "diaspora" entity. Yet, in local terms, Hindus in Lusaka are often treated as part of a general "Indian" group; indeed, the thesis shows how Hindus' relationships with other groups in Zambia emphasise the "stranger" dimension of the community's position in society. Finally, the thesis asserts that Zambian Hindu "twice migrants" – those who migrate onwards to new destinations – reinforce the existence and identities of the "home" community in Zambia.

HANIFI, Isabelle, 2011, *L'apprentissage de la mode comme solution à l'insertion? Un cas américain*, in «Sociologie et sociétés», vol. 43, N. 1, pp. 125-146.

Simmel's text on fashion, describing the mechanisms of imitation and distinction, allows to clarify the manner in which beneficiaries of this improved image adopt and incorporate a professional sophistication. Appearance is crucial in gaining access to the pool of desirable jobs. This presupposes a familiarity with the current fashion in economic milieus, particularly that of finance. Reworking a person's image aims to make membership in a specific social group a choice, through providing access to a familiar and socially acceptable appearance. As long as appearance is perceived as a vector of social mobility, fashion becomes an issue, in the same way as a diploma. Through experience in an American charity that assists disadvantaged women to improve their image to help them integrate into the professional milieu, this article focuses on the transmission of corporal codes through the adoption of a particular style of dress.

HUBIG, Christoph, 2011, "*Tragödie der Kultur*" revisited: *Carl Dahlhaus' Konzeption des Kunstwerks als Alternative zur Simmel-Cassirer-Kontroverse*, in H. Danuser-P. Gülke (Hrsg.), *Carl Dahlhaus und die Musikwissenschaft* (2011), pp. 155-167

Hubig Christoph addresses and extends Dalhaus' interpretation of the post-idealistic issue concerning the claim of pieces of art to be an objective expression of a subjective life. According to this conception, through the "way of themselves to themselves", as Simmel characterized it, the objective expression of the subjective life represents a way of cultural improvement. However, at the same time, the "subjective psychological and emotional

energy” should obtain an independent and objective form through the creativity of the life process. Furthermore, through the production of this form, the life process submits itself to the objective normativity of the material. In this context, Cassirer argues as well that subjective and objective spirit fall “apart”. Simmel analysed this kind of process carefully. When Dalhaus refers to the idealistic solution as inadequate to describe this process, it is because this solution denies exactly the tragedy. Therefore in his considerations, Dalhaus seems to have Simmel’s thought on the “Tragedy of culture” in mind.

KEMPLE, Thomas, 2011, *The spatial sense of empire: Encountering strangers with Simmel, Tocqueville and Martineau*, in «Journal of Classical Sociology», vol. 11, pp. 340-355.

This essay takes Georg Simmel’s conceptualization of space as a form of sociation (*Vergesellschaftung*) in his 1908 masterpiece, *Sociology*, as a framework for critically re-reading two nineteenth-century classics in the sociology of empire. Alexis de Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America* (1835/1940) is shown to illustrate Simmel’s understanding of social-spatial boundaries by portraying the cultural and historical geography of America as an “optic space” of racial (in)equality. Similarly, Harriett Martineau’s study of morals and manners in *Society in America* (1837) exemplifies Simmel’s ideas on social-spatial sensibilities with its attention to how everyday settings serve as a kind of “acoustic space” of gendered (un)freedom. Drawing on related arguments by recent thinkers and critics, and rectifying the relative neglect of how socio-spatial dynamics are addressed in the texts of classical sociology, the essay examines a description in each work of a particular personal encounter with strangers which exemplifies how the spatial sense of empire disrupts assumptions that new-world democracy has superseded old-world colonialism. Considered as illustrations of Simmel’s thesis concerning the spatial orders of society, the “travelling and anecdotal theories” of Martineau and Tocqueville provide “sociological allegories” designed to instruct reading publics on how law, empire, and social mores constitute bounded fields of struggle within the contact zones of modern empire.

KENT, Eliza F., 2011, *Secret Christians of Sivakasi: Gender, Syncretism, and Crypto-Religion in Early Twentieth-Century South India*, in «Journal of the American Academy of Religion», vol. 79, N. 3, pp. 676-705.

A frequent pattern found among crypto-religious communities is that the rituals or beliefs held in secret are transmitted primarily by women, from mothers to daughters. This paper examines a small community of women in

south India, the secret Christians of Sivakasi, in order to investigate why these women chose to maintain a delicate, and at times dangerous, balance between their outward observance of Hindu rituals and their inner, private adherence to Christianity. By contextualizing these Nadar women's lives in the vexed history of caste conflict in late nineteenth-century south India, the author shows that women in this upwardly mobile Hindu community found in clandestine Christian circles a means of securing a limited autonomy in an intensely patriarchal milieu, especially as their lives became increasingly circumscribed by Brahmanical customs. Georg Simmel and Paul Christopher Johnson's analyses of the affective dynamics of secrecy illuminate the complex motivations for women's involvement in these groups, in spite of the risks, and help explain why the conjugal bond becomes the focus of so much attention in the narratives of Secret Christians.

KÖHNKE, Klaus Christian, 2011, "*Der Fremde*" als Typus und als historische Kategorie: zu einem soziologischen Grundbegriff bei Georg Simmel, Alfred Schütz und Robert Michels, in BERG, Nicolas (Hrsg.), *Kapitalismusdebatten um 1900: über antisemitisierende Semantiken des Jüdischen*, Leipzig, Leipziger Univ.-Verl., pp. 219-238.

In order to examine the foreigner as type of Jew and as historical category in Georg Simmel, Alfred Schütz and Robert Michels, the author distinguishes four types of foreigner: the foreigner of the place, the foreigner of groups, the foreigner of the milieu and the foreigner of the culture. With this subdivision of the category of the foreigner, Köhnke wants to demonstrate that the classical theoretical projects of Simmel, Schütz and Michels do not just discuss and reflect certain historical constellations. They also identify different characteristics which contribute to define what a foreigner is. In fact, he is not just a foreigner of the place or a passenger, but someone who perhaps enters in a new group and who at the beginning or even later will constantly have to cope with certain difficulties of integration because of his position. Or he may also be a social climber or someone at a lower level of the social scale who wants to change his social environment, and who nevertheless will forever remain foreign to the group. Or, as a matter of fact, he can be someone who changes from a culture to another and who stays foreign to each culture, just as the other types of foreigners, for completely different and more extensive problems.

LAZCANO, Linda M., 2011, *Myth of the Life Plan: A Search for Happiness*, in «Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge», vol. 9, n. 1, <http://scholarworks.umb.edu/humanarchitecture/vol9/iss1/5>

The desire to be happy is one of the most basic motivations for behaviour, cutting across culture, language, and spatial divides. Walk quickly through a bookstore and you will be struck by the proliferation of self-help guides: step by step manuals to correct or fix you so that you too can be happy. Americans have all too willingly embraced the self-improvement ideology. This is not a shocking revelation as the United States has always been fueled by a guiding belief in continual progress towards perfection. However, with the advent of capitalism, progress has become typified by commodity fetishism – an unrealistic belief that products can magically recreate our inner selves and elicit long-term satisfaction. This article utilizes a phenomenological approach while drawing on other sociological theories and concepts to illustrate how individual happiness is dominated and impaired by the American cultural myth; a blueprint for a life plan that inextricably links success and materialism as a precursory condition to happiness. From birth, people are indoctrinated with the myth, its tenets of future-mindedness and possession repeatedly legitimated throughout culture. The author argues that the American culture myth of a systematic life plan fundamentally obstructs happiness, ultimately dominating and enslaving the individual in what Georg Simmel calls the tragedy of culture.

LICHTBLAU, Klaus, 2011, *Die Eigenart der kultur- und sozialwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung*. Wiesbaden, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 407 S.

The book explores the establishment of what has become in modern sociology a universalistic science of culture (“Kulturwissenschaft”). By addressing the historical and theoretical development of the science of culture in Germany, the author sheds light upon the interweaving and connections between this science and key issues and historical debates concerning the epistemological foundation of the sociology from its early moments to its late developments. Some of the main aspects Lichtblau considers are the following: the problem of distinction between culture and society; the disputed meaning of the logic foundation of historical sciences of culture; whether sociology is a science of culture; the dispute upon the concept of culture in the sociology; from the “Spirit of the community” to the “Spirit of the new time”, annotation on the complete edition of Tonnies’ work; soul, money and Simmel’s “Philosophy of money”; the sociology of religion in Simmel and in Troeltsch; the question of

“causality” and of “interaction” in Simmel and in Weber; Weber’s reception of Nietzsche’s thought; the genealogy of the sociology of knowledge in Scheler and in Mannheim; the break-in of history in the closed world of ethnology; the position of sociology in the spirit- social sciences.

MACKERT, Jürgen, 2011, *In the name of the state. The secret society of the torturers*, in «Berliner Journal für Soziologie», Bd. 21, N. 3, pp. 431-459.

Torture is an extreme act of collective violence that is secretly executed in the name of a state. In order to explain the reasons why people torture others, individualist approaches concentrate on individuals’ motives or interests. Contrary to that, the article argues that torture should be understood as a social relation. Thus, it takes the social relations of the group of torturers as a starting point. Firstly, following Georg Simmel’s analysis of the secret society the paper argues that the group of torturers can adequately be conceptualized as a secret society; secondly, against this background the article reconstructs the conditions which structure torturers’ agency; finally, this article offers an outline of the processes and dynamics that allows for explaining the phenomenon of torture. The thesis of the article argues that a relational sociology helps better explain and understand the social phenomenon of torture.

MAKELY, Jeremy David, 2011, *Beyond Cyberpessimism and Cyberoptimism: The Dual Nature of Social Network Site Interaction*, MA., Univ. of East Tennessee State University.

This thesis applies methodological and micro-sociological insights derived from the pioneering social psychologist Georg Simmel (1858-1918) to the contemporary social media platform, Facebook. In opposition to previously-reported one-sided, polarized analyses (i.e. either/or, pessimistic or optimistic), this study suggests a more nuanced judgment: interaction viewed as social exchange reveals that individuality is often promoted though can occasionally be hindered; while most exchanges are ill-suited for sustaining interpersonal value, they ironically facilitate enhanced trust; and finally, the unique structure of site-based exchange generally facilitates rather than undercuts constructive conflict.

MARTINELLI, Monica, 2011, *L'altra libertà. Saggio su Georg Simmel*, Milano, Vita e Pensiero, p. 340.

In her book Martinelli revisits Simmel’s thought on freedom. According to her freedom represents a central theme which goes through all Simmel’s

works: from the early “Einleitung in die Moralwissenschaft” to the late fragment called “Über Freiheit”. The very sociology of Simmel appears to be a science of relational freedom: the analysis of freedom closely intertwines with the analysis of the relationship between individual and society inside a fascinating dialectical perspective. This perspective claims the thesis of the contemporaneous origin of individual and the social as well as of their reciprocity, far from every form of deterministic, mechanistic or individualistic visions. In his research on “how the individual self can preserve its own value without sinking in the instability of subjectivism”, Simmel paid attention to the anthropological vision of a specific epoch by re-examining the notion of subjectivity. Our “individual freedom it is not the pure internal determination of an isolated subject, but it is a phenomenon of relationship”. Our freedom takes shape uniquely within our answer to a you, to a social world, to the life. In this sense, freedom has been included among the categories of the moral which describes the rooting of the human being in the relationship, which is primarily a responsibility. Simmel suggests that a critical analysis of the collective imagination on freedom is a preliminary step in order to understand a specific time as well as for building something capable of tackling the question of the sense for the self and for the others.

MATTOS, Amana Rocha, 2011, *Liberdade e individualidade nas grandes cidades: contribuições de Georg Simmel para o debate contemporâneo*, in «Revista Redescições: Revista on-line do GT de Pragmatismo e Filosofia Norte-Americana»,

[http://www.gtpragmatismo.com.br/redescicoes/redescicoes/ano2\\_04/n2\\_Mattos.pdf](http://www.gtpragmatismo.com.br/redescicoes/redescicoes/ano2_04/n2_Mattos.pdf)

The present work discusses “The metropolis and the mental life”, Georg Simmel’s seminal 1903 text, using its main points to underline contemporary experiences of freedom in urban spaces. From its publication, Simmel’s text has become a reference in the social sciences for studies of modernity, individualism, and the subjectivities produced in daily metropolis life. Positing these themes as the ground for any significant discussion about freedom, independence and autonomy, the author uses Simmel’s arguments, and other authors that comment on his text, as a basis for thinking about these topics.

MIEG, Harald A.-SUNDSBOE, Astrid O.-BIENIOK, Majken (Hrsg.), 2011, *Georg Simmel und die aktuelle Stadtforschung*, Wiesbaden, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, 297 S.

Simmel's article "Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben" (1903) gave the impetus to the social research on the city. For Simmel, the metropolis represents the place of modernity. In fact, there are places in which, through the division of work and the specialization, a particular force of production develops. The metropolis is a place in which the individual obtains a level of freedom that was unknown until that moment. With this book, edited by the Georg Simmel Centre for Metropolitan Studies, the editors address the following issue: what is the relevance of Simmel's work for today's research on the city? The authors particularly emphasize the interdisciplinary potential of Simmel's approach.

MULLER, Jerry Z., 2011, *Kapitalismus, Rationalisierung und die Juden: zu Simmel, Weber und Sombart*, in BERG, Nicolas (Hrsg.), *Kapitalismusdebatten um 1900: über antisemitisierende Semantiken des Jüdischen*, Leipzig, Leipziger Univ.-Verl., S. 23-48.

The question on the nature and the origin of capitalism was one of the main themes of the historical research on at the last century. Never the interest in capitalism reached such a great interest as in Germany during the period of Wilhelm II, before the first world war. Three German speaking scholars, Simmel, Weber and Sombart animated this discussion not just as commentators, but as initiators through their fundamental works dedicated to this subject: Georg Simmel's "Philosophie des Geldes" (1900), Max Weber's "Die protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus" (1904) and Werner Sombart's "Die Juden und das Wirtschaftsleben" (1911). The aim of Muller's contribution is to compare and to go through these books in order to point out their peculiarities. If for Simmel the development of the economy of money caused an increasing rationalization and abstraction, for Sombart was exactly Judaism which was at the origin of this process. For Simmel the development of capitalism produced the potential for the reversal of mean into purpose in the life of the individual, and for Weber the "Spirit of the Capitalism" meant that reversal. On the contrary, for Sombart the fact that Jews had called capitalism into life was the reason of a world made meaningless in the sense that the culture of German people was destroyed and replaced with a society based on abstraction and intellect.

MUNIER, Brigitte, 2011, *Du Kula à Facebook, le poids du prestige*, in «Hermès», vol. 59, pp. 113-116.

The author's comparison between Facebook and Melanesia's *Kula*, an archaic system of inter-tribal exchanges described by Marcel Mauss, has highlighted

the ability of the flagship Web 2.0 platform to respond to anthropologically verified socio-cultural needs. Both systems obey an implicit demand for reciprocity, which, over and above the actual content of exchanges, has a symbolic function: the interactions at play and the search for partners reflect a quest for prestige, or *mana* as it is famously known in Chinook. *Kula* and *Facebook*'s walls are a gigantic shop window where anyone can show off their *mana* and look at other people's, while also seeking out other partners. The use of the *Kula* as described by Simmel – as a model of intelligibility – suggests the ancient roots of these cultural traits: the combination of material and symbolic dimensions in exchanges between peers and, if there is no regulating authority, the risk that this inevitably competitive process may run out of control.

OHRlich, Max Jakob, 2011, *Situationistische Internationale: Eintritt, Austritt, Ausschluss. Zur Dialektik interpersoneller Beziehungen und Theorieproduktion einer ästhetisch-politischen Avantgarde (1957-1972)*, Bielefeld, Transcript, 629 S.

The “International Situationism” worked out one of the most influential criticisms of culture of the sixties in which the failure of the historical avant-gardes enters as central and constitutive part in its own theory. The main theses of the society of spectacle such as the drift or the *détournement* do not only represent the attempt to subvert this society, but they also have been self-reflexive instruments of reflection on the structure of the group itself, on its organization and on the activity of its members. Orlich expands the approaches of the sociology of groups (Simmel, von Wiese) as well as the sociology of interpersonal relationships (Kracauer) by pointing out the relevance of the dyads of the intellectual friendships and of the bonds of groups for both group movements and production of theory in occasion of admission, exit and affiliation of the member. For the first time the wide empirical material used for this study has been made accessible.

PERINBANAYAGAM, Robert, 2011, *The Coinage of the Self: Money, Signs and the Social Self*, in «Studies in Symbolic Interaction», vol. 36, pp. 107-136. Various sociological theories about the nature of money are reviewed here and a claim that money could be fruitfully examined from the standpoint of Peircian semiotics and Meadian interactionism is presented. The work of Marx and Simmel are interpreted in semiotic terms leading to the claim that the selves of human agents are constituted within a political and social



economy resulting in the emergence of semiotic subjectivation and objectivation of money as features of the self.

PICHÉ, Claude, 2011, *Simmel et le problème de la causalité individuelle en histoire*, in BOUTON, Christophe-BÉGOUT, Bruce (Hrsg.), *Penser l'histoire: de Karl Marx aux siècles des catastrophes*, Paris, Éditions de l'Éclat, pp. 115-132.

This article addresses the question of the individual causality in history in Georg Simmel. It represents one of the contributions which are part of a collection dedicated to the thought on history from Marx to thinkers and writers of the 20th century. Among the main authors of the “century of catastrophes” whose thought have been analysed we find Siegfried Kracauer, Hannah Arendt, Karl Löwith, Reinhart Koselleck, Hans Jonas, Imre Kertész. Piché’s essay particularly focusses on the relationship between individual causality and the maintenance of the concept of law. Furthermore, he analyses the universal meaning of the historical individuality and its link to the aesthetic paradigm.

PIETILÄ, Kauko, 2011, *Reason of Sociology: George Simmel and beyond*. London u.a., Sage, 202 p.

Sociology has long lacked the sense of propulsive direction that it possessed in the 1960s and early 70s. The discipline has fragmented in a series of interlocking fields and sub-disciplines. Where can we look for guides to build a sociology that combats fragmentation, constantly unites the micro with the macro level, and provides a holistic view of society? This book argues that the sociology of Georg Simmel is a most promising resource to accomplish these ends. Although Simmel was rediscovered in the 1980s his potential for the design of the subject as a whole and the professional necessities for “doing good sociology” were not fully realized. Simmel’s inspiration for the analysis of money, the mass media and the state showed how sociologists might approach, in an emancipatory perspective, subjective behaviour that arises from social forces that appear to be arbitrary and impenetrable. The book entails three parts: I) THE PROBLEM, The Rise, Fall and Return of a Concept – Fundamental Concepts: Society and Community – Roles for Sociology in Society; II) THE THEORY, Societal Sociology: Walking the Tight-Rope – Simmel and War – Simmel and the Modern Condition – Towards a Wider Concept of Interaction; III) APPLICATIONS, Money – Mass Media – The State.

PRIOR, Nick, 2011, *Speed, Rhythm, and Time-Space: Museums and Cities*, in «Space and Culture», vol. 14, N. 2, pp. 197-213.

This article assesses some potential approaches to museums and cities propelled by a theoretical preoccupation with modernity as a condition of speed. Here, one can extrapolate two variants in the writings and interventions of Marinetti, Simmel, Virilio, and writers in the postmodern tradition: (a) the museum is slow, it is a brake on modernity, it is modernity's sedentary other and (b) the museum is fast, it is as quick as the city, reflecting modernity's impulse toward acceleration. To finesse these approaches, the article moves toward the method of rhythm analysis and an emphasis on time-space considerations. It is Lefebvre's teasing last snippets on the concept of rhythm, the article argues, presaged by Benjamin's approach to the variant tempos of modernity in *The Arcades Project*, that point to a fuller and more advanced approach to urban-museological relations and the multiple rhythms that feature in both.

RIVAL, Sébastien, 2011, *Georges Simmel et Robert Ezra Park: de Berlin à Chicago, l'individu face à la ville*, in CLEMENS, Gabriele, GAMMAL, Jean El, LÜSEBRINK, Hans-Jürgen (hrsg.), *Städtischer Raum im Wandel: Modernität - Mobilität – Repräsentationen*, Berlin, Akad.-Verl. (Vice Versa; 4), 2011, pp. 179-199

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the philosopher Georg Simmel was one of the first thinkers who realized, in their full extent, the effects of the growth of the cities on the individual and on the social interactions. After that city was no more considered just from the point of view of its geographical and economical dimensions, but from the perspective of a real "mental condition". It was not a coincidence the fact that, some years later, the American sociologist Robert Ezra Park, one of Simmel's former students and a cofounder of the famous School of Chicago, would have considered the city as a "social laboratory" in accord with the motto of the School. The city shed light to "an increase of social processes" and emphasized the processes of social transformation. The article aims to illuminate the nature of cultural transfer between Simmel and Parks by comparing respectively their following contributions: Park's seminal article "The city: suggestions for the investigation of human behaviour in the urban environment" (1916) and Simmel's essay "Die Großstädte und das Geistesleben" (1903). Furthermore, Rival's contribution addresses the question of the present validity of the theories they developed.

RUSSO, Gláucia, 2011, *Amor e dinheiro: uma relação possível?*, in «Caderno CRH», vol. 24, N. 61, pp. 121-134.

In this paper the author tries to understand which aspects of love the monetary economy changes or affects in modern times, without losing sight that such relationships are embedded in a context where market relations and individualism dominate, but also human relations with all their complexity, contradictions and surprises. Through dialogue with Georg Simmel, in his discussion of money and modern society, and authors like Tönnies, Giddens and Lázaro, the author discusses some of the various issues involved in this debate. Russo takes for granted that love and money in our society appear as poles around which life revolves, and if, *prima facie*, are represented as separated or antagonistic elements, from another angle are complementary desires. The society of money should give rise to a new kind of love: modern love, manufactured, interested, that cannot stand without the money base.

SCHNABEL, Peter-Ernst, 2011, *Normativität bei Georg Simmel*, in AHRENS, Johannes, BEER Raphael, BITTLINGMEYER, Uwe H., GERDES, Jürgen (Hrsg.), 2011, *Normativität: Über die Hintergründe sozialwissenschaftlicher Theoriebildung*, Wiesbaden, VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, S. 119-145.

This article questions the role of normativity in Simmel's work. First of all, the author considers the typical ways in which the problem of the normativity has been tackled in his sociology, then he analyses the specific approach of Simmel to sociology. He particularly focusses on the sociology as science of experience and on its gnoseological basis. Furthermore, after having considered sociology as a "Weapon for the battle for the existence", Schnabel examines Simmel's sociology of subordination and of supremacy as an example of Simmel's sociological way of working. The author also takes into account "The Philosophy of Money" as a critical theory of society and addresses the relationship between normativity and normality.

SCHÜTZ, Erhard, 2011, Heinrich Manns "*Im Schlaraffenland*" und Georg Simmel, in BERBIG, Roland, D'APRILE, Iwan-M., PEITSCH, Helmut, SCHÜTZ, Erhard (Hrsg.), 2011, *Berlins 19. Jahrhundert: ein Metropolen-Kompendium*, Berlin, Akademie-Verl., S. 421-430.

Schütz's article aims to demonstrate the links between Heinrich Mann's novel "Im Schlaraffenland" (1900) and Simmel's essay "The Metropolis and Mental Life" (1903). Both authors give a description and an analysis of the Berlin society of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but in the case of Mann's novel this is true just if

we understand this representation as a fundamental life-aesthetic critic of the Berlin society of the period. Schütz searches to illustrate his interpretation beyond the limits the critics saw in Mann's novel and in Simmel's essay such as the absence of observations about women and working class in the metropolis. According to Schütz, Heinrich Mann's novel mirrors some of the main aspects highlighted by Simmel in his essay "The Metropolis and Mental Life" as numerous analogies between the central themes of their writings show. Schütz's basic thesis is that the Berlin of their period is to both, Simmel and Mann, the real place of the new society of money. After all we do not have to forget that Simmel's essay of 1903 was written with explicit reference to his *Philosophy of Money* published in 1900, the same year of the publication of Mann's novel.

SCHLECKER, Markus, 2011, *Universalist rationality and Simmel's sacrifice model of value*, in «Anthropological Theory», vol. 11, n. 3, pp. 309-325.

At the turn of the century, Georg Simmel published critical commentaries on what he considered a misguided faith in socialism in the Viennese newspaper *Die Zeit*. This article highlights Simmel's model of value of sacrifice implicit in these commentaries and shows its utility for a critical engagement with the efforts of the state to promote a universalist rationality. Through measures that promote universalism, qualitative distinctions between ritual occasions and the everyday are rendered problematic and irrelevant. Resistance to such efforts, it is argued, can be suitably interpreted by way of Simmel's sacrifice model of value. The discussion is illustrated through case studies of burial practices from late socialist Vietnam where the Party State has long curbed competitive consumption and nowadays promotes cremation as an economical funeral.

SCHÜRMAN, Volker, 2011, *Die Unergründlichkeit des Lebens: Lebens-Politik zwischen Biomacht und Kulturkritik*, Bielefeld, Transcript, 248 S.

In his essay Schürmann refers back to Nietzsche, Bergson, Simmel, Klages, Hermann Schmitz, Rickert, Misch, Dilthey, Plessner, Cassirer, Schopenhauer, Joseph König. The life philosophical *topos* of the inscrutability stresses that something remains incomplete in our power of control. In this way he secures more or less the non-availability of the person, but also a precise concept of performativity. This gain of the *topos* does not come till now into effect because it has not been systematically protected from an interpretation oriented to an irrationalistic criticism of culture. On the contrary, this mere Irrationalism-criticism leads to an underestimation and to a bio-political

isolation: inscrutability is something more and something different from an unattainable availability. Volker Schürmann through his considerations on Hegel, Misch und Plessner search to show how to avoid this alternative in a political interpretation of *inscrutability* (*Unergrundlichkeit*).

SCHWERDT, Oliver, 2011, *Geld und Unsinn. Georg Simmel und der Dadaismus: eine systematische Studie zu relativistischer Philosophie und Kunst*, mit e. Vorbemerkung von Klaus Christian Köhnke, Leipzig, Euphorium Books, 83 S.

Schwerdt's starting point is that Simmel's *Philosophy of Money*, considered from a culture-theoretical perspective, hides an aesthetics. According to the author, this aesthetics can be employed for overcoming the art theoretical problem of the interpretation of Dadaism. In particular, Schwerdt searches to demonstrate that the art philosophical concepts developed by Simmel help to identify the cultural conditions of the Dadaist aesthetics. Furthermore, according to this interpretation, the Dadaist movement has not merely to be understood as a social revolutionary movement, but much more as a proof of a decisive cultural transformation process in the modernity. Dadaism appears therefore no more as an expression of nihilism, as the previous interpretations assumed, but as a creative artistic power which acts in a new space of possibilities.

TEJEIRO SARMIENTO, Clemencia (Hrsg.), 2011, *Georg Simmel y la modernidad*. Bogotá, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Facultad de Ciencias Humanas, 448 S.

Tejero Sarmiento's book collects different fragments of Simmel's work addressing a large range of themes reflecting the richness of interests and aspects of his thought. This book, which queries traditional judgements on Simmel's work, is the result of a conference held on the occasion of the 150 years passed from his birth and proves a renewed interest in this author. The collected essays show both the crucial role of Simmel for the definition and the consolidation of sociology as an epistemological independent field of studies and the multiple directions of his thought. Therefore, Tejero Sarmiento's book presents, among others, contributions of Simmel's work dedicated to his theory of history, metaphysics of death, to philosophy, religion, ethics and to his contributions to aesthetics.

THOUARD, Denis, 2011, *La puissance des oeuvres. Le Rembrandt de Simmel* in LOMBARDO Mario G., ROMELE Alberto (a cura di), *L'Effettività*

dell'*Ermeneutica. Puissances de l'herméneutique*, Milano, Franco Angeli, pp. 219-233.

The article focusses on the relationship between the philosophy of life, the analysis of Rembrandt's artworks and the notion of fluidity of time in Simmel's thought. According to Thouard, in his monograph dedicated to Rembrandt, Simmel overcomes his former conception of the objective spirit. In particular, the specific forms of Rembrandt's artworks seem to escape the tragedy of culture. In fact, as it happens for instance in his portraits, the single painted moment of the life of the subject is capable of expressing the totality of his/her passed life. It also remains in constant relationship with the psychic flow and with the living source his/her life so that the forms of Rembrandt's artworks can be interpreted as an artistic synthesis which is able to convey the fluid and qualitative characters of time, or of the "durée" as Bergson called this dimension of time. Furthermore, Rembrandt's artworks embody a kind of immanent transcendence as they do not just express, in a single instant, the past and present life of the painted subject, but somehow they seem to go beyond the present moment towards the future through the impossibility of completing the possible interpretations.

THOUARD, Denis, 2011, *Soziale Zeit, gelebte Zeit. Simmels Denken der Zeitlichkeit*, in Frank Degler (hrsg.), «Bloch-Almanach», 30, 2011 (pp. 111-126).

This article focusses on Simmel's concept of social time, on the one hand, and on Simmel's concept of historical time, on the other hand. The first concept is characterised by the interaction and by the rhythmical and simultaneous character, whereas the historical time is linked with the past and with the knowledge we have of it. The concept of historical time also includes the lived time, the time of our lived experience which goes beyond the conception of linear time and which can be understood as a self-transcendence of life.

TYRELL, Hartmann; RAMMSTEDT, Otthein; MEYER, Ingo (Hrsg.), *Georg Simmels "große Soziologie". Eine kritische Sichtung nach hundert Jahren*, Bielefeld, Transcript, 414 S.

The book offers a critical approach on Simmel's *Soziologie, Untersuchungen über die Formen der Vergesellschaftung*. Content: Hartmann Tyrell: Georg Simmels "große" Soziologie (1908). Einleitende Bemerkungen (9-68); Kurt Röttgers: Die "Große Soziologie" und die "große" Philosophie (69-82); Uta Gerhardt: Die Formen der Vergesellschaftung und die soziologischen Aprioris. Das gesellschaftstheoretische Erkenntnisprogramm. Eine

Argumentsskizze (83-124); Jörg Bergmann: Von der Wechselwirkung zur Interaktion - Georg Simmel und die Mikrosoziologie heute (125-148); Martin Petzke: Soziale Differenzierung im Werk Georg Simmels – mit besonderem Blick auf Wilhelm Dilthey (149-180); André Kieserling: Simmels Sozialformenlehre: Probleme eines Theorieprogramms (181-206); Andreas Ziemann: Die Zahl als soziologische Kategorie und die Quantität sozialer Verhältnisse (207-226); Tobias Werron: Zur sozialen Konstruktion moderner Konkurrenzen. Das Publikum in der “Soziologie der Konkurrenz” (227-258); Urs Stäheli: Materialität der Sinne. Simmel und der “New Materialism” (259-274); Austin Harrington: Simmel und die Religionssoziologie (275-300); Ingo Meyer: Hausputz. Über Georg Simmels Marginalisierung der Ästhetik in der “großen” Soziologie (301-322); Alois Hahn: Geheim (347-366); Otthein Rammstedt: Der Weg zu Simmels “kleiner” Soziologie (347-366); Guenther Roth: Biographische Aspekte der amerikanischen Simmelrezeption (367-394).

VERNIK, Esteban, 2011, *Simmel y Weber ante la nación y la guerra: Una conversación con Grégor Fitzi*, in «Sociológica», vol. 26, n. 74, 2011, pp. 277-300

The article is a conversation between Esteban Vernik and Gregor Fitzi on the concept of nation in Simmel’s and in Weber’s work and on their attitude in front of the first world war. Fitzi points out that Simmel does not address systematically the notion of nation. Simmel talks indirectly about nation, using the term of state. Furthermore, rather than dealing with this concept from a political perspective, as in the case of Weber, Simmel addresses the subject from an ethical point of view, by emphasizing for instance the debt of the individual towards the state. In a provocative way Fitzi states that Simmel discovers the nation in 1914. On the contrary, Weber deals explicitly with the concept of nation also in a political perspective. According to Fitzi, one of Weber’s most important achievements is the fact that he refuses to give a biological foundation to the notion of nation. By highlighting that this concept is a social and cultural construction, Weber goes beyond his initial social Darwinism and achieves an important result in the field of sociology.