

Call for Papers

Rivista di Antropologia Contemporanea // Journal of Contemporary Anthropology
5/2022

Il Mulino Publishing House, Bologna, Italy

The construction of subjectivity in the age of social media
edited by Angela Biscaldi and Vincenzo Matera

As Arjun Appadurai wrote, migrations and communications are the basis of the processes of construction of contemporary subjectivities.

Even if we usually focus on the fact that common use of new digital media – and social media in particular – is gradually redefining the way we represent reality, it is also important to understand that the widespread diffusion of social media changes the processes of construction of subjectivities – personal ideas, interpretations of experiences, emotions, and their representations.

In a well-known article, "Egyptian Melodrama - Technology of the Modern Subject?" (2002), the anthropologist Lila Abu Lughod highlighted how the diffusion of television melodrama in Egypt provided the model of a "new" type of subject, a real "melodrama of conscience". Through melodrama the young Egyptian women have acquired a new emotional literacy, also mediated by an intense identification with the actors. They have learned to express the same emotions of television characters and to interpret their own affective and sentimental experiences starting from (or thanks to) a melodramatic register.

Based on this analysis, we can ask ourselves whether a similar process of "Instagrammation of consciences" is taking place today. Can social media be considered "technologies" to produce new types of self? And if so, which ones?

If it is true, as Daniel Miller argues, that the world has changed and is changing social media, and therefore we must not give in to the temptation of technological determinism, we should ask ourselves if there are structural - as well as ideological - constraints that social media pose to the ability of individuals to imagine themselves and, therefore, to act.

We accept ethnographic contributions that explore the construction of subjectivity in relation to the particular type of mediation exercised by the various social platforms in different socio-cultural contexts.

Please send a 250 words abstract (including title) by May, 31 to v.matera@unibo.it and angela.biscaldi@unimi.it. Accepted contributions (45.000 characters including spaces) are expected to be sent by the 30th of September 2021.

For info: ilmulino.rac@gmail.com

<https://www.mulino.it/riviste/issn/2724-3168>

RIVISTA DI ANTRO POLOGIA CONTEM PO RANEA

La svolta ontologica

Pandemia e contagio

1/2020



il Mulino