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THE VIRUS PARADIGM

A Planetary Ecology of the Mind

Roberto Marchesini

Center for the Study of Posthumanist Philosophy

(Translation by Sarah De Sanctis)



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Abstract: In recent years, the word “virus” has lost its biological perimeter of reference to acquire a much broader – one could say “paradigmatic” – meaning. The term “virus” can be seen as a key word or an explanatory model also for processes that go beyond the infectious sphere. Every event appears to have a viral character: from the way information is transmitted to the processes of cultural globalization, from the impact of human beings on the planet to the subversion of ecosystems, from pandemic risks to the demographic increase on the planet. This seems to be, indeed, the Age of the Virus. This model can be applied to most of the phenomena that characterize the twenty-first century. Its profile – its looming and invisible nature, its ability to use other people’s resources to spread and to transform into a dangerous doppelganger – is perfect to represent the fears of the contemporary age.

Keywords: planetary risks, zoonoses, anthropocentrism, human nature, posthumanism

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