

## Book Review - Profiles

R. Brubaker, *Hyperconnectivity and Its Discontents*, Hoboken: Wiley, 2022, pp. 288, ISBN: 9781509554546.

Digital hyperconnectivity is a defining fact of our time. The Silicon Valley dream of universal connection – the idea of connecting everyone and everything to everyone and everything else, everywhere and all the time – is rapidly becoming a reality. In this wide-ranging and sharply argued book, the author develops an original interpretive account of the pervasive and unsettling changes brought about by hyperconnectivity. He traces transformations of the self, social relations, culture, economics, and politics, giving special attention to underexplored themes of abundance, miniaturization, convenience, quantification, and discipline. Throughout, this book underscores the ambivalence of digital hyperconnectivity, which on one side opens up many new and exciting possibilities, yet on the other side threatens human freedom.

M. Cannito, E. Mercuri, F. Tomatis, *Cancel culture e ideologia gender. Fenomenologia di un dibattito pubblico*, Torino: Rosenberg&Sellier, 2022, pp. 104, ISBN: 9791259931184.

What is the cancel culture? What are the origins of this expression, now widespread, and what are the characteristics of the phenomena concerning it? This book tries to answer these questions, illustrating circumstances in which we began to talk about cancel culture and the way in which the theme was declined in the Italian public debate, distinguishing between practices and political effects. Through an analysis of posts published on social media by leading Italian newspapers and political actors, the authors show that cancel culture is a sort of “epiphenomenon” existing to the extent that it is narrated and around which, however, a struggle emerges for the right to speak and censorship. In fact, in Italy cancel culture is a journalistic product that combines - at the narrative level - with the pre-existing debate around the so-called “gender ideology”, supporting unprecedented political alliances and producing unexpected reality effects.

S. Citroni, *L' associarsi quotidiano. Terzo settore in cambiamento e società civile*, Milano: Meltemi, 2022, pp. 278, ISBN: 9788855197007.

What do citizens do when they found or participate in an association? This is the main starting question of the book on the everyday life of associations. Starting from an ethnographic investigation, careful to explore the experiences of the protagonists and the practices, the author analyzes the diffusion of new forms of civic engagement at the individual level, the growing importance of the organization of events in the action repertoire of third sector and the contractualisation with public entities and private funders. The research insights show how the associative styles of daily group life tend to filter the general contextual factors within which civic action takes shape. The author invites us to abandon any rhetoric on the neo-liberalization of the third sector and shows the relevance of daily association styles and their instituting power.

A. Santambrogio, *Utopia senza ideologia*, Milano: Meltemi, 2022, pp. 296, ISBN: 9788855197045.

Utopia without ideology is a book of social theory that proposes original definitions of the concepts of political culture, social imaginary, ideology and utopia, within a conceptual framework consisting of a general theory of social action inspired by phenomenology. For the author, the concept of utopia is particularly important: in today's post-ideological era, it is necessary to restore an ideal dimension to our everyday life, placing it in a temporal perspective that combines the recognition of the past and projects the present into a reasonably delineable future. In

this way, the possibility of making sense of our daily experience will reappear, within collective action projects as expression of a renewed ability to build gratifying social bonds.

H. Staubmann, *Sociology in a New Key. Essays in Social Theory and Aesthetics*, Cham: Springer, 2022, pp. 127, ISBN: 9783030949211.

This book presents essays that address fundamental issues in social and cultural theory by viewing them through the lens of aesthetic theory. Drawing on the aesthetic theories of Adorno, Bateson, Guyau, Parsons and Simmel, it suggests a new take on basic sociological concepts and methodologies. The chapters cover a wide range of topics, including the sensuality of social action and the social construction of unreality. The book's title *Sociology in a New Key* refers to a classic work by Susanne K. Langer, whose *Philosophy in a New Key* argued for a reorientation of modern philosophical thought based on a thorough account of symbolism in general and of the arts in particular. In this way, the basic ideas and assumptions of the philosophical tradition are transposed to new understandings and perspectives, appealing to anyone interested in the intersection of social theory and aesthetics.

V. Susca, *Tecnomagia. Estasi, totem e incantesimi nella cultura digitale*, Sesto San Giovanni: Mimesis Edizioni, 2022, pp. 268, ISBN: 9788857590110.

The book focuses on the so-called technomagic, which is something different from technology. Technology, in fact, can be considered more as a mere set of tools with which to solve problems, carry out tasks and act on the world. Instead, technomagic is a phenomenon carried out by streamers, tiktokers, memers and influencers which tends – according to neo-liberal capitalism – to consume time, assemble bodies, magnetize emotions, awakening archaic passions and triggering futuristic visions. This process invests the human being, who has become the object – and not the subject – of a metamorphosis transcending his rational, biological and social qualities. The author argues how technology is transformed – on Instagram, Tik Tok, Twitch or OnlyFans – into a techno-magic promoting a match of communities, machines, organic and inorganic forms around passions, icons and totems, in the context of relational chains in which the individual is no longer the main actor.