

Prof. COSTANTINO ESPOSITO

Università di Bari "Aldo Moro"

Costantino Esposito (Bari 1955) since 2000 is full professor of "History of Philosophy" and "History of Metaphysics" at the University of Bari "Aldo Moro", "Dipartimento di Studi Umanistici" [DISUM].

He graduated in philosophy at the University of Bari and worked there from 1979 to 1998, first as a Teaching Assistant and then as a Researcher; from 1998 to 2000 he worked as an Associate professor at the University of Cassino. On various occasions, he was engaged in research in Germany at the University of Freiburg i. Br. and Köln.

Areas of Expertise and professional experience

The thought of Martin Heidegger, Immanuel Kant, and Francisco Suárez

He is a member of the Editorial Board of several International Journals. He lectured and gave talks at Conferences in Europe, USA, Latin America and Japan. He also taught some graduate courses like Visiting Professor in Argentina (at the Universidad Catolica de Buenos Aires and at the Universidad Catolica de Santa Fe) and in Peru (at the Universidad "Sedes Sapientiae" in Lima). He is Distinguished Visiting Scholar Professor at the UCLA "Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies", Los Angeles, CA. Since 2001, he has worked alongside Pasquale Porro as editor of "Quaestio – International Yearbook of the History of Metaphysics". He has been Coordinator of Research Unity PRIN 2002, 2006 and 2008. From 2009 to 2015, he was Coordinator of the Course of study of Philosophy (undergraduate) and Philosophical Sciences (graduate) in the "Dipartimento di Filosofia, Letteratura, Storia e Scienze Sociali" [FLESS], University of Bari "Aldo Moro". Since October 2014, he is a member of the Working Group on Books and scientific Journal of ANVUR, the National Evaluation Agency of Italian universities.

Key recent Works

- "Al di sopra', 'attraverso', 'al di là'. Heidegger, Suárez, Tommaso nella storia della metafisica", «Giornale di metafisica», 32 (2010) pp. 553-586.
- "Memory and Temptation. Heidegger Reads the 10th Of the 'Confessions' of Augustine", in: S.J. McGrath / A. Wiercinski (eds), *Companion to Martin Heidegger's Phenomenology of Religious Life*, Rodopi, Amsterdam-Ney York, NY 2010, pp. 285-307.
- "Truth without Certainty? An Open Question into the New Realism", in C. Esposito / P. Porro (a cura di), *Intentionality and Reality*, «Quaestio», 12 (2012), pp. 515-534.
- "Kant and the Problem of Modern Ontology", in: S. Bacin, A. Ferrarin, C. La Rocca, M. Ruffing (Hrsg.), *Kant und die Philosophie in weltbürgerlicher Absicht*, Akten des XI. Internationalen Kant-Kongresses (Pisa, 21-26.V.2010), W. de Gruyter, Berlin-Boston 2013, vol. 5, pp. 441-453.
- "Suárez and the Baroque Matrix of Modern Thought", in: Victor M. Salas & Robert L. Fastiggi (eds.), *A Companion to Francisco Suárez*, Brill, Leiden-Boston 2014, pp. 124-147.
- *Heidegger*, il Mulino, Bologna 2013, 2014, 2nd ed., pp. 242.
- "Francisco Suárez: la natura, la grazia e la causa della libertà", «Anuario filosofico» (Universidad de Navarra), 47 (2014), n. 1, pp. 119-148.
- C. Esposito / P. Porro, *I mondi della filosofia*, vol. 1, 2 e 3 (Laterza, Roma-Bari 2016).

For more information:

<http://www.uniba.it/docenti/esposito-costantino>

The Thought of Francisco Suárez (1548-1617) in the Context of the Baroque Age

We use the term 'Baroque' to indicate the complex and fertile period in European culture between the end of the 16th century and the beginning of the 17th, in which a significant effort to enact change within the scholastic tradition (called Late or Second Scholasticism) starting at the Council of Trent, but widespread among Catholics, as well as Lutherans and Calvinists, was closely linked to the development of "modern" systems of reasoning. This relationship of rift and areas of continuity between the Scholastic tradition and modern philosophy will be examined in its various dimensions: both metaphysical and theological, legal and political, in Europa and in the "New World".

These force fields, at once unitary and conflictual, in which doctrinal differences and ruptures should always be interpreted on the basis of a continuity and homogeneity of a metaphysical – or rather "ontological" – kind, are what we have come to call "baroque thought". And it has a peculiar feature: that of constituting one of the theoretical "matrix", or dominant lines of thought of a whole era – roughly from the Council of Trent to Kant's critique of 18th rationalist *Schulmetaphysik*.

Suárez must always be collocated within the context and tasks required by his time, that is: 1) the revival of the great legacy of medieval theology through the systematic reclamation riproposizione of Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* as the doctrinal canon of the Roman Catholic Church, especially in contrast to Lutheranism; 2) the elaboration of a metaphysical discourse, that is, of an ontology and a natural theology that could serve as the foundations for a revealed theology; 3) the reflections on the new status of natural law (a kind of theological–juridical anthropology) and of international law, in order to deal with problems linked to the spread of Church and State among the indigenous populations of the New World; 4) the dissemination of his own teachings, whether directly or indirectly, in some of the most important Catholic universities and colleges, and then, surprisingly, even in some of the universities of Reformation Europe, especially with regard to his new system of "metaphysics".

Yet, Suárez must also be evaluated like a crossroads or a chiasmus: an exquisitely *baroque* place, in which tradition "curves" in order to form a new horizon of modernity, and modernity brings with it, shaping it in a new "fold" and from unexpected perspectives, the metaphysical tradition of the past.

Aim of the research: basing on my previous studies on Suárez's metaphysics, noetics, theology and philosophy of law I would like to highlight that the matrix of various categories in Suárez's philosophy, such as ontological, etical and juridical ones, comes from a theological order: he wants to re-build the concept of "natural" in order to affirm the link and the bond with the "supernatural", which are denied by the Reformed thought. Among these concepts there are those of "ens/the being", "essence", "existence", "principium", "cause", "distinction", "inclusion", "abstraction", "analogy", "pure nature", "natural law", "positive law".

The research aims to highlight the typical contradictions of the "baroque thought": on one hand the theology (Catholic in general and Jesuitical in particular) offers a new comprehension of the ontological structure of the natural world as a way to show the supernatural glory of the divine revelation; on the other side this supernatural revelation falls into the pure structure of the natural world. Suárez realizes in fact 1) a return to Aristotle and the metaphysics taking into account the crisis of the "theological way" of Tomas Aquinas (from the evidence of things to the existence of the Creator) after the Lutheran Reformation. 2) This post-thomistic return to the metaphysics springs up thanks to the mediation of the "trascendental" way of Duns Scotus, but 3) in this new perspective the trascendental thought becomes a tool to serve the Jesuitical program of the "ad maiorem Dei gloriam". 4) It's a paradox that the deepest point of contact between nature and supernature will be the theoretical starting point of many theories that would be valid "etsi Deus non daretur", as Grotius would say, or because they are barely "possible" to the human mind, as Christian Wolff would say.