Frankfurt 2016

New and forthcoming titles
Literature
Bruno Pischedda, A Guide to Umberto Eco’s “The Name of the Rose”
Alberto Beretta Anguissola, Readers in Love

History
Domenico Losurdo, A World with No War: The Idea of Peace, from Past Promises to Today’s Tragedies
Antonella Campanini, Food and History: Medieval Europe
Adriana Valerio, Women and the Church: A Gendered History

Philosophy
Mauro Bonazzi, Through the Eyes of the Greeks: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Times
Andrea Sani, Lights, Camera… Think! Discovering Philosophy at the Movies

Psychology
Andrea Marini, What is Cognitive Neuroscience

Communication Studies
Dario Edoardo Viganò, Brothers and Sisters, Good Evening: Pope Francis and Communication

Science
Silvano Fuso, Natural = Good?
Pietro Greco, History of π
Way back in 1980, Umberto Eco’s “The Name of the Rose” first appeared in bookstores and rapidly became an international bestseller. Far from being a superficial novel, Eco’s text requires a confident and expert guide such as the one written by Pischedda. The author explains not only the novel’s literary features, but also explores its historical, philosophical and political content. The text also explains Italian post-modernity and Eco’s role in it.

Bruno Pischedda teaches Contemporary Italian Literature at the University of Milan.
In “Sodom and Gomorrah” Proust takes it for granted that the pleasure of reading entails the transformation of a character into an object of desire. Beretta Anguissola exploits this insight and provides an overview of the great works of literature, from antiquity to the early 20th century. Adopting a long-term perspective based on a search for lost beauty, he shows that those works’ authors “seduced” millions of readers by emphasising the appeal of their “heroes”.

Alberto Beretta Anguissola teaches French Literature at the University of Tuscia in Viterbo (Italy).
In 1989 a world without war seemed to be within reach of humanity; today we are not only plagued by terrorism and local conflicts, but also live under the threat of a third world war. How did this situation come about? The author provides a novel and engaging account of the idea of peace, from the French Revolution to the present day. The text, highlighting the role of great intellectuals (Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Constant, Comte, Spencer, Marx, Popper, etc.) and important statesmen (Washington, Robespierre, Napoleon, Wilson, Lenin, Bush, Sr., etc.), addresses the major issues of our times. Is it even possible to imagine a world without warfare? Can we rely on non-violence? What is the specific role of women? Does democracy authentically guarantee peace, or can it be transformed into a bellicerent ideology?

Domenico Losurdo is professor emeritus at the University of Urbino and has been awarded an honorary doctorate by the Fluminense Federal University in Niterói-Rio de Janeiro.
More than a thousand years separate the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the discovery of America. Over that lengthy time span, European food cultures, at first quite different from one another, introduced and developed a dialogue that would result in their extensive transformation. The movement of people, products, words and ideas brought about a substantial unity on the European continent. The book leads the reader on a journey among ingredients, recipes, customs and choices, involving monarchs, peasants, high-ranking elites (aristocrats, ambassadors, bishops and popes), scientists, men of culture, cooks, craftsmen, and ordinary individuals, including (a few) women – in other words, society as a whole. Food – whether it is desired or turned down, sought out or discarded, universal or local – is a key tool for interpreting the gradual process of building a culturally unified Europe.

Antonella Campanini conducts research in the field of medieval history and teaches History of Food Cultures and Traditional Local Products, as well as History of Cuisine, at the University of Gastronomic Sciences in Pollenzo (Italy).
What is the point of a new account, using a gendered perspective, of the history of the Roman Catholic Church? For the first time in international historiography, this book applies an inclusive methodology to interpret the evolution of the Church. Using an original periodisation, stretching from Jesus of Nazareth to the present day, the author places men’s and women’s experiences in a multi-level framework in order to describe the Church’s spiritual, cultural and political development. The ensuing portrayal brings to light the contrasts between the exercise of power within the Church and women’s active struggles in their faith experiences. This innovative overview of the past leads the reader to examine critically the present and identifies bold options for changing the future.

Adriana Valerio teaches History of Christianity and Churches at the Federico II University in Naples and is a former president of the European Society of Women in Theological Research (AFERT).

Adriana Valerio
Women and the Church: A Gendered History

Donne e chiesa. Una storia di genere

History
2016 • pp. 248
Happiness, love, death, justice, force, friendship and nostalgia – the ancient Greeks addressed a wide array of problems with an admirably high degree of freedom and irreverence. The author of this book doesn’t shy away from mixing “high” and “low” topics (and how, really, can one tell them apart?) and adroitly avoids the traps of classical mannerisms. The text shows that, by turning our gaze towards those apparently remote cultures, we can find a valuable guide to understanding today’s complex issues.

Mauro Bonazzi teaches History of Ancient Philosophy at the University of Milan.
Andrea Sani

Lights, Camera... Think!

Discovering Philosophy at the Movies

Ciak si pensa! Come scoprire la filosofia al cinema

The book explains a set of fundamental results drawn from the history of philosophy through a discussion of the visual, emotional and cognitive experiences provided by exceptionally important films. Some of the movies explored from a philosophical perspective are classics: Alfred Hitchcock’s thrillers and Stanley Kubrick’s masterpieces. Others are more recent works: Clint Eastwood’s “Hereafter” (2010), David Cronenberg’s “A Dangerous Method” (2011) and Christopher Nolan’s “Interstellar” (2014).

Andrea Sani is an expert in cinema, philosophy and comic strips.
Using an accessible and engaging style, this book introduces the reader to cognitive neuroscience. After describing the main structures of the brain, the text examines the historical and philosophical underpinnings of the ideas that have led to the current understanding of how the mind works and its relationship with the brain. The current view, in fact, is that mental processes are based on complex neural networks, the organisation of which reflects individual experience. The book also features a discussion of the latest scientific findings concerning perception, movement, attention, memory and language. The final chapter sheds light on the current frontiers of this fascinating field of study.

Andrea Marini teaches Psychology of Language, as well as Cognitive Neuroscience, at the University of Udine.
With his considerable knowledge and refinement in managing linguistic and cultural codes, Pope Francis is able to reach just about anybody with his communication skills. Often Pope Bergoglio, thanks to his relational competence, abandons prepared texts, improvises, and resorts to parables, metaphors and anecdotes in order to connect his message to everyday life. Although Francis is not particularly attached to television and the media in general, he has mastered them with extraordinary ease. How does he do it? What types of symbolic constructions underpin his communication? A careful analysis of various aspects of the “public performance” of Francis’ papacy – including his greetings from St. Peter’s, apostolic journeys, homilies, and encyclical letters – allows the author to explain how Bergoglio’s messages affect us.

**Msgr. Dario Edoardo Viganò** is the Prefect of the Secretariat for Communications of the Holy See and teaches Theology of Communication at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome. From 2013 to 2015 he was the director of the Vatican Television Centre.
Science and technology have been the source of outstanding contributions to improving the quality of human life. Yet contemporary society also expresses a desire for a more natural lifestyle and nostalgia for an idealised past. Lots of people are influenced by the overwhelming appeal of the “good old days”, the flavours of the past, home-made remedies, certain products’ “authenticity”, and harmony with nature. The adjective “natural” has become synonymous with goodness, health, safety, and wholesomeness in a variety of human activities, including agriculture, eating, medicine, cosmetics, sexuality, etc. But is everything that is “natural” actually “good”? And when a thing is called “natural”, is this truly an accurate description? Rejecting the façades of ideology and advertising slogans, the author critically analyzes these issues.

Silvano Fuso teaches Chemistry and is an expert in science teaching and popularisation. Asteroid 2006 TF7, in orbit between Mars and Jupiter, is named after him.

Silvano Fuso

Natural = Good?

Naturale = buono?
Well before anybody called it “pi” or used the now universal symbol π, Egyptians and Sumerians were aware that the ratio of a circumference of a circle to its diameter is a constant. And the ancient Greeks knew that it was an unlimited and non-periodic number and called it “irrational”. But Archimedes, in Syracuse, was the first to study it in great detail, calculate its value with extreme accuracy and conceive of the modern idea of limits. The tale of π is an exhilarating one and has been the focus of a thrilling crescendo of studies by all the great mathematicians, but is has also inspired poets and left its mark on the history of peoples. Even today π draws attention, as computers attempt to determine its value to trillions of decimal places. It has even earned – as no number had ever done before – its very own worldwide annual celebration: Pi Day!

Pietro Greco – a science journalist and author – writes for several newspapers and magazines and hosts a radio programme devoted to science.