

The Digital Subject: Questioning Hypermnesia

International and transdisciplinary symposium

A Labex Arts-H2H project

University of Paris 8 Vincennes Saint-Denis, November 13-15, 2012

Organizers

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Keynote speakers

- Bernard Croisile, Chair, Department of Neuropsychology, Neurological Hospital of Lyon

- Katherine N. Hayles, Professor, Duke University

- Linda H. Liu, Professor, Columbia University

- Scott Rettberg, Professor, University of Bergen, Co-founder of Electronic Literature Organization and Project Head, ELMCIP

- Jean-Michel Salanskis, Professor of Philosophy, University of Paris Ouest Nanterre

- Bernard Stiegler, Philosopher, President of Ars Industrialis, Head of Institut de Recherche et d'Innovation (Centre Georges Pompidou).

Call for papers

Today's digital technologies of inscription and preservation have enabled the creation of substantial electronic archives and complex databases while ushering in new ways of archiving knowledge exemplified by collaborative encyclopedias. Such technical developments have foreshadowed a radical reconfiguration of human relations to the world and knowledge at large, and delineate a probable mutation in our understanding of the human subject.

Hypermnesia, a recurrent motif in science fiction narratives, was already prefigured in H. G. Wells' (*World Brain*, 1937) or Borges' works ("Funes el memorioso," 1944). From then on, the notion has migrated into other literary genres, be they published in traditional print or in a digital medium. Similarly, the possible externalization and extension of memory is one of the cornerstones of contemporary philosophical theories (such as that of the "extended mind") on both sides of the border separating the analytical and continental schools of philosophy.

Right after the Second World War, machine memory, the thematization of subjective memory in reference to computer memory, the potential alteration of the very nature of human memory due to the development of machines were recurrent issues in discussions pertaining to cybernetics and they are still vivid in the contemporary diagnosis of posthumanism.

Of particular interest is the scope and typology of works featuring the theme of hypermnesia, from fantasies of omnipotence to rewritings of the Babel myth, to political, cultural and economic policy blueprints. This call for papers invites contributions from various fields and disciplines (the history of science and technology, literature, philosophy among others) which question the theme of hypermnesia and memory through the prism of the ambiguous relationship between man and machine, in a historical as well as in a more contemporary perspective.

At the crossroads of philosophy, literature and the history of science and technology, this symposium is part of a broader long-term project focusing on the digital subject, a subject whose status and attributes appear to have been altered by the real or fictional development of digital calculating machines from Babbage to Internet.

The working languages will be French and English. Contributions may be submitted in either language and should not exceed 3000 characters. Please enclose a brief bio-bibliographical note.

Contact : hypermnnesia@univ-paris8.fr

This symposium has received the support of the LABEX Arts-H2H scientific committee.

New deadline for submissions: July 1st, 2012

Contributors will be informed of the scientific committee's decision by September 15, 2012.

Scientific committee :

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