

INVENTION AND THE IMPOSSIBLE: TWENTY YEARS
OF DECONSTRUCTION WITH AND WITHOUT JACQUES
DERRIDA

INVENCIJA I NEMOGUĆE: DVADESET GODINA
DEKONSTRUKCIJE SA I BEZ ŽAKA DERIDE

EDITOR'S NOTE

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This issue is being published in late December 2024, marking the end of a year that commemorates the twentieth anniversary of Jacques Derrida's passing. Moreover, it has been forty years since Derrida declared in *Psyche: Inventions of the Other* (1984) that “deconstruction is inventive, or it is nothing at all”. This collection of texts serves as a bold reaffirmation of that claim.

Contrary to stereotypical and often biased interpretations, deconstruction always begins with a bold affirmation—a “yes” that opens spaces of unconditional hospitality toward what is to come, inevitably linking it with radically unpredictable alterities. Moreover, its inventions are not reducible to predetermined rules, strategies, or methods. Instead, they open passageways, marking trails that ultimately deconstruct the very concept of invention itself. For these and other reasons, deconstruction continues to haunt global academia—perhaps now more than ever. It has become the straw man perceived to threaten the most fundamental concepts, values, and institutions of the Western world, such as democracy, the university, law, or the republic. Yet, there has never been a forbidden land for deconstruction; its aim has always been the reinvention of these domains, not their sheer destruction, as its detractors often portray. The texts gathered in this issue provide genuine proof of this assertion.

This issue reflects the variety of approaches and topics inspired by Jacques Derrida's work across generations of thinkers. The eight texts that comprise this issue engage with concepts, texts, and authors that constitute the “Derridean” multiverse.

Avital Ronell's intimate, dream-driven mini philo-novela, entitled “Derrida and His Shadow,” opens the issue with a unique reflection on Derrida's work and an astounding testimony to the experience of working with (and without) Derrida. In the following text, Gil Anidjar invites us to reflect on the (im)possibility of the “death of the people,” raising questions that engage with some of humanity's most urgent and timeless concerns. Cillian Ó Fathaigh's article



explores literature as a mode of thought, linking it in an extraordinary way to the notions of institutions and *différance*. Giustino de Michele reconsiders the very notion of invention, connecting it, in a peculiar way, with economy and politics. Further on, Barry Stocker offers a reflection on Derrida's ethics, recasting the concepts of singularity, violence, and universality. In the following article, Gabriel Rezende examines Derrida's enigma of validity through a close reading of the final paragraph of *Donner le temps II*, positing validity as the mystical foundation of normativity.

The last two texts explore Derrida's engagement with canonical authors in the history of philosophy. Terrence Thomson draws connections between Derrida's and Kant's respective understandings of the ideas of birth and death, while Ramón Mistral offers an insightful analysis of Derrida's early reading of Hegel, focusing on the status of the notion of *Aufhebung* in Derrida's philosophy.

This year has been marked by numerous publications, events, and discussions celebrating the life and work of Jacques Derrida, testifying to the vitality and inventiveness of deconstruction in our times. This issue contributes significantly to this trend, and for that, I extend my deepest gratitude and admiration to the authors who accepted our call and entrusted us with their contributions.

Finally, as the guest editor, I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to the editorial team of *Philosophy and Society* for accepting my proposal for this thematic issue and for making its publication possible.