

Editor's Introduction

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This special issue is somewhat atypical with respect to what *Theoria* has been publishing up to date. For many reasons, the general topic of ideology has been absent in much of post-logical empiricism analytic philosophy, including a major part of HPS studies, the tradition to which *Theoria* mostly belongs. However, this tradition is undergoing some dramatic changes lately. Many authors coming from philosophy of language, philosophy of science, and metaphysics, are trying to apply the tools that have been crafted during the last decades to pressing social issues, including the generation, sustainment, and roles of ideologies. The causes of the changes in the discipline are still to be studied, though one of the main forces behind the renewal of the analytic agenda is surely the raise of feminist studies, which may have both internal and external motivations. The external motivations are too varied to be dealt with here. But the main internal motivation is probably the realization that analytic philosophy has a ridiculous ratio of women, especially when compared to the rest of the Humanities. This is yet an unexplained fact (women in formal semantics, for instance, are much better represented than in its twin discipline, philosophy of language).

Within the analytic tradition, feminist analytic philosophers have been the first to incorporate insights from feminist and critical theory, from social constructivism and sociology in general, and from the psychology of bias, stereotyping and prejudice. The general impact of this work has been noticeable. Now there is a considerable body of work on implicit bias and stereotyping, on in-group/ out-group dynamics, on social constructivism, and on political issues at large, and in particular on the identification and analysis of oppressing ideologies. Jason Stanley's recent *How Propaganda Works* gives thematic unity to very insightful work that was somewhat scattered, and will be the reference work in the field for the years to come. This is why this special issue is largely devoted to present and criticize this book.

HPW pulls together various threads, which have developed more or less independently- from Marx, Gramsci and Du Bois to the most recent work in philosophy, sociology or psychology-, concerning the generation and support of oppressing ideologies. However, it also advances some interesting claims that will be much discussed (as this volume reveals). Particularly interesting is the notion of undermining propaganda, which Stanley characterizes as “a contribution to public discourse that is presented as an embodiment of certain ideals yet is of a kind that tends to erode those very ideals”, as exemplified by the use of the



word 'free' to mask oppressive policies and behaviors. Also interesting and controversial are Stanley's views about the relation between material inequality, flawed ideologies, and propaganda. In his view, material inequalities are a source of flawed ideologies, ideologies that contribute to the sustainment of those very inequalities. Material inequalities and the subtle undermining propaganda thus constitute two of the most pressing dangers in our non-dictatorial systems.

From the 2008 crisis and its aftermath a really dim picture of the political world has emerged. This is probably also a major reason why philosophers of all orientations now focus their work on notions such as ideology and propaganda and think about philosophy, as in past times, as part of an emancipatory project. It is interesting to note, in this respect, that many analytic philosophers are trying to put their activism and academic work together. This is also new in the field. In 2001, Michael Dummett published a wonderful essay called "On Immigration and Refugees", but this essay had no connection with his academic work. Now many researchers display a very different attitude towards the relevance of social issues to academic philosophy and vice versa. We will see in the next years what this change comports.

In any case, we are very proud to contribute with this special issue to the current increasing interests of many philosophers educated in the core of the analytic tradition. All the papers in this volume have been carefully crafted and provide insights that will surely be amply discussed. We are very grateful to the authors and reviewers of these rich papers as well as to Jason Stanley both for writing a *précis* to his book and for helping us to assemble this fantastic collection of contributions.

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