

Call for Papers

In the Power of History, Again [special issue]

This issue will be dedicated to the brave people of Ukraine

As the editors of *Eidos. A Journal for Philosophy of Culture* and philosophers we see it as a duty to respond to the pressing challenges of our times. As we speak, bombs, rockets, tanks, and all kinds of heavy weaponry are being used against the people of Ukraine within the premises of their own sovereign country. This has been done on the orders of Putin and his authoritarian regime in the name of their imperial aspirations. While it is Ukraine which has been invaded, and it is Ukrainians who must fight and die, this brutal attack is directed against the whole Western world.

As philosophers of culture, one might see signs of “the end of the end of history” (at least as Fukuyama envisioned it). That is, we might be seeing the end of a period where we assumed in the West that all-out war and its correlate kind of civilizational struggle would be replaced by a biopower/surveillance regime, especially of a capitalistic sort, that feeds a consumerist subjectivity and makes ideals for and work toward the better into empty catch phrases and performative theater. Yet we see from the Ukrainians a genuine and authentic bravery in tragedy that seems outside of that framework.

At the same time, we recognize that this war is part of an ongoing situation following the legacy of colonialism, Soviet occupation, the Cold-War, and brutal ongoing proxy wars in the Middle East. How do we in the West recognize authentic and brave deeds near to home, and use this as an opportunity to recognize the brutality on the global stage against those deemed “other” (especially people of color) that it has been all too easy for us to ignore?

As the editors of an international journal devoted to the problems of culture and rooted in an anti-authoritarian tradition, we must do our part to respond to this threat of our times. Therefore, we have decided to immediately announce the call for papers for a special issue of our quarterly whose thematic section is to be devoted to the violent return of history, as a

response to these tragic events. But we also want it to be special in the very way in which the leading theme is approached. These current events, their meaning, significance, causes and possible consequences, certainly call forth deep philosophical questions that demand our time and reflection— and all kinds of such approaches are to be welcome in the upcoming issue. However, there is yet something quite different to this situation, as we see it. To best express it, a classic concept from twentieth century philosophy of culture might be drawn upon, that is, *Ereignis*.

Ereignis, in its most standard sense, means an event, especially a very significant and unexpected one. But read as *Er-aignis* this term gains a different meaning. As *-aignis* comes from *eigen* (what is one's own, proper), *Er-aignis* would then mean something that brings one closer to her- or himself. And finally, we may read *Ereignis* as *Eräugnis* – from *das Auge* („eye”). As such it points at something that has been put right in front of our eyes with an irresistible power of an overbearing actuality.

And all these three dimensions are to be unraveled from the present course of events surrounding Putin's invasion of Ukraine. All of this is of course extremely significant (not only for the people directly involved) and totally surprising at the same time (even for Putin himself, let us hope). But there is more to that: it seems that, due to what is happening, things are being made closer to their essence somehow: we begin to really see who the aggressor is and who is a victim and defender, who is cynical and who is heroic or – most simply – who is right and who is wrong. Further, it seems that a “theatrical” play of cultural semblances suddenly stopped for a moment not only to confront us with the brutal shock of the Real, but also show us a possibility of cultural reconstruction. And this unmeasurable “moment” of violent eruption leads to the third point which needs to be made: Things are happening rapidly and overwhelmingly, as we see powerful Western countries and organizations rapidly dropping their long-term strategies and choosing new directions.

As philosophers, however, we have been advised by Plato not to look directly into the sun. We also got parallel advice from Heidegger – who actually was the one to bring up the aforementioned tensions within the concept of *Ereignis*. According to him, its uniqueness and specificity does not consist in its being a particularly shocking or even interesting object of our attention or in front of us. Rather, it comes the very other way round – from backside, so to speak. And as such it provides a source or energy for thinking and makes it possible to think about not pursuing the goals that have been accepted in advance. Thinking needs not to try to accustom *Ereignis* to its own, previously set up ways, it rather should retrieve its own essence

out and from its primordial power. Therefore, for our special issue, we invite not only the essays that seek to directly cope with the tragic things happening right in front of our eyes at the moment but, even more importantly, the ones that are somehow inspired or driven by all this predicament into their own ways. These current events are shaking the very foundations of the world we live in. Thus it is a high time to fundamentally think through both the world itself and these very foundations.

As an academic journal we expect well-researched, in-depth analyses fulfilling the standards provided for academic contributions. In accordance with the profile of our journal we are open not only to purely philosophical essays but also to contributions from other cultural disciplines. Papers can be submitted by **August 15th, 2022** to: idos.ed@uw.edu.pl

They have to be previously unpublished and they cannot be under consideration for publication elsewhere. They should be prepared for a double-blind review process. Please, make sure that your paper complies with our submission standards which are posted here: <http://idos.uw.edu.pl/submissions/>

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