

New Perspectives

Interdisciplinary Journal of Central & East European Politics and International Relations

Vol. 24, No. 1/2016

ÚSTAV
MEZINÁRODNÍCH VZTAHŮ
PRAHA  INSTITUTE
OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
PRAGUE

Contents

Editorial: Living in Post-truth: Power/Knowledge/Responsibility <i>Benjamin Tallis</i>	7
Research Articles	
An Unending Quest for Russia's Place in the World: The Discursive Co-evolution of the Study and Practice of International Relations in Russia <i>Mariya Y. Omelicheva and Lidiya Zubytka</i>	19
Too Limited, Too Late: Evaluating the Czech Republic's Performance as a Small-State Lobbyist in EU External Policy <i>Tomáš Weiss</i>	53
Intervention	
When One Religious Extremism Unmasks Another: Reflections on Europe's States of Emergency as a Legacy of Ordo-Liberal De-hermeneuticisation <i>Johan van der Walt</i>	79
Forum: Responses to Russia and the World: 2016 IMEMO Forecast	103
Frozen Transition: Russia and Great Power Crisis Management <i>Anatoly Reshetnikov</i>	103
Russia and the Missing World <i>Sergei Prozorov</i>	108
Russia at the Crossroads: Greater Kazakhstan or DPRK-Lite? <i>Graeme P. Herd</i>	112
The Plaintive Voice of Russia's Embattled Foreign Policy Establishment <i>Mark Galeotti</i>	117
The 'New Normal' in Russian Foreign Policy Thinking <i>Alexander Duleba</i>	122
Rebuttal: Russia and the World – Having Reached the Bottom of the Problem, is the Way Now Upward? <i>Irina Kobrinskaya (Co-author of the 2016 IMEMO Forecast)</i>	127

**135 Roundtable: Modernism, the International and the Possibility of
an Avant-garde**

*Benjamin Tallis, Jan Bělíček, Dita Malečková,
Gregor Podlogar, Boris A. Novak, Louis Armand*

161 Notes on Contributors

Editorial 01/2016

Living in Post-truth: Power/Knowledge/Responsibility¹

BENJAMIN TALLIS

Editor-in-Chief, *New Perspectives*

Much has already been written and said about the UK's referendum on EU membership and on the vote in favour of Brexit. This editorial does not seek to rehash the many insightful analyses and heartfelt commentaries on these topics, but, rather, to highlight that from a progressive, post-positivist² academic point of view, four key issues stand out.

First, there is a need to engage with the kind of 'post-truth' politics that has emerged as a significant, anti-democratic and anti-progressive trend (see, e.g., Stokes, 2016; Viner, 2016). *Second*, progressive post-positivist academics are uniquely equipped to engage with post-truth politics, and we have a particular responsibility to do so – beyond as well as within academia. *Third*, progressive, post-positivist academics need to go beyond the safe, postmodern haven of critique and instead do more to inform and propose positive (although not positivist) and positional, rather than merely oppositional, alternatives. *Fourth*, in fashioning such new positive perspectives for the post-truth world, post-positivists can draw inspiration from modernist as well as postmodernist sources, notably from the avant-gardes of the 20th Century.

This editorial elaborates on these points and links them to ongoing debates – in and beyond academia – some of which also feature in this issue of the journal. The purpose is to provoke innovative responses to, as well as reflections on, the issues that are raised by the widely recognised emergence of post-truth politics. However, any such responses will come in the context of the wider – and also widely recognised – challenges for progressive politics, of which Brexit and the campaigns that led to it are just the latest examples. As engaged post-positivist academics we have much to contribute to addressing these challenges, and in the post-truth world, we also have the tools to make such contributions.

Not everyone will agree with the analysis presented here, or with my somewhat caricatured characterisation of post-positivist academics, and it is certainly important to recognise the contributions that we already make. Others will disagree with the aim of spurring academics, particularly progressive, post-positivist academics, to take greater responsibility and do more to contribute to public de-

bate and to shaping politics and societies. Nonetheless, I hope that the editorial will at least provoke reflection on these issues as well as on what we as academics do and what more we can do – and, as Vaclav Havel noted, we can always do more.

I would also note that I am not, currently, alone in making such calls. The Brexit vote and the ignorance that characterised much of the referendum debate prompted Leeds-based academic Alex Nunn, with the input of a diverse crowd of scholars (including myself), to form the Facebook group ‘Academics for Informed and Progressive Debate’ and the website ‘Inform ED: Inform EU Debate’ with just such intentions. In keeping with the *New Perspectives* ethos, the journal not only supports and promotes such initiatives, but also seeks to extend them – by provoking new constellations of encounters between, *inter alia*, scholars, journalists, artists, critics and political practitioners as well as between scholars from different disciplines and backgrounds. As discussed below, this approach aims to provide richer inspiration (formally as well as substantively) for innovative and progressive post-truth politics, as well as a forum in which to discuss, critique, and improve and from which to disseminate ideas and proposals.

To facilitate this, we are launching a new series of articles in *New Perspectives* – ‘**Compositions**’ that offer positive, but not positivist, proposals for what can be done to address various issues, that go beyond oppositional critique to offer positions of their own. We must, after all, live as well as research in post-truth.

POST-TRUTH POLITICS AND POST-POSITIVIST SCHOLARSHIP

As an interpretivist scholar committed to researching and representing the multiple competing or complementary *truths* of social situations (rather than observing or testing for *the* [‘capital T’] *Truth*), it has been galling, if intriguing, to see the deceptions of the Brexiters’ campaign and Donald Trump’s scorched earth Presidential campaign described as ‘post-truth’ politics. Who among post-positivist scholars would not advocate a ‘post-truth’ approach in our academic work? But who among progressive post-positivists is not concerned at the way that this post-truth politics is being practiced?

In discussing these post-truth politicians (and the Australian Pauline Hanson), philosopher Peter Stokes (2016) employed Harry Frankfurt’s (2005) terms to claim that their approach is not so much that of the “liar”, who “knows the truth, and cares about it enough to conceal it”, but that of the “bullshitter”, who, “by contrast, doesn’t care (and may not know) if what they say is true; they just care that you believe it.” However, even that may be claiming too much or, rather, too little for the post-truth politicians. Echoing the title and thesis of Petr Pomarentsev’s recent (2014) book on Vladimir Putin’s Russia, the popular historian Timothy Snyder has claimed that the destabilisation or even the destruction of the notion of Truth as such is the goal.

The Putin approach, applying the ‘political technologies’ of Marat Gelman, Gleb Pavlovsky and Vladislav Surkov, is to create a situation where everyone ‘knows’ while Putin might not be telling the truth, and neither are the other politicians, so what’s the difference, and where’s the problem if his lies are better and more appealing? Moreover, it is in lying and getting away with it, in actively flaunting this disdain for truth yet nonetheless continuing to make the political weather, that post-truth politicians demonstrate and enhance their power. Trump, Johnson, Gove, Putin and other post-truthers thus play to a widespread and increasingly cynical, anti-expert and supposedly anti-establishment and anti-authority mood, but one that clearly also still craves leadership and ambition.

Clearly there are many differences between post-positivist scholarship and post-truth politics as currently practiced. The former entails diligent, systematic, interpretive research that seeks to produce “trustworthy and persuasive” knowledge about the complex and plural meanings of peoples’ relation to their social situations (Schwartz-Shea and Yanow, 2012). The latter involves outright lies, empirical falsehoods, and misleading associations – such as those peddled by politicians such as Trump, Gove, Farage and Putin – in the service of their own interests and the interests of those they represent, either officially or unofficially. However, there are epistemological, if not ethical or normative, similarities between post-truth and post-positivism.

Post-Positivism and Post-truth

Many scholars would bristle at the conflation of post-positivist academia with the cynical and callous machinations, or the ignorant and often bigoted bluster that post-truth politicians engage in. However, Snyder (a positivist) has specifically linked the international success of Putin’s post-truth propaganda to the influence of post-modernism in the West (see, e.g., Tallis, 2015). Furthermore, Snyder – and others (e.g. Sokal and Bricmont, 1998) – have been clear in identifying the postmodern turn and its denigration of positivist notions of truth as harmful to what they (and many others) deem to be progressive causes.

Snyder made this assertion in a high-profile speech about Ukraine and the wider context of relations between Russia and the West. These are issues where self-identified progressives have been willing to countenance and repeat the idea that the Euromaidan revolution in Kyiv was either the culmination of an imperialist American plot or predominantly the work of local fascists – or better still, a collaboration between the two. When one considers that they would promote such ideas rather than believe Western leaders and the ‘mainstream media’ one has to concede that Snyder may have a point.³ When they go on to make equivalence between the involvement of the Putin regime and that of the West in Ukraine, it only demonstrates the power of the Putin strategy and the dangers it poses.

Distinguishing between and evaluating post-truth claims or multiple truth arguments should be meat and drink to post-positivist interpretivist scholars – it is, after all, how we make our living. However, there has been a pronounced hesitance to make progressive critiques of Putin, Trump, Gove or Johnson that *embrace* their post-truth world and beat them at their own game. During the Brexit campaign, for example, critiques of the post-truth Leave campaign have generally conformed to the positivist Liberal or retro-leftist types rather than engaging with it on a post-truth basis.

Journalists have been similarly hesitant. In a major ‘long-read’ piece on the challenges of post-truth politics for journalism, Katherine Viner, editor of *The Guardian*, recently lamented the loss of journalistic authority – and declining standards of journalistic practice (2016). She quotes Aaron Banks, a key donor to UKIP and the Leave campaign, when saying, “‘Facts don’t work’ [...] The remain campaign featured fact, fact, fact, fact, fact. It just doesn’t work. You have got to connect with people emotionally. It’s the Trump success.” She notes that “rumours and lies are read just as widely as copper-bottomed facts” and is left wondering “does the truth matter anymore?”

Two days before Viner’s piece was published, an editorial in *The Guardian* (2016) highlighted the “symbolism” of the location of the Warsaw NATO summit, as it was the first one to be held in “the capital of a central European country that was once under Soviet domination,” forgetting that Prague has also hosted a NATO summit. However, the factual error in the *Guardian* report doesn’t significantly – or necessarily – undermine the symbolic significance of the location of the summit in the current geopolitical context or the arguments that are made in the rest of the piece – there are still many (more or less convincing) truths in the piece, despite this particular claim being ‘false’. Similarly, correcting the falsehoods of the post-truthers will never trump Trump or put Putin in the shade because it will not dissuade many people from ‘believing’ in the bigger, more compelling ‘post-truths’ they offer. They offer people meaningful and attractive interpretations of their current condition and future possibilities, however far-fetched, factually incorrect or empirically biased they may be.

This is a very basic example of the kind of distinction that interpretivist scholars could clearly bring into play. We could use the tools that we employ in our research to provide ways of evaluating competing post-truth claims. This would allow post-truthers to be challenged in ways that would go beyond the current resort to the kind of ‘fact-shaming’ that is the negative corollary of the equally futile presentation of facts in the hope that “reason prevails”, as Stokes claims the more positive elements of the Remain campaign did just that (2016). It would also provide a better platform for offering new perspectives, new positions, which, while they should not resort to outright falsehoods, should not be judged only on their merits in relation to classical understandings of ‘Truth’.

Viner claims that what “matters most about journalism is: the valuable, civic, pounding-the-streets, sifting-the-database, asking-challenging-questions hard graft of

uncovering things that someone doesn't want you to know." But there is more to it than this. Like interpretive, post-positivist scholarship, journalism is also about making sense of such facts and information, about contextualising and narrativising them, about trying to understand what drives people and about representing this. Inevitably this also means striving for balance (although what this means in practice is also currently highly contested [Viner, 2016]) and accounting for different peoples' different drives, interpretations, experiences and outcomes. Viner notes that "good journalism" helps "people make sense of the world" and, we may add, helps make certain narratives compelling, meaningful and inspiring. So too could post-positivist scholarship and the public and political engagement that could spring from it, should we give it the chance.

The postmodern levelling of the epistemological playing field has certainly brought problems for traditional, positivist notions of Truth and the bastions of authority that relied on them. In contrast, we post-positivists rightly congratulate ourselves on having developed a sophisticated and reflexive relation to 'facts', 'information' and, indeed, '(post-)truth'. However, while journalists like Viner worry over their declining authority because of post-truth, we post-positivist scholars too often disavow our authority by failing to sufficiently engage in public debate and political action on explicitly post-truth terms. We have left the field open to anti-progressive post-truthers, who many of us strongly oppose and positivists find it very hard to counter.

We know this and we do not act, but if the epistemological ground of post-truth politics is not the problem for post-positivist scholars, what is it that is holding us back?

"YOU MUSTN'T BE AFRAID TO DREAM A LITTLE BIGGER, DARLING"⁴

In his 'Intervention' piece in this issue **Johan van der Walt** gets close to the heart of the matter. Adapting Navid Kermani's characterisation of problematic aspects of contemporary Islam as 'de-hermeneuticised' – lacking in the kind of creative re-interpretation and the creation and enacting of new meanings required for healthy socio-political development – van der Walt argues that European ordo-liberalism has also slipped into such de-hermeneuticised dogmatic fundamentalism. He shows that the use of states of emergency to counter Islamic-extremist violence has unmasked another, home-grown extremism – an increasingly self-destructive and potentially auto-immune form of ordo-liberalism that has become dangerously dominant in European politics and economics. Crucially, van der Walt calls for a 're-hermeneuticisation' of European political economy – a revival of 'the political' to address this issue and find a way out of the downward neoliberal spiral.

We can productively see 're-hermeneuticisation' as the re-contextualisation, re-imagination and re-narrativisation of social, political, cultural and economic conditions and possibilities – beyond the scope of most post-positivists' current engagements beyond academia. We have contented ourselves for too long with critique – be it piecemeal or radical. Scared of our own authority and the responsibility it brings, we have disavowed it. We have, perhaps, too easily bought into the radical postmodern critiques of authority and expertise. This radical levelling was intended as a progressive counterweight to entrenched interests and unaccountable power/knowledge, but it has not only had progressive effects, as discussed above. It is certainly not novel to critique postmodern scholars for failing to go beyond critique, but it is necessary to repeat this criticism in the current circumstances. It is also now time for progressive, post-positivist scholars to go beyond this critique and address it.

However, while we need to find new sources of inspiration and courage in order to do so, we should also look anew at some old sources, or at least to the spirit they invoked.

Looking Back, Looking Forward, Looking for a Positive Vision

One of the unifying features of the wilfully diverse postmodern turn has been the taking down of modernism (high or otherwise), which was seen to have lost its progressive potential and become, instead, at best a technique of elite reproduction and, at worst, a tool of outright totalitarian repression (e.g. Jameson, 1998). Much post-positivist critical academic work across the social sciences has sought to expose such tendencies in the ostensibly progressive endeavours of modernism. James C. Scott's influential *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (1998) is an emblematic example of the type of work that is revered among many progressive post-positivists.⁵

Given the widespread resistance to modernism among post-positivist scholarly communities it seem strange, and even futile, to suggest that we should look, in part, for inspiration and courage to the work of the 20th century avant-gardes – groups associated so closely with modernism and its failings. However, Scott's work is also emblematic of how we have failed to live up to the responsibility that comes with the power of our knowledge and the knowledge of our (potential) power. Thoroughgoing critiques are not accompanied by thoroughgoing positive proposals for re-hermeneuticisation, let alone re-imagining or re-making societies. We now need a corrective to anti-modernism as much as we previously needed a corrective to the excesses of modernism. The Roundtable that we present in this issue of *New Perspectives* on '**Modernism, the International and the Possibility of an Avant-garde**' is a good starting point in this regard and draws

on a variety of recent initiatives to rescue the modernist babies from the discarded bathwater.

The avant-gardes were certainly not lacking in critique – much of it as radical as it gets. Yet, they also presented positive visions of how things could and should be. While sometimes frightening, these visions could also be inspiring and provided real intellectual competition for the mainstream and the mass of opinion. **Louis Armand**, who, along with his colleagues from Charles University **David Vichnar** and **Jaromír Lelek**, convened the discussion as part of the 8th Prague Microfestival, has previously questioned whether avant-gardes are even possible or meaningful under “post-conditions” (2007).

The very notion of avant gardes entails leadership and distinction from the majority of the population, yet it need not be anti-progressive and there remains a need for and a desire for leadership in every field, including culture and politics. As **Jan Bělíček** argues, we should not be frightened or discouraged by the fear of co-option of progressive ideas for unprogressive purposes – nor should we be scared of the shadows that past uses of expertise have cast. Instead we should seize the chance to reinvigorate the hermeneutic *elan vital* of the (neo)liberal mainstream in order to push or pull it in more progressive directions. As Mark Fisher (2012: 22) notes, even previously elite modernist projects, pioneered by vanguards of various kinds could be later vindicated in progressive and inclusive popular modernisms.⁶ The key here is inclusion and not seeing initial leadership as necessarily locking-in a hierarchical position. This is the type of leadership that sees the possibility for progressive change for the better, rather than pandering to either ignorance or prejudice – as has been seen in relation to Brexit.

Dita Malečková highlights the role of avant gardes in changing the very way we see or perceive ourselves and our societies, which is, perhaps, linked to the kind of re-hermeneuticisation that **Johan van der Walt** identifies as so necessary. However, she also argues for the potential of new technologies and modes of communication and interaction in provoking encounters, with others, with technologies and with ourselves. There is still much hope in the combination of technological with progressive thinking but post-positivists cannot claim legitimacy for their progressive visions from the same notions of social, political, scientific or technological ‘Truth’ as did some of the older avant-gardes.

The potential of encounter and of provoking constellations lies at the heart of *New Perspectives*, and **Gregor Podlogar** points to the ways that internationalism and the encounters and transformations that it provoked helped plural avant-gardes to flourish and spark competing ideas and visions of progress.⁷ Clearly there is much to learn from when avant-garde ideas are pushed too far, or become new dogmas that lose their progressive edge and begin to serve anti-progressive or oppressive agendas. Podlogar draws on Simon Reynolds’ (2011) notion of ‘Retroma-

nia' – a pathological state of nostalgia related to the melancholy that comes from the “slow cancellation of the [progressive] future” (Fisher, 2012, quoting Beradi [2011]). Across the progressive political spectrum commentators and thinkers are questioning the limits of nostalgic retro-politics (e.g. Krastev, 2016; Srnicek and Williams, 2014; 2015). While some of those at the radical end of this spectrum have been more willing to offer quasi-new ideas, there is still ample room for an avant-gardist corrective to the retro-domination, although we could question whether looking back to the avant-gardes for a source of forward looking inspiration may also be part of this nostalgia fetish, as Charlie Lyne has recently argued (2016). However, this editorial calls for a revival of some aspects of the spirit of the avant-gardes rather than for repeating their substance or replaying their style, but also for learning from their many shortcomings.

Indeed, **Boris A. Novak** argues not only that there is much that we can learn from the failures of past avant-gardes, but that we should be prepared for and even embrace the possibility of failure rather than remaining risk averse. This will mean taking responsibility for negative consequences of our proposals and ideas, but it should not deter us from trying. For post-positivists, perhaps it should mean daring not only to dream a little bigger, but also to fail a little bigger. Otherwise, notes Novak, we are doomed to fail in dealing with the biggest challenges of our time for want of trying.

New Perspectives: Constellations, Encounters, Interventions and Compositions

For progressive post-positivists, living in post-truth requires us to live up to the responsibilities that our power/knowledge gives us. We at *New Perspectives* are keen to be part of meeting this challenge. We build on encouraging signs from post-positivist scholars, such as those in the International Political Sociology (IPS) section of the International Studies Association (ISA), who advocate a shift from ‘deconstruction’ to ‘reconstruction’. Some of them draw on Bruno Latour’s injunction to “invest more energy in composing new and better realities, rather than deconstructing and destroying common wisdoms and societal truths” (see, e.g. Bueger and Mireanu, 2014).

It is in this spirit that *New Perspectives* launches a new type of article that we encourage you to submit to us: **Composition** pieces that *go beyond critique* to outline positive ideas relating to issues – large or small – that you feel need addressing. Pieces in the Compositions series will, like those in our Interventions series, be peer-reviewed and will then be the subject of a forum of responses. They can be then reproduced in different versions – including multimedia versions suitable for general audiences and made available through our blog, and policy papers which the journal will help to disseminate and promote with the idea of putting them into public debate and, potentially, into action. This, like the group **Academics for Informed and Progressive**

Debate, is intended as a step in the right direction for increasing the influence of progressive scholarship – in our case from a post-positivist basis. **We therefore invite and encourage you to submit your Compositions for new and better realities!**

However, *New Perspectives* remains committed to academic and intellectual pluralism, and we recognise that, as noted above, not everyone will agree with the analysis or the action advocated in this editorial. This is no impediment to publishing with us, as it is only one aspect of our mission. The current issue highlights our ongoing commitment to this pluralism and to provoking the kind of constellations of knowledge and understanding, as well as possibility, that arise from it. In addition to the Intervention and Roundtable discussed above, we are delighted to present an original research article from **Tomáš Weiss** that challenges received wisdoms regarding the effectiveness, or lack of such, of small states in influencing EU policy, which prompts consideration of how they can positively affect this. Using the example of the Czech Republic as a “small state lobbyist” Weiss draws on lobbying literature to make an innovative contribution to understanding Czech policy and the challenges that small states face in enacting their belonging in the EU as well as how they represent the interests and preferences of their citizens in their dealings with the EU. With the current upheaval in Europe and the opportunity for reform presented by Brexit, this is a timely demonstration of the value of such research.

Turning from intra-EU relations to relations between Russia and the world, we present a wonderfully rich and diverse forum of responses from leading EU-based scholars to the **Russian Academy of Sciences’ IMEMO Forecast-2016** (which we published, exclusively in English, in the previous issue of *New Perspectives*). In his response, **Mark Galeotti** offers a penetrating yet sympathetic analysis of the limitations facing academics and policy advisors operating under strict political constraints while attempting to loosen the screws and improve the direction of policy. In light of this issue’s editorial theme it is interesting to reflect on the various states of isolation and self-isolation – among different groups of academics, as well as of Russia in the world. More provocatively, **Graeme P. Herd** provides doomy projections for Russia’s future, with policy makers facing choices they don’t want to take, with the choice of attempting to maintain the status quo seen as likely to see Russia slide going from being a Great Power to becoming a “ruined province”. And like Galeotti, **Alexander Duleba** looks at Russia’s new normal but sees it as characterised by stereotypes and misunderstandings (particularly of the EU) as well as by delusions of grandeur. Duleba detects unholy echoes of the ill-fated nineteenth-century Holy Alliance in Russia’s current policy.

Anatoly Reshetnikov concurs that Great Power status is crucial to the Russian self-image. He sees the forecast as a mirror of the current Russian political imagination, including its tortured relation to the West, which is characterised by resentment, rejection *and* the desire for a renewal of perceived civilisational bonds. **Sergei**

Prozorov ploughs a similar furrow, but cuts deeper, offering a striking Heideggerian, metaphysical analysis of the “missing world” in what he sees as Russia’s world-poor worldview. Resonating with van der Walt’s notion of a ‘de-hermeneuticised’ European political economy, Prozorov sees a series of failed re-interpretations of Russia since 1991 leading to an egotistical and insecure relation to modernity and the West – by which Russia is captivated yet repulsed.

MEMO scholar **Irina Kobrinskaya**’s spirited rebuttal, which sees hope in having come to the “bottom of the problem” and now looks forward to improved co-operation and understanding, completes this fascinating exchange, which leads nicely on to – and is best read in conjunction with – this month’s featured original research article, which is freely available for download from our blog. **Mariya Omelicheva** and **Lidiya Zubytka**’s ‘**An Unending Quest for Russia’s Place in the World: The Discursive Co-evolution of the Study and Practice of International Relations in Russia**’ is an eye-opening look at how, despite Russian IR not being a fully-fledged ‘national school’, the highly ideological character of Russian IR (and ir) offers a novel way of looking at Russian foreign policy. The authors detail the historical evolution of Russian IR and the encounters between the Russian socio-cultural and academic heritage and ideas from elsewhere, which have led to the development of a unique hybrid. This piece not only enhances our understanding of Russia and its relations to the international, but also advances the literature on ‘national schools’ of IR.

Finally, and tragically, the events of 14 July 2016 in Nice have rendered **Johan van der Walt**’s Intervention piece more relevant than ever, particularly the futile recourse to states of emergency as a deterrent to political violence in Europe. That such states of emergency constitute an ineffective ‘policing on the cheap’ is clear. Van der Walt also makes clear that urgent and thoroughgoing action is required to address the causes of fundamentalist political violence, but also to address the causes of Europe’s own politic-economic fundamentalism. The events of 14th July have made equally clear the urgency of re-hermeneuticising – re-interpreting – our political, economic, societal and cultural conditions in order to re-imagine our politics, economics, societies and cultures. This must go beyond critique. It must go beyond what Vaclav Havel (1986) identified as the blinkered limitations of *opposition* and must instead imagine, create and stand for new *positions*. Progressive, post-positivist scholars have a key role to play in these processes.

In this light, we look forward to your reflections and responses to the constellations provoked by this issue, but also to your **Compositions**.

ENDNOTES

¹ Pace Vaclav Havel (Living in Truth) and Michel Foucault (power/knowledge).

² Clearly, both ‘progressive’ and ‘post-positivist’ are terms that cover a broad and disputed political and intellectual territory. However, rather than debating the precise meaning that is intended here, they are

used in just such a broad, standard way here and it is left up to the reader whether – and how – they identify themselves with the use that is made of them or not. The definitional point is not necessarily crucial to the argument made here but it will be in taking the steps that it advocates.

³ See, for example, Immanuel Wallerstein (2014), <http://iwallerstein.com/geopolitics-ukraines-schism/>, or Seumas Milne (Labour Party Executive Director of Strategy and Communications and one of Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn's chief advisors), <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/jan/29/ukraine-fascists-oligarchs-eu-nato-expansion>.

⁴ As the character played by Tom Hardy in Christopher Nolan's (2010) film *Inception*, put it.

⁵ It is perhaps unfair to single out Scott's work, although it is archetypal of the supposedly modest, realistic, and (almost) rueful correctives to modernism's supposed hubris that are popular and influential in some post-positivist communities. Like much postmodern scholarship it is certainly not anti-progressive in intent, but without positive counterparts, work of this ilk can be seen to have had an anti-progressive effect on the influence of post-positivist scholarly communities, both in academia and in wider society.

⁶ In the British context, Fisher counts more intellectual parts of "the music press and the more challenging parts of public service broadcasting, postpunk, brutalist architecture, penguin paperbacks and the BBC radiophonic workshop" as examples of "popular modernism" (2012: 22).

⁷ As Podlogar mentions, this is beautifully illustrated in the current exhibition 'Chagall to Malevich: The Russian Avant Gardes' at the Albertina Gallery in Vienna.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Armand, Louis (ed.) (2007), *Avant-Post: The Avant-Garde Under "Post-"Conditions*, Prague: Litteraria Pragensia.
- Beradi, Franco (2011), *After the Future*, Oakland: AK Press
- Bueger, Christian and Manuel Mireanu (2014), 'Proximity', in Claudia Aradau, Jef Huysmans, Andrew Neal and Nadine Voelkner (eds.) *Critical Security Methods: New Frameworks for Analysis*, London: Routledge, pp. 118–141.
- Fisher, Mark (2012), *Ghosts of My Life: Writings on Depression, Hauntology and Lost Futures*, London: Zero Books
- Frankfurt, Harry G. (2005), *On Bullshit*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- The Guardian (2016), 'The Guardian View on the Nato Summit: A Refreshed Alliance for Troubled Times', *The Guardian* – published on 10/07/2016. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/jul/10/the-guardian-view-on-the-nato-summit-a-refreshed-alliance-for-troubled-times> (Accessed 13/07/2016).
- Havel, Vaclav (1986), 'Living in Truth: Or, Vaclav Havel', London: Faber and Faber.
- Jameson, Frederic (1998), *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on Postmodernism 1983–1998*, London: Verso.
- Krastev, Ivan (2016), 'After Brexit, Europe's Dueling Nostalgias', *The New York Times* – published 15/07/2016. Available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/15/opinion/after-brexit-europes-dueling-nostalgias.html?rref=collection%2Fcolumn%2Fivan-krastev&action=click&contentCollection=opinion>

®ion=stream&module=stream_unit&version=latest&contentPlacement=1&pgtype=collection&_r=0
(Accessed 15/07/2016).

- Lyne, Charlie (2016), 'How Nostalgia Took Over the World (and Why That's No Bad Thing)' *The Guardian* – published 09/07/2016. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2016/jul/09/the-ghostbusters-reboot-and-nostalgia-in-pop-culture> (Accessed 13/07/2016).
- Pomarantsev, Peter (2014), *Nothing is True and Everything is Possible*, London: PublicAffairs.
- Reynolds, Simon (2011), *Retromania: Pop Culture's Addiction to Its Own Past*, London: Faber and Faber.
- Srnicek, Nick and Alex Williams (2014), *#Accelerate: A Manifesto For An Accelerationist Politics*. Available from, e.g., <http://criticallegalthinking.com/2013/05/14/accelerate-manifesto-for-an-accelerationist-politics/> (Accessed 13/07/2016).
- Srnicek, Nick and Alex Williams (2015), *Inventing the Future: Postcapitalism and a World Without Work*, London: Verso.
- Sokal, Alan D. and Jean Bricmont (1998), *Fashionable Nonsense: Postmodern Intellectuals' Abuse of Science*, New York: Picador USA.
- Scott, James, C. (1998), *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*, New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Stokes, Peter (2016), 'Please Don't Explain: Hanson 2.0 and the War on Experts', *The Conversation*, published on 07/07/2016. Available at <https://theconversation.com/please-dont-explain-hanson-2-0-and-the-war-on-experts-62106> (Accessed 13/07/2016).
- Tallis, Benjamin (2015), 'No End of History, No End of Politics, But Limits to Critique', *Visegrad Insight*, published online 02/02/2015. Available at <http://visegradinsight.eu/no-end-of-history-no-end-of-politics02022015/> (Accessed 13/07/2016).
- Viner, Katherine (2016), 'Long Read: How Technology Disrupted the Truth', *The Guardian* – published on 12/07/2016. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2016/jul/12/how-technology-disrupted-the-truth> (Accessed on 13/07/2016).