

Editoriale

An Open Letter to RIFP Readership

Sandro Nannini^(α)

Dear Readers,

When Dr. Giuseppe Saracino informed me that the “Associazione R.I.F.P.” wished to appoint me as Editor in Chief of the “Rivista Internazionale di Filosofia e Psicologia” I accepted with a mix of satisfaction and gratitude on the one hand and fear and sadness on the other hand. Satisfaction because it is a great honor for me to be entrusted with the editorship of such a highly prestigious journal, and gratitude because I know that my name is the result of extensive consultation: I do not know how extensive (and it is neither my task nor my right to know this) but certainly broad enough to give me good reason to hope that in the implementation of my task I shall be supported not only by the other Editors (who know RIFP much better than I) but also by the numerous and very competent members of the Scientific Advisory Board.

However, as I said, in accepting this posi-

tion, I also felt fear and sadness. Fear not only because the task entrusted to me is in itself difficult but also because it will be very challenging to be a worthy successor of Massimo Barale, whose farsighted management of RIFP set an example I will always aspire to but find difficult to equal. Deep sadness because the demand for a new chief editor of RIFP was made necessary by the sudden death of Massimo. He was for me not only an esteemed colleague but also a dear friend. I never wanted to have the honor given to me today of being his successor because of his death. I shall say nothing further about Massimo since I share the fine words dedicated to him by Alfredo Ferrarin in his obituary “*In memoriam*” published in the latest issue of RIFP. I repeat only that Massimo’s humanity and expertise will always be an inspiration for me and, I am sure, for all other Editors of RIFP.

Two words on me and the contribution that I would like to make to RIFP. I have worked for many years in the field of the phi-

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losophy of mind and the philosophy of cognitive sciences. Those who know me also know that I am a staunch naturalist with strong sympathies for eliminative materialism. In my field of studies such a position is only judged coherent and rigorous by a few, but dogmatic and misleading by most philosophers. However, although I have always staunchly defended my ideas, my publications and my thirteen-years as the Director of an interdisciplinary PhD program in Cognitive Sciences at the University of Siena – a program that I founded with linguists, psychologists, computer scientists, neuroscientists, and economists – prove that I conceive philosophy to be strictly in continuity with the sciences. And more generally I do not believe in the existence of insurmountable barriers between basic research and applied research, the natural sciences and humanities, analytical philosophy and continental philosophy, systematic philosophy and history of philosophy or, on the other hand, between cognitive psychology or neuro-psychology and dynamic psychology or psychoanalysis. And so on. I think we all, philosophers of any orientation and scientists of all disciplines, should not look at academic distinctions, which serve at best to justify the competition for funds and chairs, but should instead simply search, in an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary way, for... truth! And truth is certainly never defi-

nitively knowable in its entirety and is always dependent for its formulation on theoretical frames that must permanently remain subjected to revision. But in itself truth is absolute and immutable. To sum up, the common objective of philosophers and scientists must be to try to understand how the natural and human world are constructed.

Therefore, when Dr. Giuseppe Saracino wrote in his letter of appointment: «I hope that you can further the pluralism and anti-dogmatism that has characterized the life and growth of RIFP until now and which represent basic elements of the whole project» [my translation] he describes a goal that I fully share.

It is my intention that RIFP continue to be a workspace of dialogue and cooperation between philosophers, psychologists, cognitive scientists in general and scholars of similar disciplines of any cultural bent. A space in which everyone (including me!) will defend her/his ideas and her/his own discipline without any concession to an easy and empty eclecticism but in which no one will withdraw into her/his shell and refuse to learn anything from those who think otherwise. And, in this context, any suggestions from our readers will be most welcome.

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